

SOTM 4 - Hunger & Thirst After Righteousness

Review:

Luke 16:16 The law and the prophets *were* until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

You must approach the Beatitudes with a "sonship" mindset instead of a "law" mindset. If you read the Sermon On The Mount with the attitude of, "I must become this" ... you are defeated before you start. You are still legalistic in your mind. You don't know who you are. We are not to be satisfied with where we are until we can manifest the works of the Father in the earth. But at the same time, you have to approach the Beatitudes knowing Jesus is not preaching "law" unto you. He is preaching "who you really are in Christ." He has already made you this. The Sermon on the Mount is the kingdom of God being preached prophetically to those who would be born again.

The Sermon on the Mount is an expository, and expansion on the three requirements to be a disciple of Jesus:

Luke 14:26 If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

The God At War teaching series really helped me understand those verses ... and opened up the remainder of the Sermon on the Mount to me. We are to have the same mindset as soldiers at war. A soldier is totally dependent upon the army for his food, his clothes, his weapons, his training, his direction, his assignments. But a good soldier has all of the might of the army backing him up. A soldier can call in "air strikes" and we can ask the Father to send angels to help us. As we seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, all of the resources of the kingdom of God are available to us.

The principles of the kingdom are precisely opposite to those of the world. The world wants money and power, fame and fortune, happiness at all costs. We are in the world but not part of it. There is a mourning for the genuine Christian as we live in this fallen

world. This world is not our home and we should not feel comfortable here. We are to remain meek and mild, like Jesus. When we are reviled, we revile not again. We never return evil for evil. Yet we are courageous in the face of resistance and persecution. Jesus walked on water, healed the sick, cast out devils, rebuked religious leaders publicly, yet he never sought revenge but trusted Him who judges righteously. "Vengeance is Mine. I will repay," says the Lord.

Today's Lesson:

Mat 5:6 Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

1. Not a single person prior to Christ ever lived a righteous life.

Rom 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

2. Under the Old Covenant, the best a person could hope for was accounted righteousness. Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness.

Romans 4:3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

Rom 4:8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

"counted" and "impute" are the same Greek word – G3049 – logizomai - Middle voice from G3056; to *take an inventory*, that is, *estimate* (literally or figuratively): - conclude.

3. Abraham was never born again. The best God could do under those circumstances was to "account" Abraham as being righteous. Based on Abraham's faith, God "accounted" all of his sins ... forward to the cross ... "*charge it to the Master*" is how pastor Dave would teach us.
4. "Accounted Righteousness" was the best Abraham ever had. It was the ending point of his covenant with God. **But "accounted righteousness" is the entry point, the beginning point for Christians.** We are all sinners from birth. Christ died for all of us while we were yet sinners. Christ died for the ungodly. The righteousness of Christ is "imputed" to us also when we believe on Him as our Savior.

Romans 4:22-25 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

(23) Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to

him; (24) But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him

that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; (25) Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

5. When you are born again, the righteousness of Christ is imputed to you also, even though you were a sinner ... even if you did your best to repent before you received Christ ... at your heart you were still a sinner by nature when you bowed the knee to receive Christ as your Savior. **God justified you when you were still a sinner.** He clothed you with the righteousness of Christ the same way He clothed Adam and Eve with the skins of innocent animals after they sinned in the Garden of Eden.
6. I say again ... Abraham's ending point of "accounted righteousness" is our entry point into the grace of God that recreated us in the image of Christ.

Romans 5:1-2 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: (2) By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Access – G4318 – prosagoge – admission

Rom 5:2 Through Him also we have [our] access (entrance, introduction) by faith into this grace (state of God's favor) in which we [firmly and safely] stand. And let us rejoice and exult in our hope of experiencing and enjoying the glory of God. AMPLIFIED BIBLE

There is only one way to obtain "admission" into the grace of God.

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

We have been given so much more than Abraham. We received accounted righteousness at the moment of our salvation, but for us ... that was not the end ... that was the beginning ... because for us who believe, we are made new creatures. By the grace of God, when we believe on Christ as our Savior, we are recreated in the very image of Christ. It is truly a better covenant established on better promises.

We received the very "gift of righteousness" when we received the new nature. We have been given the "mechanism of righteousness" ... which God wrote in our

minds and in our hearts. God did a new thing through the resurrection of Christ in this new covenant. He not only accounted us righteous through the blood of Christ, He recreated our spirit in the very image of Christ to impart the gift of righteousness to us freely by grace.

Hebrews 8:6-13 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. (7) For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. (8) For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: (9) Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. (10) For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: (11) And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. (12) For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. (13) In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away.

Romans 5:9-10 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. (10) For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

7. Saved by His life = The gift of righteousness = we have been "made" righteous the same way through Adam's sin we were "made" sinners.

Romans 5:17-19 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) (18) Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. (19) For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

2Co 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

8. Read the prophecy from 1994 where the Lord spoke of restoring character to the church through the teachings of the Prayer Center.

Developing Character In The Church

November 27, 1994

I kept seeing a teaching vision of a man who had one strong leg and one withered leg. He used a staff to help support himself upright. I couldn't help but think this looked a lot like Jacob after he had wrestled with God, prevailed, but had been touched in his thigh causing the sinew to be withered.

The Spirit said to me, *"The reason the Charismatic Renewal has been so loose in its morals and weak in the fiber of its character is that it is imbalanced concerning the Law of Sin and Death and the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. The church has prevailed sufficiently to receive the revelation that man cannot save himself by his own efforts in the flesh. It knows that it must switch its dependency from the arm of flesh to the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ in order to be saved. This is the door that allows them (both good and bad) into the sheepfold of the grace of God. On this leg, the church is very strong."*

"Once in the sheepfold, however, the church does not know how to properly employ the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus to purge them from infirmities of the flesh. This is precisely where the church is lame. On the one hand the church hesitates to revert back to the arm of flesh, or willpower, to overcome these things. On the other hand, it does not know how to employ the power of the Spirit to accomplish the desired changes in its character and habits."

"The progress of the church has been greatly impeded by it being caught in the middle by the tension created by these two methods. That lack of progress has caused repeated failures by unpurged flesh and has allowed the enemy to bring great reproach upon the Kingdom of God."

"The coming revival at the Prayer Center will not only be accompanied by signs and wonders to draw the masses to Jesus, but will be My fountainhead whereby the church at large will receive a fresh revelation of how to employ the power of the Spirit to produce

the character of Jesus in the church. That character will be Spirit born and Spirit molded. The fruit of that character will be true holiness."

9. Now here is the question. **Do you hunger and thirst after righteousness? Jesus said, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst.** Many do not. Even though God has made it possible now for every born again child to live free from sin by the gift of righteousness, the mechanism of righteousness ... many hunger and thirst for the world instead of for righteousness. That is a very dangerous walk:

Jas 4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

10. There is a difference between being born again ... and hungering and thirsting after righteousness. I have heard preachers lift the following verse out of context and use it to say that once we are born again, we no longer need to hunger and thirst after righteousness:

Joh 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

The subject matter in John chapter six is life ... not righteousness. Just read the book of Revelation where Jesus speaks to the "churches" ... meaning "Christians" but they had become lukewarm, had left their first love, and gotten way too friendly with the world. Jesus says we are blessed if we HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS!