THE ATTITUDE OF LIVING BEAUTIFULLY IN A BROKEN WORLD # 4 Adam Heather

- Where have you seen God at work in your life this week? (Share any brief examples and encouragements).
- Was there anything from Sunday's message which you found particularly inspiring or challenging?
- Was there anything else you particularly noticed?

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Matt5v6

Adam reminded us of the Edgar Mueller pavement painting - it needs to be seen from the right perspective. The Beatitudes can be broken into 2 groups of 4 (each set has the same number of words in Greek). 1-4: Blessed are those who have felt crushed by the world; 5-8: Blessed are those who act on behalf of the crushed and broken of the world.

Reading back from Matt 5: 4v25 Large, multi-ethnic crowd; 4v24 News about Jesus spread and the oppressed and possessed came to listen; 4v23 the Kingdom had arrived with Jesus. The beatitudes were preached to those who were not blessed in the eyes of the world. This was radical, revolutionary, subversive.

Compare Jesus of Ben Shira (BC150) who preached different 'beatitudes' - His audience had authority, they were male, they saw the downfall of their enemies - they were vengeful. They never stooped, never had to humble themselves. This is the 'blessed life'. Jesus Christ's beatitudes gave dignity to those without honour.

Are we blessed in spite of our circumstances or because of them? Jesus is calling for a reordering: thinking differently about money, sacrifice, others, life's purpose, what really matters. This is the gateway to the Sermon on the Mount - turn the other cheek, love your enemy, go the extra mile, treasure in heaven, etc. Jesus has one request: everything.

It's easier to grab the new Kingdom when we hold nothing from the old kingdom. The inverse is true, too: new life is harder for those with full hands. Yancey suggests the Sermon on the Mount could be subtitled "Survival of the least fit". "Success" in our society may block our entrance into the Kingdom where dependence, sorrow, repentance are the steps to God's Kingdom. Matt 19v16-22 tells of the rich young ruler. The world had given him much, he couldn't let go, so walked away. Likewise, Luke 14v18-22, the invite to a banquet is met with excuses. Eventually, those invited were like the listeners - poor, crippled, blind and lame.

Image of a jigsaw - the more pieces one has the harder it becomes to complete the picture. Our busyness can block our blessing. There can be competing desires.

Jesus wants us to hunger and thirst for Righteousness. Righteousness in Matthew means right relationship with God, with ourselves, with the land and with each other.

"Hunger and thirst" for us can be hyperbolic ("I'm desperate for a coffee") but Jesus was talking to a crowd that didn't have the Welfare State - the poor and crippled knew hunger and thirst. They knew you can't ignore the feeling, it grows! And Jesus is saying '*you are blessed if you are one of those people who look out at the world and are afflicted by the broken relationships and injustice you see in the world.*'

Parrot Analytics (social media and streaming tracker) highlights the fact that true crime documentaries rank as top search - folk are looking for entertainment from the most unrighteous behaviour. The US has an "appetite for casual violence". We need to break away from unhealthy appetites. Piper (Hunger for God) suggests that sometimes God's good gifts can get in the way of us hungering/thirsting for righteousness. How full are our hands? Has satan numbed us from hungering and thirsting after God's righteousness and blessing?

- What excuses might we have for not joining the great banquet (Luke 14)?
- What good things do we do that hinder us from putting God first?
- How can we develop righteousness in our spheres of influence?
- What can we as a Collective do to affect the injustices in the world? There are so many, but is there one that we can influence over the coming months?

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