

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness

Starter: *What is hunger and thirst? What happens when you are hungry or thirsty? What do you do?*

Ecclesiastes 3.11 talks about God putting eternity in our hearts. In all humans there is a deep longing and hunger.

What do you long or hunger for? What do people around us long or hunger for?

What do you/people around you try to satisfy that hunger/longing with?

Read Matthew 5.3-16

Summarise what the beatitudes have been about so far. What has been difficult? How have they impacted you, and what have you learned?

If we are to know the blessedness that Jesus speaks about in the beatitudes, it begins by acknowledging our spiritual bankruptcy before God. True poverty of spirit then causes us to 'mourn' over the cause of it, our sin and the corruption of our hearts, to turn to God and to grieve over the havoc that evil has brought into the world and in doing so, sharing his heart. This causes us to be 'meek', humbly trusting God's sovereign dealings with us and responding graciously to the hurtful attitudes and actions of others. What use is it though if we just leave it there? Jesus has been describing what we are now he turns to describe what we do. The filling he describes overflows in the remaining beatitudes.

When you hear righteousness, what words and phrases spring to mind? What do you think it means/entails?

God is righteous and righteousness is what He does. Righteousness is more than simply our being made right with God through Jesus. Look at following beatitudes and their relationship to this one, and scan through Matthew 5-7. *What references are there to righteousness, and how does the rest of the Sermon on the Mount help us understand righteousness? [If you have time look at Isaiah 58, Amos 5 and Deuteronomy 15]*

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The tense and wording Jesus use refer to a sense of constantly hungering and thirsting after righteousness. If this is the case how can we be filled?

What will it look like for us to long to see God's righteousness (in all its forms) among our family and friends, classmates, in Queens, in our world?

We are to long for God's righteousness in our own lives and character, and to implement the righteousness or justice of the kingdom in society. Obviously we cannot do everything but we also can't just give up, to quote Edmund Burke – "*All that is needed for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing*"

Choose one thing that you as a small group will do.

Split into pairs and share two ways you will commit to seeing God's righteousness established in the lives of people you know, here at Queens, or globally and pray through those things

Reflect

How is your hunger and thirst for righteousness?