

BLESSED ARE THEY WHO HUNGER AND THIRST FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS: They Shall Be Filled

Mt 5:6; Ps 42:1-11; Ps 63:1-2

I. IN LIGHT OF OUR DEEPEST PHYSICAL DESIRES: FOOD & DRINK

- A. Biological givens; inescapable; somewhat insatiable
- B. Somewhat amenable to one's will
 - 1. Food—fasting, up to 40 days (occasionally more)
 - 2. Drink—do without a few days at most

II. THERE ARE SOME SPIRITUAL LESSONS—Ps 42:1-11; Ps 63:1-2

- A. Historical evidence: “gonna have to serve somebody”
 - 1. Ancient temples, shrines, groves
 - 2. Enduring rituals, even amidst growing secularism
- B. By Nature *homo religiosus*
 - 1. Augustine: “thou hast made us for thyself, and our hearts are restless”
 - 2. C.S. Lewis: *Surprised By Joy*
- C. Current misdirections
 - 1. “Woke” variants (e.g. BLM); pop music (e.g. Taylor Swift)
 - 2. “Mother Earth” (thus “climate change” frenzy)

III. FOR ULTIMATELY RIGHTEOUSNESS/JUSTICE/JUSTIFICATION IS THE END/GOAL

- A. Central tenet of Scripture—law and prophets constantly emphasize; (OT *tsedek* & cognates) & NT *dikaiois* & cognates mean both righteousness & justice—virtual synonyms)
 - 1. Righteousness: “the quality of being morally right or justifiable” generally re person’s character
 - 2. Justice: “just behavior or treatment: a concern for justice, peace, and genuine respect for people,” being fair, personified by blindfolded Lady Justice, giving what’s due to another person or group, generally re an act or decision or state of being
 - a. Expounding the Natural Law, Socrates said one should submit to anything—prison, pain, exile, even death—in order to “be freed from the greatest of evils, from injustice” (Gorgias).
 - b. On the west pediment of the Supreme Court building: “EQUAL JUSTICE UNDER LAW”
- B. Controversial Interpretations divide Christian world
 - 1. Imputed (positional/*extra nos*)—Luther, Calvin, R.C. Sproul: “The conflict over justification by faith alone boils down to this: Is the ground of our justification the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, or the righteousness of Christ working within us?” *Sola fide* insists that we are justified solely by Christ’s righteousness, something *extra nos*, outside us, totally unrelated to our inner condition.”
 - a. Declared righteous, seen through blood of Christ
 - b. *Simul justus et peccator*
 - 2. Imparted (personal/*intra nos*)—Augustine, Aquinas, Wesley, Wiley; Newman: “God’s word, I say, effects what it announces.” Newman links “justification and renewal. The are both included in the one great gift of God, the indwelling of Christ in the Christian soul. The indwelling is *ipso facto* our justification and sanctification, as its necessary results. It is the Divine Presence that justifies us The word of justification is the substantive living Word of God, entering the soul, illuminating and cleansing it, as fire brightens and purifies material substances. He who justifies also sanctifies, because it is He. The first blessing runs into the second as its necessary limit; and the second being rejected, carries away with it the first” (p. 154).
 - a. Made righteous through atoning work of Christ & indwelling of Spirit
 - b. Free from sin’s bondage; sanctifying grace real; holiness essential

IV. WHICH SHALL BE FILLED/FULFILLED

- A. Here-and-now
 - 1. Imputed—since declared righteous content with status, saved in sins
 - 2. Imparted—living new life, new creature in Christ; freed from, victorious over sin
- B. By-and-by
 - 1. Imputed—death-transformed, righteousness enacted
 - 2. Imparted—death-affirmed, validated in redeemed status