

# **THE ANATOMY OF A CHRISTIAN STEWARD**

## **VIII. An Appetite that Hungers**

*Matthew 5:6*

Abraham Lincoln, it is said, was always striving to be better. On one occasion a friend found him sitting with his Bible open on his knee. Lincoln said, "I have been reading the Beatitudes and can at least claim one of the blessings. It is the blessing pronounced upon those who hunger and thirst after righteousness."

What could Jesus mean by saying we are blessed when we hunger after righteousness? Perhaps we will understand it if we consider His words one at a time. Let us note the following:

### A. The Condition He Described – "hunger after righteousness."

We all differ in many ways – DNA, fingerprints, color, height, weight, I.Q., etc. But all the races, nations, and individuals are the same in that we all hunger and thirst.

But we are dealing here with a spiritual hunger that can only be satisfied with a spiritual experience. We must "hunger" – intensely desire – righteousness.

It is this hunger that Jesus is talking about! Actually, hunger is a sign of health. A good appetite indicates growth. One of the first things a doctor asks is, "How is your appetite?"

It is also a sign of spiritual health and growth. God has placed in each of us an insatiable hunger for Himself. The Psalmist cried out, "As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants after thee, O, God." (Psalm 42:1)

### B. The Challenge He Demanded — "hunger after righteousness"

This is considered by many to be the most challenging of all the beatitudes. It is uncompromising. It insists that the Christian life is not for one who is simply interested or attracted, but for those who desire righteousness as a matter of life and death.

Our problem, as Peter Marshall once said is that, "We are to Christian to enjoy sinning and to fond of sinning to enjoy Christianity." He was right. We are not perfect, but we have a perfect Saviour who is ready to forgive when we turn to Him.

Remember, the righteousness that Christ demands is not a possession, but a passion. It is an intense desire to be "right" with God. This is settled when we give our lives to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

It also means to do "right" toward God. The starting point is "to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matthew 22:37). When we fail to put God first and do His will we are not "doing right" toward God.

Certainly it involves keeping His commandments. A good starting point here is "to love thy neighbor as thyself." This is not easy, but it is godly. Someone has said,

*To dwell there above  
With those that we love  
Oh that will be glory  
But to live here below  
With those that we know  
Well, that's another story.*

What about His demand that we, "Bring all the tithes and offerings into my storehouse." Oh that's another story too, but we can't pick and choose can we?

### C. The Comfort He Defined — "shall be filled"

Sure it is demanding. No one said it was easy. The price is great but so is the reward. When we meet His demand to "hunger after righteousness" He promises us that we shall be "filled." What a picture! The word was used to describe the feeding and fattening of cattle. The idea is that one keeps on hungering, but is constantly being satisfied.

God said, "open wide your mouth and I will fill it." (Psalm 81:10)

There is no satisfaction greater than having hungered to know and do God's will and then doing it. This results in His saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

*Lord, I hunger to do Your bidding and to be like You in all I say and do.*