**The Sermon on the Mount**

***Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness*; Matthew 5:6**

**Background**: The kingdom of heaven

**Exposition of Matthew 5:6, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”**

1. Blessed: Happiness or inward joy that comes from God
2. Blessed are those who seek to be emptied
   * The spiritually poor
   * Those who mourn over spiritual poverty
   * Those who are gentle with others who are spiritually poor
3. Blessed are those who seek to be filled
   * Hunger and thirst: an inward craving, an intense desire, a drive for that which is absolutely necessary
   * For righteousness
     + Option 1: personal rightness with God, striving to do the right thing
     + Option 2: corporate rightness with others, striving for justice in this world
     + Context of the Sermon on the Mount:
       1. Matthew 5:17-20 – fulfilling the Law’s requirements
       2. Matthew 6:1 – practicing spiritual disciplines of giving, praying, and fasting
   * They will be satisfied
     + The focus, the spiritual discipline, the effort, the striving is worth it because God will grant satisfaction or fulfillment

IV. Conclusion: There is a promised happiness for those who strive for personal righteousness, who are living out God’s Word and pursuing God through the practice of spiritual disciplines because God will satisfy their deepest longings

**The Sermon on the Mount**

***Blessed are* ; Matthew 5:6**

**I. New Series Background**

* **Background (Header Slide – The Kingdom of Heaven)**
* Some observations about the kingdom according to this section of Scripture in Matthew’s Gospel
* **Read Matthew 4:23 (Slide 2)**
* The arrival of the kingdom is good news
* **Read Matthew 4:17 and Matthew 5:3 (Slide 3 and 4)**
* What about the phrases Kingdom of Heaven versus the Kingdom of God?
* Only Matthew uses the phrase Kingdom of Heaven
* Leading me to conclude that this is likely the phrase Jesus used and that Mark and Luke and John had in mind a greater audience than just Jewish people and translated Jesus’ “kingdom of heaven” statement as what Jesus meant by the statement “kingdom of heaven” as the kingdom where God reigns
* Kingdom of heaven like the British kingdom when Henry VIII the king reigned, the British kingdom is the kingdom of the king Henry VIII
* In the same way the kingdom of heaven is the kingdom where Christ the king reigns
* The kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of Christ are the same
* Repentance and an acknowledgement of spiritual poverty are required attributes for entrance into the kingdom
* The kingdom is something that is entered, now, immediately and entrance is based on an attitude of humility and spiritual poverty and a needy attitude
* **Read Matthew 5:20 (Slide 5)**
* The kingdom of heaven is connected to righteousness and entrance into the kingdom is dependent on personal righteousness
* **Read Matthew 6:10 (Slide 6)**
* The kingdom of God is connected to the will of God and we should pray for His kingdom or will or reign to occur here on earth the way it already reigns in heaven
* **Read Matthew 6:33 (Slide 7)**
* His kingdom and (notice the connection again between kingdom and righteousness) righteousness we should seek after His kingdom or His reign or rule and His righteousness or His Law in our lives
* **Read Matthew 7:20-21 (Slide 8)**
* Notice the statement Father in heaven and its connection with kingdom of heaven
* The Kingdom of Heaven is a saving and sanctifying reign
* Individuals can deceive themselves into thinking that they are in the kingdom
* Righteousness becomes one of the marks of kingdom people
* How do we know if we are in the kingdom? We do the will of the Father

**II. Closing discussion on the kingdom of heaven (Closing Slide)**

* The Kingdom of Heaven describes the reign not realm of God –
* It is not primarily a place, though in the future the kingdom will be a new earth where the King will reign, but the primary expressions is the authority of the King of all, all people and things and times
* The kingdom of heaven is any place and any person where God reigns through His Son the King, Jesus Christ
* Entrance into the kingdom comes through repentance and an acknowledgement of spiritual poverty
* Praying, seeking and following the rule of God marks individuals that belong to the kingdom
* Entrance into this kingdom is of eternal significance as the kingdom of God will one day be the only expression of reign and rule and authority in the universe

**III. Scripture Reading and Prayer**

* **Read Matthew 5:3-12 (slides)**

**Exposition of Matthew 5:6, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”**

I. Blessed: Happiness or inward joy that comes from God

II. Blessed are those who seek to be emptied

* + The spiritually poor
  + Those who mourn over spiritual poverty
  + Those who are gentle with others who are spiritually poor

III. Blessed are those who seek to be filled

* + Hunger and thirst: an inward craving, an intense desire, a drive for that which is absolutely necessary
  + To hunger, to suffer want, to be in need, to thirst, to be overwhelmed with need
  + The strongest impulses in the natural realm – the need
  + Present tense participles, continuous action
  + The implication this is not a onetime event, but a way of life, a constant pursuit, a continuous drive, a lifetime of passion for this essential attribute
  + What do I hunger for? That may be a good indication of whether we are kingdom people or not
  + For righteousness
    - Option 1: personal rightness with God, striving to do the right thing
    - Option 2: corporate rightness with others, striving for justice in this world
    - Context of the Sermon on the Mount:
      1. **Matthew 5:17-20 – fulfilling the Law’s requirements (Slides 3 and 4)**
      2. **Matthew 6:1 – practicing spiritual disciplines of giving, praying, and fasting (Slide 5)**
    - Not a natural craving, we do not naturally crave the righteousness of God
    - That is why an emptying of self is a necessary precondition to this
    - Stephen Charnock states, “There is in humanity a natural unwillingness to have any acquaintance with the rules God set…The refusing instruction and casting His Word behind us is a part of atheism. We are weary in hearing the instructions either of law or gospel, and slow in the apprehension of what we hear…**A man may sooner engrave the chronicle of a whole nation, or all the records of God upon the hardest marble with his bare finger, than write one syllable of the law of God upon his heart.” (Slide 6)**
  + **Quote from Edwards at Brainerd’s funeral**
  + They will be satisfied
    - The focus, the spiritual discipline, the effort, the striving is worth it because God will grant satisfaction or fulfillment
  + Much of life has unfulfilled desires, most desires never satisfy
  + Abrams in Chariots of Fire, “All my life I have been afraid to lose, now I am afraid to win.” Why? Because if you spend your whole life in pursuit of a dream, if you obtain the dream will you be satisfied?

IV. Conclusion: There is a promised happiness for those who strive for personal righteousness, who are living out God’s Word and pursuing God through the practice of spiritual disciplines because God will satisfy their deepest longings

* **Read Matthew 5:6 (Slide 7)**
* If you directly seek happiness you will never find it, if you seek the things that Jesus Christ gives us here, you will find it
* If you seek happiness you will not find it, if you seek righteousness you will find happiness
* The classic hymn “it is well with my soul”
* The way bread satisfies a hungry person, the way water satisfies a thirsty person
* Satisfied – it’s worth the fight
* Why am I fighting for righteousness and discipline and following God?
* Christ says because you will be satisfied, you will have that drive and passion fulfilled