

A Blessed Kind of Hunger

Matthew 5:6

Halifax: 9 November 2003

For the last several weeks, we have been studying the Beatitudes in Matthew 5.

- A “beatitude” is a pronouncement of blessing.
- It was with beatitudes that Jesus began that great sermon that we call “The Sermon on the Mount.”
 - Matthew presents this sermon to us as an example of the preaching he did as He went from city to city in Galilee, preaching the good news of the kingdom.

How wonderful that the mighty Son of God should begin with beatitudes!

- What a demonstration of His gracious purpose—
 - That He came into this world to bring blessing to sinners!
- We have seen that He does not pronounce blessing on those who are full of themselves, but on those who are poor in spirit...
 - Those who know they have been ruined by sin and have no way to deliver themselves—
 - And who therefore mourn over their condition...
 - And who are meek, looking outside of themselves and all the fallen human race for King Jesus to govern them!
- It is to people like this that Jesus says,
 - “Blessed are you!”

These beatitudes are so helpful because they speak encouragement to everyone who realises what he is before God...

- to those who would otherwise be swallowed up with despair!
- They bring us right to centre of everything about Jesus and His kingdom...
 - That He came to bless sinners!

And today we come right to the centre of the centre!

- The fourth beatitude:
 - Matthew 5:6: “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.”
 - This, my friends, is the very heart of the gospel!
 - Righteousness!

- That is what Jesus left the glories of heaven to bring into this otherwise unrighteous world.
- Righteousness!
 - That is what His kingdom is all about—It is a kingdom of righteousness.
- The good news is that Jesus brought righteousness into a world that was dead in trespasses and sins!

I. Righteousness is a thing greatly to be desired.

A. But what is this righteousness?

1. When you peel everything away,
 - righteousness is: “a right standing with God.”
 - a. That’s quite simple, isn’t it?
 - You are righteous when you are right.
 - When you have God’s approval.
 - When you are pleasing to Him and acceptable to Him.
 - b. Righteousness can also be defined as “conformity to a norm,” or in this case, “conformity to God’s law.”
 - But in saying that, we must never think that God’s is impersonal.
 - His law is an expression of what He, as a person, requires of us, as human beings made in His image.
 - Righteousness in the Bible is always covenantal.
 - It always has to do with relationship to another person.
 - You are righteous when you meet certain claims that another person has on you.
 - Even God is often said to be righteous because He keeps the promises He has made to us.
2. It is necessary when we consider righteousness in the Bible to look at it in two ways:
 - First, as how you stand with God,
 - and secondly as what you actually are before God.
 - a. The reason this is necessary is because God justifies the ungodly—

- To justify means to declare that they are righteous and to fully accept them as such.
 - In other words,
 - There are righteous people who are not really righteous!
 - God has made a way to fully accept sinful people as righteous even though they have not lived acceptably before Him.
- b. He sent Jesus, the Son of God, from Heaven to make His elect righteous.
- The way He does this is by letting Jesus represent them before God.
- 1) Jesus met all that was required not only of a human being,
 - but also of a **sinful** human being.
 - If you break the law, you can be justified by paying the penalty that the law imposes.
 - You pay the fine or do your time in jail, and then you are justified.
 - By paying the penalty for your violation of the law,
 - you obtain a right standing again.
 - 2) When God sent the prophet Moses,
 - He had Moses clearly explain to the people what is required of a human being before God.
 - Moses made it clear that everyone had come short of God's righteousness.
 - But the Lord also had Moses explain what is required to justify a human being who has sinned.
 - He was given certain ceremonies to show that the penalty must be paid by death of a substitute.
 - The problem was, the substitute himself has to be without spot or blemish, and the penalty was eternal death.
 - No son of Adam was qualified in the first place because all had sinned...
 - and even if one was, how could he bear the weight of eternal death?
 - 3) That is where Jesus comes into the picture!
 - Because He was the Son of God,
 - He was able to meet the demands of God's law,

- not only to be righteous as a human being...
 - but even to make sinful human beings righteous!
- First He lived a life of perfect conformity to all that God requires of a human being...
 - And then He bore the curse of God, the equivalent of eternal death, on the cross!
 - He did it for all those that God had ever justified and ever would justify.
 - And so by Jesus, the unrighteous are given a righteous standing before God.

TRANS> That is the first way you are taught to look at righteousness in the Bible, but what is the second?

- c. The second way has to do with what you actually are before God.
 - 1) As soon as you believe in Jesus Christ, you are declared righteous...
 - From that moment you are fully accepted by God as one who perfectly pleases Him...
 - You are regarded as one (and are in fact are one through faith in Jesus) who has met all that God requires to make you righteous.
 - 2) But because the righteousness you have is based on what Jesus did, you yourself still need to change.
 - You need to begin to live in conformity to what God wants.
 - You have a right standing with God,
 - but now you need right conduct before Him.
 - 3) The good news is that Jesus promises to transform you so that you will be right with God not only as to your standing, but also as to your behaviour.
 - But this second work is not done all at once.
 - It is the work that is described in Ephesians 5:25 where it tells you that:
 - “Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she should be holy and without blame.”
 - This “washing of water by the word” is the work of sanctification which Jesus performs in all His true disciples.
 - When He sent out His apostles to preach the gospel,

- He commanded them to teach His disciples to observe all things that He has commanded...
 - That is how He washes them with water by the word.
 - The word is preached to them, and by and by they learn to observe it and so are renewed in God's image.
 - By grace, they are enabled to put off the old man and put on the new man.
- And in the end, they will be like Him because they will see Him as He is.

TRANS> So you see then,

- First, Jesus has given them a right standing...
 - Then, He begins to bring them into right conduct.
- He makes them righteous in both ways!
 - The first way is called justification.
 - The second way is called sanctification.
- And so, in Matthew 5:6 when Jesus says,
 - "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness,"
 - He is speaking of both kinds of righteousness.
 - He is speaking about righteousness in a general, comprehensive way that includes both justification and sanctification,
 - righteousness imputed and righteousness imparted.
 - It is simply **righteousness** that the blessed ones hunger and thirst for.

B. Now let me tell you what a wonderful thing this righteousness is!

- It is a thing greatly to be desired!
- 1. First, righteousness is to be desired because when you have it, it means you please God!
 - There is no greater blessing than the blessing of being made to please God!
 - We all like to please others—
 - At work, you want to please your clients or your employer...
 - Men want their wives to be pleased with them,
 - and women want their husbands to be pleased with them.

- But what a great blessing it is to have God pleased with you!
 - God Almighty is pleased with the righteous!
 - He is the judge of all the earth,
 - And when all is said and done,
 - No one else's judgement really matters!
 - Righteousness is something to hunger for because when you have it, you have this testimony:
 - That you please God!
2. Secondly, righteousness is desirable because it is beautiful!
- I already showed you that Christ wants to make His church glorious,
 - “not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she should be holy and without blame.”
 - How lovely the fruits of the Spirit are—
 - Love, which has to do with giving to others and blessing them...
 - Joy, which speaks of delighting in God—learning to appreciate and praise Him for all His excellence and for His goodness
 - Peace, which speaks of learning to rest comfortably in God so that nothing unsettles you or disturbs you
 - Longsuffering which speaks of being unstoppable in your service to God so that nothing or no one is able to through you off track.
 - Kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control!
 - Are these not all beautiful things—things greatly to desire?
 - Look at Jesus. He is righteous...
 - Do you see how beautiful He is?
 - Do you see how He loved His sheep and gives His life for them?
 - Do you see how He treats His enemies?
 - Do you see how He delights in the Father's will and makes it His very food and drink?
 - Do you see how He responds to suffering?
 - Righteousness desirable because it is beautiful!
3. Thirdly, righteousness is to be desired because it is our whole reason to be!
- God created us to be righteous.
 - He created us in His image,

- And since He is righteous,
 - we were created in righteousness that we might display His glorious righteousness as His image.
 - What loss we suffered when we fell from righteousness!
 - We lost our whole reason to be...
 - Yet, what gain it is to obtain it again!
 - Righteousness is desirable because it enables us to be what we were created to be!
4. Fourthly, righteousness is desirable because it produces peace!
- Romans 5 says that those who are justified by faith have peace with God!
 - Nothing is worse than to be enmity with God.
 - He has the final power when all is said and done to bless or to curse you.
 - And He knows how to bless and to curse!
 - Even if you had the power to do what you want,
 - you wouldn't even know how to make yourself happy!
 - Often the more power a man is given, the more unhappy he is...
 - But God knows how to bless and how to curse,
 - and those who are righteous have gone from being the object of His cursing to the object of His blessing!
 - His anger is turned a way, and they are reconciled to God.
 - Righteousness is desirable because it means we have peace with God!
 - That means everything!
5. Fifthly, righteousness is desirable because it is wholly satisfying!
- The sweet psalmist of Israel looks to the resurrection day when his righteousness will be complete and He says:
 - Psalm 17:15: As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.
 - The world is rushing around looking for satisfaction in one thing after another, but real satisfaction comes from being renewed into the perfect likeness of Jesus Christ who is the image of God.
 - We have a our conquests, we have our achievements and our successes that bring us some measure of satisfaction...

- But there is none so great as the attainment of righteousness.
 - That is when true satisfaction finally comes!
 - Righteousness is highly desirable because righteousness satisfies!

- 6. Sixthly, righteousness is desirable because it brings blessing to our children!
 - Surely parents want to leave their children a good inheritance...
 - Well there is no better inheritance to leave them than righteousness.
 - A righteous man has the privilege of setting his son or daughter out in the right direction.
 - The unrighteous send their children out in the wrong direction...
 - on the path that leads to destruction.
 - In Exodus 20:5-6, God declares to us:
 - For I, the LORD your God, *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.
 - Clearly, parents, you have an affect on your children.
 - Psalm 103:17-18 tells us:
 - The mercy of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children, To such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them.
 - Righteousness is desirable because it brings blessing to your children.

- 7. Seventhly, righteousness is desirable because it positions you to know God!
 - As you become more righteous, Jesus reveals more of Himself to you.
 - In John 14:21, He said:
 - Joh 14:21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."
 - This is a promise to disciples as they grow in the Lord.
 - Jesus will make Himself to known to them more and more.
 - God is the supreme excellence, high above all so that nothing can compare!
 - He alone is worthy of praise...
 - And there is nothing better for a man than to know Him, to see His glory and majesty and to behold His sweet excellence!

- If this is the expectation of the righteous,
- There is great reason to desire righteousness!

TRANS> And so you see that righteousness is a thing greatly to be desired!

C. To drive this home still more, I want you to consider how greatly Jesus desired righteousness for His sheep.

1. As I have already said, He came into the world with this one great purpose!

- To establish righteousness in this fallen world!
- To set up a kingdom of righteousness for sinners!
- All who enter His Kingdom with true faith are made righteous in this kingdom of righteousness.

a. This righteousness was a thing so greatly desired by king Jesus,

- He placed such a high value on it...
- That He was willing to leave the glories of heaven and come into this sin cursed world...
 - He was willing to take to Himself the weakness of human flesh and live in a world of iniquity.
 - He was willing to bear the contradiction of sinners and the hardness of men's hearts—even the very ones He came to redeem...
 - He was willing to go the cross and suffer the wrath and curse of God...

b. And why did He do all this?

- He did it to make His people righteous!
- Their righteousness was such a precious thing to Him...
 - a thing so greatly to be desired...
 - that He spared nothing in order to bring it to them!

2. Surely the Son of God knows what is precious and valuable!

a. Surely we ought to respect His judgement in this matter!

b. I say,

- if He thought our righteousness was something so precious and so greatly to be desired that He did all this...
 - What a fool you are if you do not value it also!
 - What a fool to disregard it and count it trivial and secondary when the Son of God counted it of such supreme importance!

TRANS> Oh my friends!

- What a desirable thing righteousness is!
 - Do you see it? I hope you do!
- Now I have a very important question I want to ask each one of you.
 - I am almost tempted to walk around the room and look each one of you in the face and ask you this question...
 - I want you to seriously ask it to yourself because it is a very important question:

II. Do you hunger and thirst for this righteousness?

A. Do not answer without carefully considering.

1. This is a matter about which you do not want to be mistaken.
 - a. Your eternal destiny hangs on this question!
 - Jesus says that it is those who hunger and thirst for righteousness that will be filled, or satisfied with it.
 - If you don't hunger and thirst for it, you can forget about having it.
 - And if you don't have it, you are at enmity with God,
 - Your future is misery unless you repent!
 - b. And be careful—
 - Answering yes will do you no good unless it is true.
 - The only thing that matters is whether you actually **do** hunger and thirst for it...
 - It means nothing just say that you do.
 - I am sure in a congregation this size there are some who do not.
2. It is not just a **desire** that Jesus speaks of here...
 - a. It is a hungering and thirsting desire!
 - That is a strong desire!
 - b. Most of us don't really know what it means to hunger and thirst in the physical sense.
 - We may have missed a meal or two here and there, but most of you have never experienced real hunger and thirst.

- During the liberation of Palestine in World War One, a combined force of soldiers from Britain, New Zealand, and Australia were pursuing the Turks across the dessert. The allied forces outdistanced the camel train that was carrying their water supply. The mouths of the men got dry, their heads ached, they became dizzy and faint, their eyes became bloodshot, their lips swelled and turned purple. Hundreds died, and they knew that many more would die if they did not make it to the wells of Sheriah by nightfall. In desperation, they drove the Turks on and arrived at the wells. As there was only room for a few at a time to drink, the wounded and those who had guard duty were allowed to drink first. The last man had to wait four hours before he could take a drink. There they were, right next to the water, yet unable to drink. One of the officers who was present gave this report: “I believe that we all learned our first Bible lesson on the march from Beersheba to the Sheriah Wells. If such were our thirst for God, for righteousness and for His will in our lives, a consuming, all-embracing, preoccupying desire, how rich in the fruit of the Spirit would we be?”
 - That is the kind of hunger and thirst you ought to have for righteousness!
- c. But I do not mean to trouble any over sensitive consciences.
- Our text does not say that you must hunger and thirst a certain amount or there is no righteousness for you.
 - It simply says,
 - “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.”
 - It is a promise to encourage.
 - Now I know what happens with something like this—
 - The person who needs to be stung hard because there is no hunger and thirst will breathe easy when I say this...
 - But the person who is truly hungering and thirsting will begin to doubt his salvation.
 - That is not the point—
 - The point is to stir you up to hunger and thirst.
 - Every one of you needs to hunger and thirst more than you do—
 - but let me make it clear that we are not saved by the righteousness of hungering and thirsting...
 - We hunger and thirst for the righteousness that saves, and that is the righteousness that Jesus gives.

3. But beware that your hunger is not misplaced—that you do not thirst for something other than the righteousness that Jesus gives.
 - a. Of course the most blatant way this is done is simply to hunger and thirst after other things...
 - Amos 2:7 says: They pant after the dust of the earth *which is* on the head of the poor, And pervert the way of the humble. A man and his father go in to the *same* girl, To defile My holy name.
 - Their hunger for wealth was greater than their hunger for righteousness;
 - and their hunger for sexual stimulation overshadowed their thirst for holiness.
 - Such persons are like bees in a field going from one flower to another—
 - They have many things they hunger for, but they do not hunger for the righteousness that Jesus came to give.
 - They think to themselves that they will find blessing in these things, but in them there is no lasting satisfaction.

TRANS> But the misplaced appetite is not always quite as obvious as this.

- b. There are many people who desire greatly to gain God's approval, but they desire to do it by their own works.
 - 1) Some of them are very diligent in prayer and fasting and alms giving and good works...
 - But they do not learn to rest in the righteousness that Jesus Christ obtained for His people when He lived for them and then died on the cross to atone for their sins.
 - 2) Such a person is not really hungry for righteousness because he does not realise the radical nature of his need.
 - He is like the rich young ruler who came to Jesus and said that he had kept all of God's commandments from his youth up.
 - This young man was diligent in his service to God,
 - but he was not really hungering and thirsting because he was satisfied with what he could do for himself.
 - He was already satisfied with what he had and did not know how much He needed Jesus.
 - 3) Such a person may labour hard to be righteous, but he labours for a righteousness that cannot save him...

- Isaiah 55:2 asks him,
 - “Why do you spend money for *what is* not bread, And your wages for *what* does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat *what is* good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance.”
- c. But then on the other hand there are those who presume that since Jesus fulfilled all righteousness for us, there is no reason for us to hunger and thirst any more.
 - Such a person says,
 - “Praise God, Jesus has made us righteous. Now it doesn’t matter what I do. Let us do evil that grace may abound.”
 - Such a person does not really hunger for righteousness, does he?
 - All he wants is to avoid God’s curse...
 - He comes to Jesus to escape punishment,
 - but he did not come to be righteous...
 - He has no desire to be like Jesus, renewed in God’s image.
 - He wants to be saved from the penalty of sin, but he does not want to be saved from sin itself.
 - Do you remember Balaam?
 - He was like that.
 - He said,
 - Num 23:10: “Let me die the death of the righteous, And let my end be like his!”
 - He wanted to die like the righteous, but he did not want to live like the righteous.
 - If he had hungered and thirsted for righteousness,
 - he would have wanted to live like the righteous as well.

TRANS> So you need to be sure that your hunger and thirst is a hunger and thirst for the righteousness that Jesus brought from heaven and not something else.

B. Where does this hunger and thirst come from?

1. It is not natural...
 - a. It is natural to want happiness, but it is not natural to want righteousness.
 - The Bible teaches that we are by nature the children of wrath.

- We are conceived in sin and come from the womb speaking lies.
 - We will be looking at this more tonight.
- b. The Fall has warped us so that we cannot see the true nature of things, nor do we have a heart to appreciate what is good.
- And so if you are left to yourself, you will never want the true righteousness that Jesus gives.
 - The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God because they are foolishness to him...
 - There is nothing appetising about righteousness to the natural man.
2. It is the work of God's Spirit that gives you such desires.
- a. The Spirit breaks into your blindness and your delusions and shows you the true nature of your sin...
- He causes you to be ashamed of the way you have been living.
 - He wakes you up to see your pride and your selfishness,
 - your covetousness and your idolatry
 - As we have seen in the former beatitudes,
 - He makes causes you to be poor in spirit—to see that you have no resources from yourself by which you can please God.
 - You see that you are undone, defiled and corrupt.
 - Obviously when this happens, you begin to hunger for righteousness!
- b. But the Spirit also shows you what God thinks of your corruption...
- He causes you to tremble at the thought of God's judgement.
 - You realise that you are worthy of death and that unless something is done to take away your sin, you are condemned forever.
 - This makes you hunger even more for righteousness.
- c. The Spirit also shows you the beauty of Christ...
- You look at Him and you see His perfect righteousness.
 - You see that He is the fairest of ten thousand and that there is none to compare with Him.
 - You see that He has no defect, no spot, no blemish and you long to be like Him.
 - Now of course, there is a sense in which all these things happen together...
 - One of the reasons you come to despise what you see in yourself is because you come to see the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ.

- And so you want to follow Him—you become meek and teachable—you become hungry for the righteousness you see in Him.
- d. And all the while, the Spirit also shows you the way of salvation in Jesus Christ...
- The Spirit teaches you that Jesus came to bring righteousness into this fallen world...
 - The Spirit shows you from Gods Word that Jesus became sin for us in order that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
 - Now your mouth is watering and you say,
 - “Lord, give me this righteousness or I die!”
 - “Have mercy on me, and pardon my sin for Jesus sake.”
- e. All this work of the Spirit that makes you hungry for righteousness is what God promised to His elect in the covenant of grace.
- He said:
 - “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: ‘I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them’”
 - What does it mean to have God’s law written in your heart?
 - It means that it becomes the desire of your heart to do His will!
 - It means that you want to please Him!
 - It means that you hunger and thirst for righteousness!
 - And what follow this covenant promise to produce this hunger in you?
 - He adds, “Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”
 - That is the second part of the covenant promise!
 - In other words, you will be forgiven!
 - God writes His law in your heart, giving you a desire for righteousness—
 - Then He gives you a righteous standing by pardoning your sins!
 - And being forgiven, you then have hope to follow Him that you might learn to observe all that He has commanded.
 - He has given you a desire to observe it and He has forgiven your sins...
 - So now you follow Him with hunger and thirst for righteousness!

TRANS> So you see that this hunger is a God-given hunger....

- It is not something you have by nature,
 - but it is something God's Spirit produces in you through the Word.
- It is so important that you have this hunger and thirst for righteousness!
 - If you don't have it, you will die in your sins.
 - There will be no satisfaction for you.
- And because it is so important...

C. I want to give you some tests to see if you really do hunger and thirst for righteousness.

1. The first test is this: Are you dissatisfied with what you are?

- Obviously a hungry person is hungry because he wants more to eat.
- If he is full, he is not hungry and he does not meet the criteria that Jesus gives for being a blessed one—
 - Because Jesus does not say,
 - "Blessed are you are filled with righteousness," but He says,
 - "Blessed are you who hunger and thirst after righteousness."
- It is not that you are simply dissatisfied with the way life is treating you,
 - or dissatisfied with your lack of success in the world...
 - or dissatisfied with your circumstances...
- No no no!
 - This is a dissatisfaction with your unrighteousness.
 - This is an unhappiness with your own sinful heart and life.

2. And this being so, the next test is,

- Do you find satisfaction in the righteousness that Jesus gives you?
- A person who is hungry finds satisfaction from eating good food!
 - If you haven't eaten for several days and you are hungry, you will be delighted when food is set before you!
 - But you will not be pleased if someone offers you a new book at that time or a trip to the zoo—
 - you want something to eat because you are hungering, and nothing but food will satisfy you.

- And so I ask you, are you satisfied with the righteousness that Jesus gives?
 - Does it bring you great joy and satisfaction that He laid down His life for you on the cross, and that He met all the demands of God's law for you?
 - Are you pleased when the fruits of the Spirit begin to appear in your life and you begin to see transformation?
 - Do these things make you rejoice?

- 3. And that leads to the next test: What is your attitude towards the means of grace?
 - Are you eating and drinking of the righteousness of Jesus Christ that is set before you?
 - A person who is truly hungry does not just look at food and drink when it is set before Him.
 - He digs in! He can't get enough because he is hungry!

 - You can tell if you are hungry by looking at what you do with the means of grace...
 - For example, how do you come to God's Word?
 - Do you come with eager desire to feed upon His word, to believe His promises, to obey His commands, to love what He reveals about Himself?
 - Do you quickly become bored and disinterested when the word is preached?

 - And what about prayer?
 - Do you come with fervent longing to plead with God to give you the bread that endures to everlasting life?
 - A hungry man will plead and beg for food if he finds someone who has it,
 - and especially if it is someone he knows has always been willing to give it away to those who ask!
 - Like Jacob, he will wrestle with God and say,
 - "I will not let you go until you bless me."

 - And how do you come to the sacraments?
 - Do you come with desire to be washed and cleansed from your sin?
 - Do you come longing to commune in the broken body and shed blood of Christ that you might be filled with His righteousness?
 - Do you come as one hungering and thirsting, or as one who is already full and has need of nothing?

TRANS> And now for the fourth test—it is a little different...

4. The fourth test is, Are you willing to suffer to obtain more righteousness?
 - a. A hungry man will go to great pains and endure many hardships and dangers to obtain the food for which he craves.
 - If he must go through a hedge of thorns to get food, he will.
 - If he must make great sacrifices, he will if he is hungry.

 - Brethren, if you are going to become like Jesus,
 - it is necessary for you to suffer in this world.
 - b. The righteousness that Jesus displayed and cultivated was an obedience that He learned through suffering.
 - It is one thing to serve God when everything is going your way;
 - quite another when there are difficulties and hardships to endure.
 - It is easy to love those who love you,
 - but Jesus calls you to love the way He loved...
 - He loved in a fallen world!
 - That means you must learn to love when your are tired, sick, and distressed...
 - To love others when they mistreat you and abuse you and oppress you.
 - To love them when they are ungrateful and give you nothing in return...
 - To love your husband when he is being a selfish and unreasonable...
 - To patiently discipline your children when you would rather either avoid them or yell at them.
 - c. If you are really hungering and thirsting for righteousness, you will rejoice in tribulation because you know that tribulation is necessary for you to grow in righteousness!
 - It will make sense to you that God causes all things to work together for good to those that love Him and are called according to His purpose...
 - Because for you, the good spoken of there is righteousness—it is the good of being renewed in God's image!
5. The fifth test is this...
 - Do you desire to righteousness not only in yourself, but also in others.

- a. A person who loves righteousness does not simply love it for himself—
 - He wants to see it in others also!
 - He weeps when God's law is not kept!
 - He rejoices with the angels in heaven when a sinner repents!
 - The prodigal sons older brother did not love righteousness because he did not rejoice when his little brother repented.

- b. And if you hunger for righteousness in others, you will be willing to pray for them and instruct them and to suffer for them.
 - 1) Look at the apostle Paul who said,
 - 2Co 12:15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls.
 - He was willing to labour and to suffer hardship if it would help to make others righteous...
 - He hungered for righteousness not only in himself, but in others.

 - 2) Husbands, do you hunger for righteousness in your wives? Parents, in your children? Brothers and sisters, in each other?
 - Can you rejoice when trouble comes because then you have an opportunity to encourage others by the way you respond?
 - Are you willing to spend yourself to help others know Christ?

 - 3) Consider Jesus—
 - In this way, He hungered for righteousness also!
 - He spend Himself and gave all in order that He might make others righteous.
 - Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.

TRANS> So now, let me review these tests of hunger for righteousness:

- 1) Are you dissatisfied with what you are?
- 2) Are you satisfied with the righteousness that Jesus gives?
- 3) Are you diligently feeding upon the means of grace to grow in righteousness?
- 4) Are you learning to rejoice in suffering because it helps you to become more like Jesus?
- 5) Do you long to see righteousness in others?

Do you hunger and thirst for righteousness?

III. Jesus promise to you—if you do hunger and thirst for righteousness—is that you will be filled.

- A. Jesus gives this righteousness to all who hunger and thirst for it.
- It is not something you can manufacture...
 - It is the righteousness you obtain by faith in Jesus Christ.
 - He came from heaven to bring this righteousness to fallen sinners like you.
- B. I have already showed you that Jesus gives you this righteousness in two ways:
1. By imputation—
 - In that He fulfilled all that God required to make sinners righteous.
 - And by faith, His righteousness is imputed to you.
 2. And secondly, there is the impartation of righteousness.
 - This is the ongoing work of Jesus after you have entered His kingdom.
 - This is when He teaches you to observe all that He has commanded.
 3. Psalm 45 has some wonderful counsel for you who hunger for righteousness.
 - It is about King Jesus bringing you, His bride, into His house...
 - In verse 10, it tells you to forget your own people and your fathers house!
 - You have a new house now, you live in the house of King Jesus!
 - You have been brought into His kingdom and you must put off the old ways and learn to live in new ways that please Him!
 - And as you do that, it says the king will greatly desire your beauty.
 - King Jesus is giving you His beauty treatment to make you fit to live in His house!
 - He is beginning to train you in the ways that please Him!
 - He is making you more and more beautiful in His eyes!
 - More and more pleasing and delightful to Himself!

Conclusion

Now I say,

- Don't you want to come into the house of King Jesus as His bride?
 - Don't you want to be made into a beautiful, glorious queen that fully pleases Him?
 - Don't you want to be made into that which He greatly desires and delights in?
- Then come to Him!
 - The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!"
 - And let him who hears say, "Come!"
 - And let him who thirsts come.
 - Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely!