

# *A Christian Appetite*

*Matthew 5:6; Romans 12:1,9*

- C. What is their blessing? They **shall be filled**.
1. With that which God has to offer: His kingdom/righteousness, the highest degree and quality of life now and eternal forgiveness and joy hereafter (Acts 7:52; 17:31; 24:24,25).
  2. Such hunger and thirst lead to a richer, fuller, more abiding possession and satisfaction, of that for which they hunger now and eternally.
  3. "Is acceptable to God" (Acts 10:34,35).
  4. Right with regard to (1) the past, (2) the present, (3) the future (2 Timothy 4:8).

## CONCLUSION —

### I. WHAT JESUS SAYS PLAINLY IS THAT SUCH WILL **INSURE OUR FILLING:**

*"Blessed are they whose ruling desire is to be right and good above everything else in the world."*

- A. The greatness of any soul is measured by the intensity/quality of its desires.
- B. Men are right and good in proportion to their earnest desire to be good and right.
- C. "You never find God until he becomes your deepest desire" -- Allen, *God's Psychiatry*, p. 142.

### II. WE CAN HAVE GOD IN OUR SOULS AND IN OUR WORLD WHENEVER WE TRULY WANT HIM (James 4:7,8; John 14:23).

- A. **Every soul eventually becomes what it craves most earnestly, and seeks to be.**
- B. So "be careful what you set your heart on, for you will surely get it" - G. Harkness.

### III. IT IS CERTAIN THAT THOSE WHO SEEK AFTER GOD PROMPTLY, WHOLE-HEARTEDLY, DILIGENTLY AND STEADFASTLY WILL FIND HIM (Ecclesiastes 12:1; Isaiah 55:5,6; Philippians 4:5; James 4:7,8).

- A. Isn't it wonderful that, **We can have God in our lives whenever we truly desire HIM?**
- B. JUST SUPPOSE THERE IS ONLY ONE REAL BELIEVER ON EARTH NOW, AND THE NUMBER DOUBLES EACH YEAR.... In 31 years, 3,147,483,648!
- C. **But it all depends upon a Christian appetite!!!!**

*Charles E. Crouch*

## INTRODUCTION —

- I. WE LIVE ON A BEAUTIFUL, BOUNTIFUL, WONDERFUL PLANET.
- A. Yet it is an earth polluted by sin, in thought, word,/action: We are in a great battle (Ephesians 6:10-18).
  - B. The U.S. Public Health Service and Defense Department spend billions annually to "watch the diets" of its citizens physically, to insure pure food, water and air.
  - C. But how is your spiritual appetite and taste today?
  - D. God has provided a heavenly dietician, physician and health nurse.
- II. THE FOURTH BEATITUDE DEALS WITH POWERFUL DRIVING WORDS.
- A. "Hunger and thirst" expresses strong, intense, deep, craving desires for that which God has to offer.
  - B. These are vitally related to human life now and eternally.
  - C. What is your greatest hunger and deepest thirst?

## DISCUSSION —

### I. A GOOD APPETITE IS A REAL BLESSING AND GREAT TREASURE.

- A. It is evidence of life: Only living things hunger and thirst.
- B. It is a mark of normal, healthful and vigorous life.
- C. It is a vital key/roadway to growth: Insures a growing condition.
- D. It is also a source of genuine enjoyment.
  1. We speak fondly of "the bread mother used to bake," etc.
  2. It is a delight to eat when one is truly hungry.
  3. It is a joy to feed a hungry person, but almost impossible to feed one who is not hungry, physically or spiritually.

### II. THE POWER OF HUNGER/THIRST IS ENORMOUS, FAR-REACHING AND TRANSFORMING.

- A. What will a person do to satisfy hunger and thirst?
  1. Esau sold his spiritual birthright (Genesis 25:30-34; Hebrews 12:17).
  2. The Israelites murmured in the wilderness because of manna, and longed for fish, leeks, garlic, melons (Numbers 11:5).
  3. Hunger leads to cannibalism: Famine in Samaria (2 Kings 6:24-29). Josephus tells some terrible tales about the siege of Jerusalem by Titus which "confounded all natural passions" (McCord, *Happiness Guaranteed*, p.30.) Recent survivors of a plane crash in the Andes in S. America lived on their dead

comrades-- *Spiritual Sword*, April 1973, p.10.

- B. Millions have said, "I wanted it so bad I could taste it." We know the feeling, yet Jesus spent 40 foodless days and did not disobey God once.
- C. Tell story of young man who went to Buddha: Allen, *God's Psychiatry*, p. 140.

### III. MAN NEEDS/HUNGERS FOR MUCH MORE THAN PHYSICAL AND CARNAL BREAD

- A. Bread is essential to satisfy physical hunger.
  - 1. "Just what I needed!" We understand such language.
  - 2. This hunger is shared by lower orders of life.
- B. But we have higher hungers which are a badge of our higher spiritual nature, which animals do not share. (Matthew 4:4).
  - 1. Our dog Joe and I ate, played and hunted together, but he could not share my dreams, the beauties of music, poetry, nature (sunrise, hills, trees, etc.).
  - 2. The world of ideas: Desire for knowledge and growth in it.
  - 3. Longing of the soul for God/Christ, Creator of all good (Psalm 42:1,2).

### IV. "RIGHTEOUSNESS:" LORD, WHO ARE THE "BLESSED" ONES? (Matthew 3:15; 5:20; 6:1; Proverbs 14:34; Ephesians 6:14).

- A. What is the righteousness for which we are to hunger?
  - 1. "The quality of being right or just"--the state or condition which is acceptable to God and which he approves.
  - 2. It is uprightness of heart/life: Inward righteousness, one who longs to be good and to do right (1 Samuel 16:7; Matthew 23:23).
  - 3. A synonym of **goodness**: "The state of him who is as he ought to be;" Integrity, virtue, purity of life, uprightness, correctness in thinking, feeling/acting (Matthew 3:15; 5:6,10,20; Acts 13:10)" -- Thayer's Greek English Lexicon, p. 148, 194. (Gus Nichols' three questions.)
  - 4. To be "right" necessarily implies an objective spiritual standard because it *must include knowledge of God and His righteousness, Christ/heaven--the righteousness which is of God* (Jeremiah 23:6; Job 23:3; Matthew 5:48). Jesus set our standard and is our standard (John 6:35; Matthew 4:4; Hebrews 1:9; 11:6; Romans 10:17).
- B. Jesus "loved righteousness, and hated iniquity" (Hebrews 1:9; cf. Acts 10:38).
  - 1. Barnabas was "a good man," devoted wholly to Christ, and he was generous in hand, heart and in his judgments of others (Acts 11:24; 4:36,37; 9:26-29).
  - 2. "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Romans

12:1,2,9,21).

- 3. What is "good"? "Fried chicken, strawberries, pizza vs. squash, etc." "Purity of life, correct thinking, feeling, actions vs. immoral living, corrupt thinking, speaking, actions, etc."
- C. How "prove all things" to determine between good and evil? (1 Thessalonians 5:22). Willard Collins, *Great Preachers*, p. 153.
  - 1. Does the Bible condemn or warn against it? (2 Timothy 3:16,17).
  - 2. Will it injure, hurt/cause the downfall of other people, or cause me to be a stumbling block to them? (Romans 14:15, 21; Matthew 18:6,7).
  - 3. Will it hurt my influence? "A good name is..." (Proverbs 22:1).
  - 4. Will this bring me into close companionship with evil?
- D. How may we develop and strengthen an appetite for the good, and thus follow Jesus and not the crowd, majority, etc.?
  - 1. By study of the Bible, "the word of life," God's food for the soul: "Behold his love, goodness, mercy" (Psalm 1:1-3).
  - 2. Practice doing what you know to be right, obeying God, and begin now: "Repent and do the first works" (Revelation 2:5).
  - 3. Sing good songs: The influence of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs is truly great, far reaching and uplifting.
  - 4. Pray to God without ceasing, and worship faithfully in spirit and truth (1 Thessalonians 5:17; Hebrews 10:24,25; John 4:23,24; 17:17; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1,2; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).
  - 5. Abide in the word of Christ, the fellowship of His disciples and receive their encouragement to engage in all good works (Titus 3:1).

### V. WHY ARE SUCH PEOPLE BLESSED? WHAT IS THEIR BLESSING?

- A. **The meaning of it: They are already "blessed."**
  - 1. Such longing denotes that they are already in some measure the possessors of that for which they crave: They already, in some degree, possess that for which they hunger and thirst. Unless one is already righteous in some measure, it would be impossible to yearn to become righteous.
  - 2. "They have set (addicted) themselves to minister unto the saints" (1 Corinthians 16:15).
- B. **The certainty of it: "They shall be filled;" i.e., the law of cause/effect: **Sponge: Honey/vinegar.****
  - 1. If your deepest desire and hunger is to be righteous, no power on earth can prevent you from becoming righteous (Romans 1:16,17; Galatians 6:7,8).
  - 2. The one who thus hungers and thirsts will seek, and seeking, will find: "Ask and ye shall receive..." Jesus describes a desire in this beatitude so intense it seeks fulfillment of that for which it craves (Matthew 7:7; John 4:13,14; 7:37,38).