**Righteousness Leads to Fullness**

For the past several weeks we have been going through Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. The first section of His sermon is the Beatitudes—or the Blessings. First Jesus blessed the poor in Spirit—those who recognize they are nothing without God, followed by the mourners—those who recognize their great sin, and then the humble—those who recognize God is the only real strength they have.

Matthew 5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied

That word righteousness is tossed around in Churches all the time. What does it really mean? What is righteousness? When most people hear the word righteous or righteousness they think of being good and holy and they are right to think this way. Righteous defined is “to be right”—more specifically to be right with God. Righteous is the adjective, righteousness is the noun. Righteousness is “right standing/relationship with God”. At the beginning of time, Adam and Eve, the first two humans, were formed in right standing with God. They had a strong relationship with God. But when they ate the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil they broke that relationship. They were no longer in right standing with God. And ever since then, every human ever born has found themselves to be in the same state: they are not in right standing with God. God is holy and He cannot have relationship with that which is not holy.

“The fact that our heart yearns for something Earth can't supply is proof that Heaven must be our home.” – C.S. Lewis

God made us for Himself. God made us for the purpose of having right relationship with Him. Now that we have a broken relationship with Him one of the central aspects of who we are is gone. That which brings us true happiness is not found in us anymore. We long for something and we often don’t even know what it is. True happiness and fulfillment is found in relationship with God. But because we have a broken relationship with Him true happiness and fulfillment is nowhere to be found. We look for happiness in all the wrong places.

Jesus reveals the key to true fulfillment is to hunger and thirst for righteousness. The key to having that hole in your heart filled; the key to finding true fulfillment and happiness in this life is to hunger and thirst for righteousness: a right relationship with God! Right relationship with God leads us to right living which leads to fulfillment and happiness.

The problem we find with so many people is that they are chasing fulfillment and happiness rather than righteousness. Right living and right relationship with God are the only things that lead to true fulfillment. Some of you are looking for fulfillment in pornography or drugs or alcohol. Some of you are looking or fulfillment in a relationship, a friendship, in acceptance by your peers. And those of you strong Christians on the list are no exception because you may be looking for fulfillment in church service every week or camps or youth conventions, concerts of conferences. So much of what we do in life is in an attempt to be filled.

Jesus promises fulfillment but not for those who seek it. Fulfillment is promised for those who seek something else—those who seek righteousness. We will never be fulfilled if we seek fulfillment, but we will be fulfilled if we seek righteousness. Don’t look to live in such a way that you are happy. Look to live in such a way that pleases God and in turn you will be happy.

We were not made to hunger and thirst after the next best experience; we were made to hunger after God and righteousness!

So, what is it ultimately that we seek? What is this righteousness that we look for? What does it mean to hunger for righteousness? The person who hunger and thirsts after righteousness is simply the person that wants to live what the Bible teaches. Right relationship with God is found by putting faith in Jesus Christ and what He has done on the cross to save us from our sins! And when we put faith in someone it means we would do what they say. The Bible is the Word of God, spoken by Jesus Himself. As we put our faith in Jesus we learn to do what He says in His word. And as we do what He says in His Word we begin to see all the problems with ourselves. The Bible is a mirror that reflect back on us and shows us just how messed up we really are. And when we become aware of this we want to be freed from it! To hunger and thirst after righteousness is to desire to be entirely free of sin in all its forms!