

I. Review

- A. Jesus starts the SOTM with 8 aspects of His bridegroom heart that He longs to impart. He imparts these heart conditions to us in order for us to share in deep intimacy and love with Him. As we enter into this deeper degree of friendship, we experience increasing levels of abundant kingdom life in our inner man.
1. Blessed are the Poor in Spirit – Out of the desire for intimacy with His Father Jesus chose to empty Himself and only rely upon reality of what His Father empowered Him to do and say. Poverty of spirit is the necessary posture of entrance and experience of the Kingdom.
 2. Blessed are those who Mourn for the Kingdom – Experiencing the Kingdom causes us to see a disparity between the current age and the coming Kingdom age. This causes a constant dissatisfaction and mourning in our soul until the fullness of the Kingdom comes.
 3. Blessed are the Meek – Meekness is the restraint of power or strength for the higher purposes of righteousness. The meekness of Jesus is the primary aspect of peace and rest in our inner man and the guarantee of an eternal Kingdom of peace on the earth.

II. Blessed are those who Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness, for they shall be Filled. (Mat. 5:6)

- A. The first three beatitudes we have looked at all call for a shift from the natural or carnal perception of ourselves to come into alignment with the true spiritual state of our inner man. I view the first three beatitudes as foundational and paramount to walking in the rest. Now that foundational heart aspects for fullness of life or “blessedness” are in place, Jesus moves the focus from perception of qualities of inner self to movement towards fullness.
- B. **Righteousness** – The theme of hunger for God is a common and wonderful theme taught within the body of Christ and consequently this beatitude is often looked at as hungering for God. However Jesus did not say hunger for God, He said hunger for Gods righteousness.
1. Righteousness and Holiness are used in the scriptures to speak of the sinlessness of God. Within Him no wicked thing dwells. Jesus is exhorting us to hunger and thirst for God to set aside all unrighteousness Godliness and move towards a life totally free from sin like His.

There are large numbers of people in the Christian Church who seem to spend much of their life searching for lasting happiness or blessedness through spiritual experiences (healing, miracles, prophecies, and revival). They go from meeting to meeting, conference to conference hoping to encounter something wonderful. We are not meant to hunger and thirst for spiritual experiences, nor the temporary happiness or blessedness that comes from them. If we want the true and lasting happiness and blessedness that comes from God, then we must hunger and thirst after righteousness. We must never place the temporary joy and happiness that comes from pursuing experiences in God as a higher priority than pursuing Gods righteousness. – Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones

C. **Hunger** - The idea of Hungering for righteousness can also get convoluted in the biblical themes of imputed righteousness, self-righteousness, and transformational righteousness. It is absolutely essential that we understand these themes and apply them rightly as we position ourselves to walk in this beatitude.

1. **Imputed** – The righteousness that is placed upon us by God as through sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus for our justification. This aspect of righteousness gives us right or righteous legal standing before God in the courts of heaven concerning our sins. We cannot add to this righteousness for it is the very righteousness of God Himself through the person of Jesus that is imputed to us. In light of this truth Jesus is not exhorting us to hunger and thirst for this type of righteousness in fact we are incapable of adding to imputed righteousness. (Rom. 3:21-26, 4:6; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9)
2. **Self** – This is a false righteousness that stems from a religious spirit. It is attempting to be as righteous as God without intimacy with Jesus and the transformational power of the Holy Spirit. Self-righteousness is categorized by God as gross sin and an abomination to the beauty of His righteousness. (Is. 57:12, 64:6; Lk. 6:15; Rom 9:31-32, 10:2-3; Gal. 5:3-4)
3. **Transformational** – This type of righteousness is where your mind, will, and emotions are actually changed, through the power of the Holy Spirit as you behold God's righteousness. It is motivated by love and intimacy with God. It positions you to walk in greater intimacy with God and to rightly shine His righteousness to those around you. This is the only type of righteousness which fits into the context of hungering and thirsting for greater measures of righteousness. Walking in increasing levels of transformational righteousness goes hand in hand with experiencing the fullness of life, on the inside, that Jesus made possible for you. (Jonah 2:8; 1 Cor. 15:34; Titus 2:11-15; 1 Jhn 2:29)

D. **Essential Need** - The language Jesus uses is the correlation of the natural process of human growth and health and the process of spiritual growth and health. In the same way that our bodies need nourishment of food and water to live our spirit man also needs nourishment in order to be fully alive.

1. We must not miss the fact that we are not talking about something that is optional for our lives, without food and water your body dies. The revelation Jesus is giving us here is that someone who is desperately thirsty or hungry will do anything to obtain nourishment. So too, your spiritual life desperately pursues righteousness because it depends upon it for survival. (Deut. 8:3; Mt. 4:1-4, 6:31-33; Jhn. 4:32-38)
2. Possibly one of the most powerful and eye opening scriptures concerning the hunger and thirst that Jesus carries is found in the psalms. It declares that the result of Jesus's lifestyle of hungering for righteousness resulted in Him experiencing an unmatched height of joy and an absolute disgust for wickedness. (Ps. 42:6-7; Heb. 1:8-9)

“Living things grow in visible creation. Acorns grow into oaks, tadpoles into frogs, and babies into adults. We are so convinced that living things slowly mature into a fullness of life that if we were to notice that a three foot sapling stopped growing, we would immediately and with no need for any reasoning conclude that something had gone wrong. Many of us do not at all understand to be applicable on the spiritual level what we fully grasp on the natural level. We are not alarmed about truncated spiritual development. Yet Jesus said that He came not only that we might have life but have it abundantly, and St. Paul insisted that we are to live so intensely that we are to be filled with the utter fullness of God, and nothing less.” – Tomas

3. Scripture also shows us that just like the natural the maturing process of babies into adults, spiritually as you grow and are healthy your need grows to take in greater amounts of nourishment, and in progressing qualities. If your hunger for righteousness is not growing in quality and quantity, then you should be concerned about the health of your spiritual walk. (1 Cor. 3:1-4; Heb. 5:12-6:6; 1 Pet. 1:13-2:5)

In the natural when you eat food you get full and lose your hunger. In the Kingdom it's the opposite, when you feast on God it increases your hunger for Him. If someone desires to hunger for God they need to start feasting on His beauty. – Bill Johnson