

ACTNow! (Applying Christ's Teaching NOW) follows the weekly sermon series of TPMC, and challenges us to apply and put into practice the biblical truths we hear each week. It is the recommended Bible discussion material for TPMC's Cell Groups, and leader's notes are available to all Cell Group Leaders and at the Information Counter.

Blessed Are Those Who Hunger and Thirst

Matthew 5:6

Rev Ming Feong Ching

SERMON SYNOPSIS

- To have the fullness of life, as referred to by Jesus in Matthew 5:6, means having the sense of being filled or satisfied in life – mentally, emotionally, spiritually (John 10:10). All of us desire such fulfillment in our lives, but some of us may pursue it in the wrong places, for example in career, relationships, through our children. Matthew 5:6 tells us that those who have an intense desire and need for righteousness will have the fullness of life.
- The meaning of such righteousness can be surmised from the continuation of the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-10. The second half of the Beatitudes comprises a call to be merciful, pure and a peacemaker, and ends by telling us that those who are persecuted because of righteousness are blessed (Matthew 5:10). Being righteous, in this instance, therefore refers to being filled with mercy, purity and peace-making, that is righteousness of character and conduct.
- Jesus emphasises that our righteousness must exceed that of scribes and Pharisees. Our righteousness must stem from inner righteousness of the heart, mind and motive, and is not about simple obedience towards the law (Matthew 5:20).
- We are ultimately called to put the things of God first, for His righteousness to be provided to us (Matthew 6:33). Seeking God's kingdom as the priority of our lives involves sharing the concerns of His heart, be it seeking justice, integrity and honour in our daily lives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have there been moments where you received something which you pursued fervently, only to realise that it brought you less satisfaction than you expected? Share about your experience and what might have been the reason your expectations were not matched.

[Children's Activity: Prepare two plastic cups, one with a hole cut on the base. Pour water into the cup with the hole, and explain how people frequently seek temporary pleasures of the world that somehow can't make them feel full. Then pour water into the other cup, and as it fills, explain that only when we seek God's righteousness, will we be able to understand the fullness of life.]

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2. What is the standard of righteousness that God wants us to pursue? Is it possible for us to "achieve" righteousness?

[Verses to help us go deeper: 1 Peter 1:15-16, Isaiah 64:6, 2 Corinthians 5:16-21]

3. How can we "hunger" and "thirst" for the righteousness of God?

[Verses to help us go deeper: Psalms 42:1-3, Luke 18:9-14, Jeremiah 17:5-8, Titus 2:11-12]

PRAYER POINTERS

- Thank God that through Jesus we are justified and we have received righteousness in our lives.
- If we have filled our hearts with worldly things and matters that have crowded out righteousness, confess that to God.
- Ask for a deeper hunger and thirst for the things of God; that which is eternal and not earthly.

MEMORY VERSE

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God [2 Corinthians 5:21].

PRACTICAL HANDLE

Is there something preventing you from devoting yourself to hunger and thirst for God's righteousness? Pray for each other and ask for God's help to overcome such obstacles and to focus on Him instead.