

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

We Praise Your Name, Better Than Life, The Love of Jesus, Beautiful Savior

WELCOME

Happy Feet. Where do you usually go when you want to be happy? Describe a happy place for you.

WORD

MATTHEW 5:6

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

The word "blessed" comes from the Greek word 'makarios' which means 'happy.' We have to understand that in the language of the Bible, joy and happiness are basically the same which tells us that God wants us to be happy. The question is are we happy and do we know how to be *truly* happy?

GOD WANTS US TO BE HAPPY

We should not feel guilty when we desire for happiness because God created us with a desire to be happy. In fact, the Bible commands us to be happy:

"And you shall rejoice before the Lord your God..." (Deuteronomy 12:12); "Let all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You" (Psalm 40:16); "Shout joyfully to the Lord" (Psalm 98:4). "Rejoice in the Lord always" (Philippians 4:4); "Rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven" (Luke 10:20).

Notice that in the Bible, happiness is always connected with the Lord. True happiness is about having joy in the Lord. Because God made us for Him, whenever we try to fill the God-shaped vacuum in our lives with substitutes for Him, we fall into idolatry. It can be work, relationships, title, money, position; in fact, anything that takes the place of God becomes our idol.

For sure, Christians are not exempt from trials and sufferings but despite this, we can always rejoice in the Lord. The central essence of the Christian life is joy, but because we live in a fallen world, there will be grief and pain (John 16:22). This does not mean you will not cry anymore but that at the end of it all, joy shall prevail (John 15:11).

God is a happy God and He wants us to be happy His way. Sadly, many people do not know the truth about happiness. They are either ignorant or they are deceived by counterfeit happiness. If only they knew

that God wants them to be happy and that He even laid down the principles of being happy to them in their lives, wouldn't they consider coming to Jesus?

HAPPINESS IN JESUS

The Bible tells us that we will be happy when we hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matthew 5:6). The words used to describe hunger and thirst in this verse are 'peinao' and 'dipsao', together they express a strong desire and an extremely dry thirst. Hunger and thirst are natural instincts. Just as food and water are essentials to our physical life, so is righteousness to our spiritual life. But unless we have experienced deep hunger and thirst, we will not fully understand this verse.

Also, if we do not hunger and thirst for the right thing, we will eventually lose our appetite for it. Now, "righteousness", in this verse, comes from the Greek word "dikaiosyne" which means the condition of acceptable to God. The Bible also tells us that unless we have righteousness that exceeds the righteousness of religious people, we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:20). This is why righteousness and Jesus cannot be separated. The righteousness of human beings is external while the righteousness of Jesus is both external *and* internal. The righteousness of man says do not commit murder. But Jesus says that anyone who is angry with his brother *already* commits murder (Matt 5:21-22). He is saying that if we are angry, we are as guilty as a murderer. While this kind of righteousness is certainly higher than the law for it deals with the heart, it is actually for our own good. Research says that anger actually puts our health at risk. Compounded anger can lead to anxiety, cardiovascular diseases, depression, and other illnesses. So, if you want to live longer, don't be angry.

WORD (cont'd)

The Sermon of the Mount is the manifesto of true followers of Jesus. It tells them how they ought to live their lives. Do not, however, confuse good works as a way to salvation. While righteousness is the standard of Jesus, He Himself is the source of it, including the strength needed to carry it out.

God made us righteous because of Jesus. By God's doing, Jesus became to us both wisdom *and* righteousness (1 Corinthians 1:30, 2 Corinthians 5:21). He is our righteousness, our sanctification and our redemption. This means that we are as righteous as Jesus when we give our life to Him. We are made righteous by God's grace (*positional righteousness*) and also by the same grace, we desire to live a righteous life (*practical righteousness*).

True righteousness is not just an imparted status, it is also a lived out and pursued reality (2 Timothy 2:22).

If you are truly a child of God, He will give you the appetite to put into practice *true* righteousness. But keep in mind that we are not supposed to live the Christian life alone on our own, we need the body of believers to be able to live a righteous life (Titus 2: 11,12).

In Jesus, we will find satisfaction for our hunger and thirst for righteousness. How do we know we are satisfied in Him? The Samaritan woman, right after she encountered Jesus, dropped everything to tell others about Him (John 4:28-29). Her response to finally experiencing Jesus shows that she is fully satisfied in Him. How about you, are you satisfied in Jesus? What is the evidence that you have found *full* satisfaction in Him?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. **Happily Hungry.** What will make us happy according to Matthew 5:6? What is God's promise?
2. **Unsatisfied.** What have you desired in life that after attaining it still left you unsatisfied? What did you learn from it?
3. **I'm Full.** What satisfies you in life? What is the evidence that you are satisfied in Jesus?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Use the table of righteousness below in sharing with your unbelieving friend and/or relative the righteousness of Jesus, with emphasis that it is not about our good works that make us righteous but we become righteous when we give our life to Jesus.

EXTERNAL RIGHTEOUSNESS	INTERNAL RIGHTEOUSNESS
You shall not commit murder	Everyone who is angry with his brother commits murder (Matt 5:21-22)
You shall not commit adultery	Everyone who looks at a woman with lust already committed adultery (Matt 5:27-28)
You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy	Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you (Matt 5:43-44)

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants and a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- School and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends