



Daily Verse and Comment

Matthew 5:6

(6) Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

King James Version

This beatitude is a positive consequence of the first three: [poor in spirit](#), [mourning](#), and [meekness](#). Hungering and thirsting are positive actions that come from those three seemingly negative attitudes. So, combined, they are a Godward-looking desire of one who realizes his spiritual poverty, his grief over his sins, and his lowliness. Such a person knows that, after seeing these things in himself, the only worthwhile direction to turn is to [God](#) and His righteousness.

At first, this beatitude seems straightforward, but many otherwise intelligent people have misinterpreted what [Jesus](#) says. So, to have a proper basis of understanding, we need to start with a bit of grammar. We need to understand this because the Greek tells us how we are supposed to understand this.

The words "hunger" and "thirst" in Greek are present tense, active participles, which implies continuous application. We could probably get a better sense of the force of Jesus' thinking here by considering them as not "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness," but "Blessed are those who *are* hungering and *are* thirsting for righteousness." So, one could say, "Since Jesus says, 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,' and I have done that once or twice, I guess I've fulfilled this beatitude." But when we realize that the beatitude suggests a person *is* hungering and *is* thirsting after righteousness, it means that he is *continuing* to do so.

Christ expects His disciples to have this desire all the time. He never wants us to slack in our pursuit of being righteous and doing righteousness. This attitude must be *constant* and *wholehearted* in a Christian. It is a perpetual, healthy, hearty spiritual appetite because we need it; otherwise, we will die spiritually. That idea should be in our heads: We need spiritual food and drink just as our bodies need their physical counterparts.

From God's point of view, the presence of this attitude of *always* hungering and *always* thirsting after Him and His righteousness shows Him our desire for Him and like Him, to be righteous, pure, and holy as He is.

— Richard T. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[Those Who Hunger and Thirst](#)



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