



## ***St. Paul Evangelical Community Church (SPECC)***

**Worship Address** : Cerritos High School Auditorium  
12500 E. 183<sup>rd</sup> St., Cerritos, CA 90703  
(Enter at Bloomfield, across Heritage Park)

**Mailing Address** : 11428 E. Artesia Blvd. # 4 ; Artesia, CA 90701  
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**Website** : [www.sp-ecc.org](http://www.sp-ecc.org)

November 8, 2009

### **Theme: Blessed Are Those Who Hunger and Thirst**

### **Text: Matthew 5:6**

Jesus' promise of blessing for today is another paradox. It seems like a contradiction in terms. We don't think of hungry and thirsty people being satisfied. Yet, that is exactly what Jesus has promised—spiritual satisfaction to those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. Few in our society are truly satisfied, even though we live in great comfort and are one of the wealthiest societies that has ever existed. Why is this? It is because many pursue things that can never bring true spiritual satisfaction. Jesus promises that the food and drink that will truly satisfy is a spiritual diet of righteousness.

One of the reasons that we are spiritually unsatisfied people is that we are engaged in the wrong pursuits. For example we pursue pleasure in many forms. One way that Americans pursue pleasure is to pursue activities that will cause them to feel good. Some seek that feeling in immoral activity. The problem with this pursuit is that it is like drinking salt water. It satisfies briefly, but eventually, it leaves a person thirstier than before. If a person drinks too much salt water, he/she will become dehydrated and will eventually die.

Another form of pleasure that Americans pursue is the success that comes from performance. The thought is that success in a given field will produce satisfaction. Again, there is a certain amount of satisfaction that comes from success; but it too is like drinking salt water—it makes a person thirstier and thirstier. A related pursuit in our society is the accumulation of possessions. Many think that if they can have a nice home, nice clothing, a hot car, and so on, that they will be satisfied. But in the end the result is the same. Something is missing inside.

If we want to experience true spiritual satisfaction, we must stop searching in all the wrong places. We need to discontinue our pursuit of pleasure, performance, and possessions. We must become people who pursue righteousness instead. We need to pursue God. The Psalmist wrote, "As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?" This is a man who thirsts for God and his righteousness. The beautiful thing about this kind of thirst is that God promises that it will be satisfied. God promised through the prophet Jeremiah, "And you will search for me and find me, when you search for me with all your heart."

Jesus promises that if we hunger and thirst for righteousness we will be satisfied. The word, "righteousness," has more than one meaning in the NT. First it can refer to the righteousness that God gives us as a gift when we place our faith in Jesus' death on the



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cross and acknowledge Him as Lord. We might call this legal righteousness. The apostle Paul calls this justification by faith. It means that God treats us as though we were as sinless as Jesus Himself when we make the commitment to follow Him. Second, once we have been justified by faith, righteousness refers to the life we live doing good deeds as we follow Jesus example. We might call this personal righteousness or holiness.

The amazing thing about this promise of Jesus is that He does not make it to people who are perfect and have no faults. He makes this promise to people who are aware of their spiritual poverty and who mourn because of it. In this life the satisfaction is found in the pursuit. As we commit ourselves to following Jesus and seeking His righteousness he will give us the spiritual satisfaction that he promised in this beatitude. However, we must remember that this blessing will be fulfilled completely, only in the future when Jesus returns to the earth. At that time we will be made righteous in that we will literally never be able to sin again. At that time we will enjoy pure pleasure—the pleasure of a relationship with Jesus Christ that will not in any way be polluted by sin.