

Happy Are the Satisfied

Matthew 5:6

August 24, 2025

For today, we are back in our study in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapter five. And this, probably for me, is one of my favorite sermons, that things that I've learned and, and studied in Scripture. And so, I hope that, that comes out and is translated to you today. But for today, what I want to start with just a very simple question for you today. Are you satisfied with life? Are you satisfied with your life, in your life?

Maybe a couple other questions to help examine that even further. Do you go to work or do you stay home and rejoice in the labor that God has given you to do and called you to do? Do you look at your spouse and your kids, or lack thereof, and consider yourself satisfied, blessed above all people, satisfied in Christ?

Do you lay your head down at night and think, look at all that God has given me, I am the luckiest person alive. Do you rejoice and thank God at the end of the day, realizing that you above all people are blessed beyond compare?

Are you satisfied with your life? Or is your thinking plagued with vain hopes of being satisfied with the things of the world? Or maybe you've experienced the vanity and the dissatisfaction of chasing after those things.

Or maybe you think, you know what, my life is pretty good, but if I just had this one thing I wouldn't need anything else, then I would be satisfied. Maybe your mind is plagued with discontentment about your life situation, feeling sorry for yourself, or maybe you're just somewhat ambivalent to the whole thing all together.

You just put your head down, you work hard, but you don't give much thought to it. You're not dissatisfied, but you're not satisfied either. Life to you is just, meh.

In the passage that we're going to be in today, back in Matthew chapter 5, we see that Christ's kingdom people, true Christians, are to be marked by a happy satisfaction. As



Christians, we have every reason to be the happiest people on the face of the earth.

We know more than anyone what we deserve is immediate punishment, even for our daily sins. We deserve to be cast headlong into a fiery, eternal punishment for our sins against a holy God. Each and every one of us. But God, while we were his enemies, he sent Christ to take our place, take our punishment on the cross, satisfying the wrath of God, rising from the dead.

Paul says in Colossians 2:13 and following. He goes on to describe how, "He has now made you alive with Him, having graciously forgiven us all our transgressions. Having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us which was hostile to us, is taking it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross."

We of all people should live with a happy satisfaction knowing God's wrath has been satisfied. There's now therefore no condemnation for us who are robed in Christ's righteousness. And yet that is so easy to lose sight of on a daily basis, is it not? It's so easy to get caught up in the things of this world, in our life circumstances, that's just life by definition.

It's every day, it's consuming, it takes our time, it takes our attention, and what Jesus is going to teach us from his Word this morning is absolutely foundational, fundamental to living a life of blessed satisfaction. He knows how consuming life can be, and he helps us here by giving us instruction regarding how we can be truly and deeply satisfied in him.

And so, let's read. We're in the Beatitudes. We're going to be in verse 6, but let's just read the first few verses leading up to verse 6 from chapter 5, things we've covered so far. "Now when Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him,

"and He opened his mouth and began to teach them, saying, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the lowly, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.'"

So, I've titled this message happy are the satisfied. Happy are the satisfied. And this message, it follows this beatitude, it follows the same pattern as the others with one edition that the others do not have, and that is a direct object. So, I've

adjusted my outline from three to four points, and I've actually changed them all altogether.

If you've been taking notes, the last few beatitudes, the structure of all the Beatitudes is still this divine judgment of blessedness. And then there's the earthly subject and the spiritual spectacle. But because familiarity breeds contempt, I wanted to change the outline up a bit.

I don't want you to be bored with it. I don't want that to be a reason you don't pay attention. But with the addition of the direct object here, we're going to have four points today instead of three.

So, we're going to see that in this text four points to help us understand how to be truly satisfied. So, four points for this morning: an early benediction, an intense desire, a righteous object, and a satiated existence; an early benediction, an intense desire, a righteous object, and a satiated existence.

Let's jump right into our first point, an early benediction. Blessed is the first word of every beatitude and as we've talked about, it is a divine judgement, a proclamation of

blessing. It is a benediction, but what is interesting is benedictions would typically come at the end.

Sometimes they come at the beginning, but typically they would come at the end after an offering, the Aaronic blessing. They would come out of the temple and announce an Aaronic blessing. We have a benediction at the end of our service. It's the final word to send people out with a blessing.

But here, Jesus front loads his sermon with pronounced blessing after blessing instead of reserving them. And this may be in part because Jesus has, he's got a lot of difficult things that he's going to be saying to people in this sermon. And he wants to start with some encouraging words for his disciples, for the people listening.

He wants to pronounce blessing upon those who are his, so the Spirit can encourage them and prepare their hearts for the conviction that's going to come later. And so, we should be encouraged, beloved, if we find ourselves here in the beatitudes.

We should be encouraged even though we might be far from perfect. We find comfort in the gospel knowing that we're not

saved, because we are perfect in and of ourselves, because we, because this is us perfectly.

But we're saved because of Christ's perfect righteousness imputed to us and we should be encouraged if we find ourselves here and we desire to seek after these things. We desire to mourn after our sin. We desire to walk righteously, to be meek people on the face of the earth.

And so, if that's you, be encouraged. You stand in this blessed position of divine favor, blessed by God, and so be strengthened to seek his face, be strengthened to be this kind of disciple.

But that brings us to point two, an intense desire. That was an early benediction, but that leads to an intense desire. Jesus says, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst", those who stand in the position of divine favor before God. Those who stand in this position of enviable favor are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

These words hunger and thirst in the Greek, they're both present participles. Which is quite interesting because it means that Christ's kingdom people, they are to be continually and



enduringly perpetually hungry and thirsty, hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

Now this is where Jesus' teaching is a bit paradoxical, because who would count themselves blessed if they were perpetually hungry and thirsty? We're going to answer that towards the end of the sermon.

And as we live on this earth, we know it's one thing if you don't have anything to eat, but it's also much worse if you don't have anything to drink. You can only live three to seven days without water, but if you're well hydrated, you can last up to weeks or months without food, depending on the body's composition.

But to be deprived of both, that is quite the sorry state. Nobody envies the guy wandering around in the desert who has no food, who has no water. It's that kind of hunger and thirst that Jesus is referring to.

That guy wandering around in the desert, marching through the desert, surviving one day, stomach pains, parched thirst, parched mouth. Jesus says happy or blessed is the one who perpetually and enduringly hungers and thirsts.

Imagine with me for a moment that you are extremely hungry and thirsty. You've gone days without food and water. You're parched so you have intense stomach pangs. Your tongue is sticking to the roof of your mouth and you have the opportunity to eat a delicious plate of food and drink a giant glass, a big gulp of whatever your favorite drink is.

And imagine that after that, you eat this entire plate of food. You drink this big gulp glass of your favorite drink, and you're left with the same hunger pangs and unquenched thirst. You ate and you drink, but your hunger is unabated, your thirst unquenched, but your stomachs full. You can't take anything else in.

How miserable would that be? But that is actually the spiritual reality of every unbeliever in the world. They have been created in the image of God to long to have their souls satisfied, but they chase after everything else in the world and what they feed on turns to poison in their mouth and they're left in an even greater want.

And we as Christians, we can fall into the same trap of trying to satisfy this intense desire and longing for our souls with common mundane things of life: entertainment, sports, video games, even good things like family.

We have a blessed hope here from Jesus' lips that if we seek after what he tells us to seek after, if we hunger and thirst for what he tells us, we will not be disappointed. We're to have an intense desire, and we really do. Innately, we have this intense desire to be satisfied, but we have to have this intense desire for the right object in order to be satisfied.

And that brings us to our third point, a righteous object. This intense desire must be focused on a righteous object. Those who hunger and thirst, but seek to be satisfied with vain things will be left wanting.

But Jesus says, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied." When you are hungry, when you are thirsty, do you try to satisfy your hunger with sand? When you want a midnight snack, or whenever you tend to snack, do you go out into the backyard and dig up a bowl of dirt and maybe pour some milk on it and eat it? No, that's nonsense.

When I lived in Haiti, we would go occasionally to the street market, particularly when groups came. They would want to see what the, the market looked like, what the people were gathering and buying. And one of the occasions, my first

occasions at one of these markets, I was walking through the market.

They've got hanging meat everywhere. It, it stinks. Some of you, many of you have had been there, but, but as I walked through the market, I noticed that there was this, this large bin container of what looked like small sand dollars. And so, I inquired as to what they were and they were not sand dollars.

They were actually small dirt wafers. See, those who couldn't afford the real food in the market, they'd buy these dirt wafers that had maybe minimal nutrients mixed in and fiber mixed in, but really nothing nutritional. If anything, it would make the hunger pangs go away, but really wouldn't do anything for the person. But they were extremely cheap and so those who had no money, they could at least put something in their stomachs.

Beloved, when we seek to satisfy our souls on the wrong thing, that is essentially what we're doing. We're wasting money and energy on something that is empty and vacuous of all nutrients, spiritually tantamount to going out in the backyard and digging up a bowl of dirt to eat. And sometimes we actually think that we're seeking the right thing.

Martyn Lloyd Jones in his commentary, he notes that, "We are not meant to hunger and thirst after experience. We're not meant to hunger and thirst after blessedness. If we want to be truly happy and blessed, we must hunger and thirst after righteousness. We must not put blessedness or happiness or experience in the first place." So some things are, are good from God, but if we seek those things in and of themselves for happiness, like family for instance, we're going to be dissatisfied.

So, you know, the American pursuit of happiness is the wrong pursuit. We have to seek righteousness, not happiness, as an end. When you try to satisfy your soul with the things of this world, when you try to make yourself happy with this thing or that thing, when you're bored and you seek to be satisfied with worldly entertainment, it's tantamount to eating spiritual dirt cakes, thinking that they will satisfy. Now, there's nothing wrong with good, healthy entertainment, but we can't seek those things to be satisfied. As a dog returns to its vomit, so does the fool return to Facebook and YouTube thinking that it will satisfy this time.

Jesus here, he doesn't leave us wondering either what to chase after, what to hunger for, what to thirst for. He doesn't

leave us wondering what to satisfy our soul with, what will truly satisfy our soul. He wants us satisfied. This is a, a goodness. Bill was talking about the goodness of God and the confession. This is a goodness of our God. He wants us fully and completely satisfied. And he tells us how to do that here by hungering and thirsting perpetually, continually for one thing, righteousness.

Now this righteousness is the object of our hunger and thirst, but it is abstract, this notion of righteousness. It'd be much easier to wrap our minds around a concrete object if God had said, hey, you will always be satisfied if you eat this thing, if you always eat bread or if you always eat meat. But he doesn't.

It's, it's abstract. It's not as concrete. It's harder for us to wrap our minds around. This requires a little bit more work for us to think about what exactly it is that we should hunger and thirst for what it is that we should seek. We're going to flesh that out in just, just a moment.

But there's a, a very helpful observation that you need to draw out from James Boyce here. James Boyce notes a very important Greek grammatical structure here that's led me to come up with some, some sub-points. And this is a little bit more of

a lengthy section from his commentary and I've paraphrased some of it and I don't want to interrupt it, where I'm quoting him and where I'm not.

So just know if there's anything good in here, it's James Boyce and the rest is filler for me and I'll let you know when we're done. "In the Greek language, it is a rule of good grammar that verbs of hungering and thirsting are followed by nouns in the genitive case. We don't have cases in English, German. The German language has cases, but essentially, they are grammatical markers indicating different functions that the word has in the sentence.

"For example, the nominative case would identify the subject of the sentence. The accusative case would identify the object. Different cases identify a noun, the different functions that the nouns do in the sentence. The genitive case is the case that is expressed by the preposition, of, in English.

"So, when you're translating from Greek to English, the genitive case, we add, we supply a word in English, "of". An example of a genitive would be the last words in the phrases, peace of mind, love of God, object of faith, that of and that noun indicates the genitive case, peace of mind, love of God and object of faith, and so on.

"So, the Greek would express a feeling of hunger by saying something like this, and it kind of breaks grammatical things here, kind of hurts our heads a little bit. But this is the trouble of translating from one language to another.

"If you know two languages and you've translated, you know this struggle, but it would go something like this. I am hungry for *of* food would indicate the genitive case. I am thirsty for *of* water. And this particular use of the genitive case is called a partitive genitive.

"It's only one of 28 uses of the genitive case. This means that it has a reference to only part of the object that occurs in the sentence. Now if you're a little bit lost, just, just stay with me. Hold on there for a couple more minutes. Thus, when the Greek would say, I am hungry for *of* food, he would be saying that he was hungry only for part of the food that existed in the world, not all of it.

"And similarly, when he would say that he was thirsty for *of* water, the genitive would indicate that he did not want all the water that the world had to offer, but only some of it, only part of it. Thus, the partitive genitive or the genitive, *of*, part.

"In more modern times, the same grammatical structure appears in French, of a polite way to ask for, not all the rolls on the other side of the table, but just a some of the rolls on the other side of the table. But the significance of, of the point here for interpreting this beatitude lies in the fact that Jesus, he totally and entirely abandons the normal Greek usage here.

"Instead of the word righteousness occurring in the genitive, as we would expect. Jesus totally abandons the normal usage and instead he uses an accusative of direct object, the case of direct object. So, Jesus, he breaks the norm of the pattern, the, the typical genitive pattern with uses of hunger and thirst; because Jesus doesn't want us to just be partially satisfied.

"He doesn't want us somewhat satisfied. He wants us wholly satisfied. And in order for us to be wholly satisfied, we can't hunger and thirst for part of righteousness. We cannot seek after part of righteousness. We must seek after all of it. We have to want the whole thing. We have to want it all. We have to want all the righteousness in the world, not just part of it. The one who is blessed is the one who longs for a perfect

righteousness, and this means therefore a righteousness that is equal and identical with God's."

Now that's the end of anything from James Boyce. After contemplating this, this really brilliant observation, for a time I meditated on what it would mean to hunger and thirst for part of righteousness and then what it would mean to hunger and thirst for complete perfect righteousness.

And that has led me to come up with six sub-points or six parts of righteousness that we must hunger and thirst for to make sure that we are fully satisfied. Because Christ doesn't want us to be partially satisfied. He wants us completely satisfied in him.

And so, I just, I, I want to stop here before we go into those and just for a moment expose the heart of our Lord for us here. Our, our Lord's love for us is deeper than we can fathom, but we get a glimpse of it here. I mean, how amazing is it that Jesus, he doesn't want us just partially satisfied. He doesn't want you even in the least little bit to be unsatisfied.

Jesus looked in the Sermon on the Mount. He looked out, He saw his creatures. He had compassion on them. Many of them were poverty stricken. They were poor, they were destitute, they were

ravaged with sin and sickness. He looked at all those sheep, saw them languishing in this sinful world that never satisfied, and he spoke to them these kind words to lift their eyes upward, to call them to come and to be satisfied beyond any degree that they could imagine or had ever known.

And beloved, he wants the same for us. He doesn't want us eating dirt wafers, trying to fill our stomachs to be satisfied. He wants us to be fully satisfied. He looks down from heaven and he sees us returning and eating dirt wafers again, thinking those are going to satisfy.

He's not filled with indignation. He's filled with compassion for you, to try to lift you up out of the mire, because he doesn't want you dissatisfied. He doesn't want you trying to satisfy yourself on the wrong thing. He wants you to be fully satisfied, wholly satisfied in your soul. And we do that not by seeking the things of this world, but by hungering and thirsting for all righteousness.

So, what does he mean here by all righteousness? We've got six parts of righteousness or aspects of righteousness to desire and long for and feed on so we can be blessed, so we can be satisfied. So those parts of, of righteousness, they're all peace: principle righteousness, private righteousness, personal

righteousness, public righteousness, political righteousness, and promised righteousness. And I promise these are all going to be very short, but six P's so that we can be truly, wholly satisfied. Six parts of righteousness, so to speak, for us to seek after.

The first principle righteousness and I'm just looking at this abstract idea of righteousness and putting concrete things to it so we know what we can seek after in order to be satisfied. Principle righteousness, or we might say positional righteousness, that might be a better word, absolute righteousness, perfect righteousness in character and being.

We know the only person who actually holds this is God himself. Romans 1:16 to 17, Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith as it is written. But the righteous will live by faith."

This concept of the righteousness of God, perfect righteousness, it was actually a concept that drove Martin Luther mad as an unbeliever, because he saw how far short he fell from that perfect standard of righteousness. It drove him

to despair as he was hungering and thirsting for righteousness, but could never attain it.

He would go and, and confess to the priest as a monkey would confess to the priest for hours on end, hoping to bring relief to his conscience, but it never came. He was looking to his own ability to be perfectly righteous. However, he got saved, realizing as we all did, that it was not a righteousness of his own that he needed, but he needed God's righteousness.

2 Corinthians 5:21, "He made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God." After Martin Luther understood that, that it was the righteousness of God that he could take unto himself, that God could impute to him, the righteousness of God became a glorious doctrine for Luther.

It now was like this comforting doctrine, like a comforting blanket being wrapped in Christ's righteousness, protecting from all condemnation, dispelling all wrath, rather than the righteousness of God being in an unattainable standard. It became this thing that he loved to hunger and thirst for.

It was a hunger and thirst for this principle righteousness that drew us all to Christ. And God has imputed this perfect



righteousness to us all, declared us righteous in him, justified us. And as Christians, we're all like Luther.

We are satisfied when we meditate on these truths that we have been given this righteousness, when we think about it, meditate on it, that our souls are secure, our spirit is at rest, at perfect peace with God, knowing that there is no condemnation for us.

God's wrath has been propitiated, it's been satisfied, and we are content and happy and marvel that God saved sinners like us. This is the gospel. Dwelling on it, meditating on gospel truths are, just, only one way to resatisfy our soul, to be reminded that we have every reason to rejoice that we've been snatched from the pit of Hell.

And then feasting on these truths, meditating on them, drinking them in, it only invigorates our soul to seek to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which he has called us. So, the first aspect of righteousness that we can hunger and thirst for is this principle righteousness that we've all received as Christians.

That brings us to sub-point B: private righteousness. By this I'm referring to one's private practice of piety. Matthew

6, if you flip over just a page, or maybe it's on the same page for you, 6:1, Jesus said, "Beware of doing your righteousness", singular speaking to a multitude of people, singular your personal righteousness "before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven."

In this passage, just a little later in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is warning his disciples not to practice personal piety in order to be seen by men. He was encouraging them to do their private prayers in private. Not that publicly praying was wrong, it's not. But they're practicing their private prayers in public to look good before other people.

Jesus said you got to be aware of that. That's a practice of Pharisees. This private prayer, the Puritans had a name for it, they called it the prayer closet. It wasn't necessarily a closet, but for often times it was for them, a place where you could go, shut the door and privately commune with God.

I think Jesus, when he tells them not to do these things in public, I think he's talking about personal piety or private communion with God. Don't do that in public before men.

So, reading his word and praying privately, communing with God is one thing that we are to hunger and thirst after, an

aspect of righteousness that we can seek and be satisfied in. Hungering for the word of God. It's a common metaphor in Scripture.

Peter says in 1 Peter 2:2, he says, "like newborn babies long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow up in respect to salvation." Not only is God's Word the nutrients that we need to grow, but it also deeply satisfies our soul.

When we seek to grow in our private righteousness, our private devotions in the Word and prayer; when we hunger and thirst to commune with God in Word and prayer, he will satisfy our soul. I've found that to be true, and I know many of you have as well.

So, when we hunger and thirst for that principle righteousness, meditating on the righteousness we've received in the gospel, when we hunger and thirst for private righteousness in the prayer closet, we feed our soul on those things. Well, we are well on our way to being wholly satisfied as Christ intends.

But that brings us to a third aspect. Third sub-point, sub-point C: The personal righteousness. Paul says in Romans 6:13, "Do not go on presenting your members to sin as instruments of

unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."

So there's this idea of personal practice of righteousness, using our bodies as instruments of righteousness. And beyond what we've talked about, there's some overlap in these categories in these phrases, but we're trying to get a picture of righteousness in general.

So there's some overlap, but when it comes to this personal righteousness, there's maybe a couple ways that we can break it down to look at it. One might be the internal life or the private life in that sense of your thoughts and your inner workings of your heart, those things that you might do when you're all alone, the things that you think about and do in secret.

We must strive for holiness and righteousness, even to every corner of our hearts. So this internal righteousness, an example of this might be unrighteousness and might be murmuring to yourself about how you like, dislike this person or that person, rehearsing wrongs in your mind.

Righteousness would then be putting those things off. And as Paul says in Philippians 4:8, "Think about whatever is true, right, noble, pure." So the personal righteousness of our own thought life, what we do in secret. But there's a second way to think about this personal righteousness. And we could say that this is interpersonal.

What we might try to keep private, it always spills out into our interpersonal relationships. But with this, are we seeking righteousness in how we act towards other people? And here specifically thinking about the one another's, how we interact with fellow believers.

There are around 40 different, one another commands, in the New Testament. Just a sampling of these: greet one another, care for one another, serve one another, bear one another's burdens, forgive one another, be patient with one another, speak the truth in love, be kind and compassionate to one another, speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, submit to one another, consider others better than yourselves, look to the interests of one another, bear with one another, teach one another, comfort one another, stir one another up to love and good works. That's just a sampling of them.

These are different areas of personal righteousness that are, you know, Paul, the reason he writes the churches is because he wants them to be concerned with these things. Our Lord wants us to be concerned about all of these and walk rightly and treat one another righteously.

This alone is just a massive and broad category that we can exercise in every area of life. So beyond principle righteousness, private righteousness, we also hunger and thirst for personal righteousness in our hearts, how we act towards one another.

Fourth sub-point D: public righteousness. We're to hunger and thirst for public righteousness. And you might be thinking, ok, how's that different than the one we just talked about? What I mean by this, and what I want to draw out of this point, is seeking righteousness in the broader public sphere. That last category had more to do with interactions with one another.

In a Christian context, this has to do with interactions with the unbelieving world. As Christians, we all want to see righteousness prevail on the earth, do we not? On a broad scale, one way I think we can do this on a more local scale or on a broad scale.

One way we can hunger and thirst for righteousness is just by supporting local law enforcement. It is the God ordained purpose of the government. Romans 13 to punish the wicked, to be a righteous restraint upon sinful men. Those men and women, Romans 13 says they are ministers of God.

As Christians, we want to see sin restrained. And the way this works out is if sin is restrained, then behaviorally the society is more righteous. Not because they have a heart to be righteous, not because their motivations are good, but they fear punishment.

Yet we as Christians, we still rejoice in this because that means less people are getting murdered. So, we do this not by all of us going out and becoming police officers. But if we're not, many people in our congregation are in law enforcement. The rest of us can aid in pursuing this by praying for those who are these kinds of God's ministers, many of those men in our church. Pray for them. Or if you have that desire, it is a good and righteous and Godly desire to take that profession up.

But for the rest of us not in public service as a minister of God, to execute righteousness in this way, we all ought to. And this is kind of a aspect I think we can all practice. We all ought to be concerned and willing to confront the public sins of

others in a meek way in order to be a restraint upon our society.

Let me illustrate it with this. It doesn't mean that you need to go over on the other side of town and be looking for gangs and trying to confront those things. That's, that's for the police.

Let me illustrate what I mean by this. So growing up here at Grace, some of you know Sarah Nickell, her family was here growing up at Grace, the Lemons family, I was a friend with her older siblings.

And I remember on one occasion, this was over 20 years ago, that we went out to dinner, their whole family and myself. And not shortly after we were there, we were sitting in a, a booth. And not shortly after we were there, some young men in the booth behind us begin using all kinds of crude and foul language.

And Jeff, Sarah's dad, he kindly, meekly got their attention and he said, Gentlemen, could you please watch your language? We have some, some ladies and children over here. And they were actually very respectful and cordial and obliged to his request.

I can imagine that those men probably thought twice next time before doing that again in public. We might live in different times now than we did 20 years ago, but that's the kind of thing I'm, I'm talking about. As Christians, we ought to be kind of restraint upon sin in this way.

God commissioned Ezekiel, and we don't have time to go to Ezekiel chapter 33, but God commissioned Ezekiel to be this kind of watchman for his city, addressing even unbelievers and challenging them to turn from their sin.

And I think as Christians we can assume the same kind of responsibility as well, because we want to be a restraint on our society, a common grace of God to restrain sin. However, as we do this, we should expect that it may not always go as well as the example I gave earlier.

There's an old Puritan by the name of John Downname. It's spelled D O W N A M E, might be Downnam. And he spoke of of this kind of thing now recorded in a book that we have. We're going to have it at the, the conference bookstore called *The Cure for Unjust Anger*.

But in that book, which is probably a recorded sermon, John speaks of the need for a righteous anger to confront these kinds

of public sins that that I referred to. But then he speaks of what is often the response of these people. He says, and I quote "These days," and note probably the similarity with our day.

Nothing changes. It's, it's been the same forever, he says and I quote, "These days we have too many examples of those who cannot patiently endure to hear their duties taught on or their vices reproved from God's word." That would be from the pulpit in church.

He goes on to say, "Nor will they abide private admonitions, but like a sick man with a raging fit of burning fever, they are ready to spite the physician who tries to cure them." He goes on and says, "These days the one who reproves sin is more likely to provoke anger than he who commits sin and he who reproves atheism and profanity more than he who lives in these sins."

How true is that? I think true in his day, true in our day. You are far more likely to provoke someone to anger, to get an angry response from someone for confronting their obvious sins. But if you just join in with them, you'll be celebrated.

But as Christians, this is the response we can expect, but we have to be willing to suffer. And this is what Jesus gets to

at the end of the Beatitudes, suffer for righteousness' sake.
So, this is what I'm referring to as public righteousness.

We want to see justice prevail in society. But that starts a very basic level of all of us as Christians acting, being salt and light to preserve what is good and righteous. And that means confronting public sins.

That brings us to fifth aspect of righteousness, political righteousness. Let me just jump right to a passage of Scripture to look what I'm getting at. Just look a little bit down the page in, in Matthew chapter 5 to verse 43, might be the next page over, Matthew 5:43.

Jesus continues to address interpersonal relationships here addressing some, how we treat enemies. Jesus says in verse 43, I'm going to read through 48, "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

"But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have?

"Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." No doubt a reference to righteousness from back in verse 20.

Maybe you confront someone in sin and maybe they respond as those young men did in my illustration. But maybe they don't and they become your enemy. Maybe you even, you confront them in meekness, righteousness. But these people turn, as we read from John Downname, they become your enemy as they turn on you and persecute you.

Or that's just one example of an enemy. Or as we consider people in our society who would definitely consider us as political enemies, maybe we don't consider them enemies, but politically we're enemies by the way we vote. Those are totally opposed to all that is good and right in the world.

Those who would want to bring unrighteousness as the norm to be celebrated, everything condemned in the Bible, they want to see that celebrated. They are our political enemies. We are warring against them. They are warring against the truth, and therefore they are warring against us because we love the truth. They're God's enemies.

How do we think about them? Do we think of them as our enemies and treat them as such? Maybe this looks like mildly mocking them online, scorning them, deriding them, pointing out how ridiculous they are. Or do we love them?

Are we concerned for righteousness to prevail ultimately, that they would see the gospel, repent and believe? Do we pray for those who hate us and persecute us? For many of you, I know those are your family members. How do we treat those people? Are we seeking righteousness in those relationships?

We come now to our final sub-point, the sixth aspect of righteousness, part of righteousness to consider, sub-point F: promised righteousness. Galatians 5:5 says, "For we through the Spirit, by faith, are eagerly waiting for the hope of righteousness."

This is our hope, beloved, that even if we get no justice in this life, our world is, is running headlong down the path of Romans 1. And as we struggle with sin for the rest of our lives, personally, we have this hope that one day we will be set free not just from the power of sin and our salvation.

We're no longer slaves to sin, but we'll be set free from all of its effects. We won't be plagued in mind and heart with

sinful desires. We'll no longer sin against those that we love and hurt them. We won't be sinned against by anyone else. All wrongs will be righted.

All God's people will be glorified and live in eternal, blessed righteousness with the Father, the Son, the Spirit, in perfect communion. Not only will we be positionally righteous, but we'll be practically righteous and enjoy the eternal blessedness of God.

And like the first aspect of righteousness, that we looked at, principle righteousness, when we feed on these truths by meditating on them, ruminating on them, we have great hope our soul is satisfied while we still long for yet more satisfaction.

And that brings us to our final point for this morning. The final point in our main outline, a satiated existence. The word satiated refers to being absolutely stuffed full. A closer word in, in English related might be saturated, but this word satiated is a, a biblical word, come, you can find it in Psalm 23 where David says, "My cup overflows." It's so full.

There's an overflowing to it, a sponge that's been dunked into a bucket of water and you pull it out. It's saturated when you pull it out, it just runs everywhere because it can't

contain all that's been put into it. This is the idea of the Greek word here. Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied," satiated, stuffed, overflowing, can't fit anymore in, except we have to.

Again, we're going back to what I mentioned earlier. Acknowledge the paradox here, because Jesus has stated that the hunger and thirst is perpetual and it's ongoing, it's durative, it's enduring. We're to cultivate this hunger and thirst so it never goes away.

We are to be perpetually hungry, perpetually thirsty, and yet satisfied at the same time. We cannot do this physically, because our stomachs fill up. Eventually you're too full at Thanksgiving dinner to eat anymore, and yet you are. I would say you are quite satisfied, but you can't fit anymore in.

The spiritual reality that Jesus is explaining here is quite different. Imagine that you could eat your favorite food without ever getting full, and more importantly, without taking on all the calories. But you just eat and eat and eat and enjoy the taste without ever getting full. I mean, many of you have experienced this, but having so much food, whether it's Thanksgiving dinner or a Christmas dinner, so much food that you

wanted to eat and try, because it tasted so good, but you couldn't because your stomach was full.

You will appreciate the spiritual reality Jesus teaches us here. When you feast your soul on righteousness, the righteousness that we've talked about, when you feast your soul on righteousness, you're satisfied, but yet never full.

You can keep eating and eating and eating and drinking all you want and you will feel satisfied, just like you do at, at Thanksgiving dinner. With every bite you take, it tastes so good. You're so satisfied with it. You wish you could eat more.

That's the spiritual reality he's telling us here. Spiritually, you can do that. You can eat and eat and eat and be satisfied and yet never be full. What a blessing. Jesus tells us it is the one who hungers and thirsts, the one who has this intense desire to fill himself with all righteousness. It is he that will be filled.

It's the one who hungers and thirsts for principle righteousness, for private righteousness, for personal righteousness, for public and political righteousness, for promised righteousness. It's the one who hungers and thirsts for all of this that will be satisfied.

Now, there is no doubt that as I talked about many of these things, these different aspects of righteousness, that we were all convicted by one or two or like me, all six, that you need to grow in.

What I don't want you to walk away from here thinking and feeling is this, oh man, I've got so much I need to work on. If you walk away feeling overwhelmed and in despair because of how far short you fall from the bar of personal righteousness, perfect righteousness, and you walk away discouraged, I don't know where to start. Then I have failed because Jesus has framed this in a totally different way.

Imagine with me for a second. Again, you haven't eaten all day. You're extremely hungry and thirsty. Now, if you were in this hungry and thirsty condition and you walked into your favorite restaurant, let's just imagine a buffet restaurant with tables everywhere. Would you look around at all the stations of food, the different kinds of food, and think, oh no, how am I going to ever eat all of this? This is so discouraging. Look how much I have to eat. That's how Jesus has framed this discussion on this beatitude. If we walk away thinking that, we have totally missed his point.

GRACE CHURCH



Dear Christian, Jesus knows all that you struggle with. We all fall so far short of this perfect standard in all these areas. Jesus knows that your sin sick soul longs to be filled with good things. It longs to be satisfied and I have stacked up or spread out or however you want to look at it, all these different aspects of righteousness, not to make you despair, but to point out everything that you have opportunity to do and be satisfied. Not to be discouraged by how much you have to work on.

Jesus wants you to be deeply and fully satisfied and look at the manifold ways that you can be satisfied. Again, just the one another statements, I read earlier. Look at all the options you have to be satisfied to greet one another, to care for one another, serve one another, bear one another's burdens, forgive one another, be patient with one another, speak the truth in love, and so on.

It's not a list of things you have to do. It's a buffet table of options that you can do and be satisfied. You can meditate on the principle righteousness of the gospel in the gospel and be satisfied. You can read your Bible and pray and grow in personal piety and be satisfied.

You can pick any of those one another commands to practice and be satisfied. You can seek public and political righteousness and be satisfied. You can hope for the future and be satisfied. Beloved, our Lord wants us to be satisfied and he is so good and kind to give us so many options to be satisfied in him.

There's more that I could have drawn out from this to talk about today. The options are nearly limitless. All the different aspects, the manifold ways that we can hunger and thirst for righteousness and I spell all these out, not so we can feel guilty about all that we're not doing, that we can see all the options.

We can satisfy our souls in Christ as Christians; there's so many things that we can practice to satisfy our souls. Let's not look at this buffet of, of righteousness that we have before us to satisfy our souls on and then turn and eat spiritual dirt wafers by looking to the things of this world to satisfy.

Let's see this spiritual feast that we have before us, gorge ourselves on it, never be full, always taking in more, always being satisfied. And we will, beloved, be blessed. We will not be disappointed. Let's pray.

Oh Father, how good are you, were we to write out all the ways that you are good to us? If we had a pen and all the, all the water in the ocean were ink, we would dry it up. If all the skies were parchment, we would run out. You are so good to us, Lord. I pray that as we walk away from here today, that your goodness, your kindness to us is infinite.

You love us so much to give us this one thing to seek after, and yet there are limitless ways in which we can pursue this one thing. And I pray for us, Lord, that we would not turn back to, as the dog turned to it, to returns to its vomit, not turn back to worldly things to find satisfaction in them.

But look at the buffet that we have on the table of ways that we can pursue righteousness, hunger and thirst for righteousness. Help us to keep our eyes fixed upward on you, to steward our lives well and pursue these things that we might fully and wholly be satisfied in you. Lord, we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.