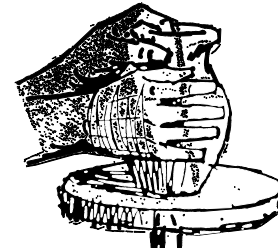


His Workmanship at Westside

*"For we are His
workmanship, created in
Christ Jesus for good works."
—Ephesians 2:10*



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Isaiah 64:8

Beatitudes Revisited: Hunger for Righteousness, Mercy *by Paula Hendricks*

Visions of cheesy pizza, crunchy Sour Cream 'n Onion chips, and gooey chocolate brownies dance through your mind. All else fades except that repetitive thought: FOOD. RIGHT. NOW. FOOD. RIGHT. NOW. Rumbly crescendos from the lower regions of your belly, and before you know it, you're just desperate to satisfy that craving. You are officially hungry!

Jesus points to our hunger pangs to reveal the secret to our search for true satisfaction: *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled,"* Mt 5:6.

Righteousness? That's a rare food that's not typically found in my fridge! What is righteousness? John Piper described it based on the context of the Beatitudes: *"The first four beatitudes describe the broken, grieving, quiet person who hungers and thirsts for righteousness. The next four beatitudes describe the merciful, pure peacemaker who gets persecuted for his righteousness. Doesn't this structure, then, give us the definition of righteousness? If we were hungering for righteousness (Mt 5:6) because we were empty, and then we get persecuted for righteousness*

(Mt 5:10) because we've been filled [with righteousness], isn't it proper to define righteousness as that with which we have been filled—namely, mercy, purity, and peacemaking?"

Thus, the structure of the beatitudes is like a hill: a hard climb from total emptiness, sorrow, and humility, to being satisfied with Christ's righteousness at the top, and then an empowered slide in demonstration of His righteousness with mercy, purity, peacemaking, and joy in persecution. Isn't righteousness is the key, Mt 6:33? Righteousness is what we hunger for (yearn for)—the lack of righteousness is the reason we are helpless, sorrowful, and meek. And the result of righteousness is mercy, purity, and peacemaking.

We begin to approach righteousness when we see our need, mourn for our sins, and develop humility. Righteousness is showing mercy to other people and being pure in heart before God Who alone can see our hearts and our effort to make peace.

So how do you know when you're hungry and thirsty—really hungry and thirsty—for righteousness? You can't hunger and thirst after righteousness until:

1. You're not impressed—not at all—with your own "righteousness." A woman I met matter-of-factly described herself as "spiritual." From the context of our conversation, my guess is that she meant she attended church, prayed, and was hospitable and friendly. Never mind that *"all our righteous deeds are like filthy rags"* in God's eyes, Is 64:6. What are you secretly (or not so secretly) most proud of spiritually? What makes you feel better than other people? Are these areas where you're trusting in your own righteousness? Develop meekness, Mt 5:5.

2. You trust solidly and solely in Jesus's righteousness on your behalf. You are empty of righteousness (poor in spirit, Mt 5:3). You're not impressed with your own spiritual résumé, so you turn to Jesus to receive the free gift of His righteousness. *"To the one who does not work but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,"* Rm 4:5. God justifies you; you can't get justification (righteousness) yourself. When Christ justifies you, He sees you just *continued on p. 2*

**"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."
—Matthew 6:33**

as if you hadn't sinned, just as if you'd always obeyed. The barrier of sin and guilt between you and God is bulldozed to nothing—but only by Christ's blood. You are credited with His full and complete righteousness!

But does that mean you never hunger after righteousness again? No! God's Holy Spirit keeps stirring up hunger pangs in you so you desire to keep feeding on His righteousness and growing into the person He wants you to become.

3. You want to run from everything that is not righteous. This week I watched a coworker jerk away when she realized she was sitting next to someone who was contagious. Do you run from, or are you attracted to, things that aren't righteous? Do you avoid things that might spoil your spiritual appetite? As you do, you realize that you need spiritual food. *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God,"* Mt 4:4; Lk 4:4; quoting Deut 8:3. So...

4. You soak up time with those who are righteous. I just talked with a woman who doesn't go to church because "I don't have to go in order to believe in Jesus." While that's true, it seems a bit like saying, "I love hockey, but that doesn't mean I have to go to hockey games." If you're hungry for righteousness, you want to be with other hungry people. You want to go to the banquet with them. You crave spending time reading your Bible and talking to God. Your heart hurts when you don't, just as your stomach hurts when you don't feed its hunger. But you don't stop there.

5. You move out into the world as a representative of God's righteousness. (More in the rest of the Beatitudes!) John Piper said, *"Deep and*

lasting satisfaction for our souls comes not from the delights of the world nor from a merely religious or vertical relationship with God. Satisfaction comes from God to those whose passion in life is to know Him in the struggle to be like Him in the world."

So what if you're just not hungry for righteousness? Find where you are in the list above and honestly confess to God your lack of desperation for His righteousness. Then put your faith and trust in Jesus's righteousness. Ask Him to give you starvation and craving for His righteousness. When you do, you will find not only true happiness (*"Blessed are those who..."*) but satisfaction (*"for they shall be satisfied"*). You'll be completely full and content like you feel after a delicious Thanksgiving dinner—without the bloating, of course! So how about it? Are you ravenously, desperately hungry for His righteousness?

Your Mercy's Showing I used to think I was merciful simply because I felt others' pain. If I'd lived long ago, I could easily have been hired to be a professional mourner, wailing through a perfect stranger's funeral. But it turns out that's not mercy after all. While mercy is often accompanied by tears, it's much more than feelings or emotions. It's an act of the will. It involves not only seeing a need and empathizing with it, but doing something about it—either forgiving or meeting needs. It's how Jesus responded to the insults flying at Him while He hung on the cross: *"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,"* Lk 23:34. In Martyn Lloyd-Jones's words, mercy is both *"inward sympathy and outward acts in relation to the sorrows and sufferings of others."*

Mercy was on full display the day the Samaritan man met the needs of a

complete stranger (while the religious folk passed by on the opposite side of the street). If you're like me, you're no "Good Samaritan." You could be, mind you, if only thinking of others' needs was as easy as thinking of your own! But it's not. So you're not.

The problem is, Jesus doesn't seem to think being merciful is optional for the true Christian. After describing a Christian's character in the first four beatitudes (poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness), Jesus moves to how Christians relate to others in the last four beatitudes... because what you do flows out of who you are. As Dorothy Patterson put it, *"A passion for God means compassion for others."*

So how do you and I get there?
1. Reflect on the mercy you've been shown. Lloyd-Jones doesn't mince words when he says, *"If I am not merciful, there is only one explanation; I have never understood the grace and the mercy of God."* Sally Lloyd-Jones wrote: *"Did God abandon us? Did He just look down from heaven at the mess we made? No. He didn't just look down. He came down. God Himself came down. Not as a judge to punish us, but as a Rescuer to save us."* If you're still not "feeling" God's grace and mercy, carefully read and think about [Ephesians 2:1–10](#).

2. Ask God to open your eyes to the needs around you. Make a list. It didn't take me more than a few seconds to write down a boatload of needs I'm aware of, including financial needs, relational needs, spiritual needs, and emotional needs. If you're having trouble coming up with a list of others' needs, Patterson suggests a good place to start:

continued on p. 3



Psalm 133:1



Fill your can-teen in 2013

“May you be filled with all the fullness of God.”
—Ephesians 3:19

Honoring Mom, from p. 4

- 1, In what ways am I contributing to the difficulties mom and I are having?
2. What can I do to make my relationship with my mom better?
- 3, Is there anything I need to apologize to my mom for?

It's likely your mom would accept your attempts to make peace with her as a beautiful gift this Mother's Day.

Look For a Spiritual Mother What if your mom isn't in the picture? Then what? You can't exactly honor or make peace with someone who isn't there, can you?

First, let me say that to those of you who have lost a mom to death or divorce, I am so sorry. Your loss is huge, and I'd imagine that this is a particularly difficult holiday for you. But God sees your loss and heart-break and has a plan for you: “God sets the solitary in families; He brings out those who are bound into prosperity; but the rebellious dwell in a dry land,” Ps 68:6.

God calls His church to reach out to you. “For it is written, ‘Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you who have not been in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than those of the one who has a husband,’” Gal 4:27, quoting Is 54:1. At first glance, this verse doesn't seem to make much sense. How can a barren woman have

Discipleship Here At Home

more children than a woman with a husband? Why should a woman who cannot have children of her own rejoice? Because God is calling women to “spiritual mothering.” It's an idea repeated in other places in scripture, such as Tit 2:3-5.

If your mom is out of the picture, ask the Lord to provide someone who can mentor, love, and guide you. No one will be able to replace your mother, of course, but it is possible for a wise, godly woman to mother and nurture you.

You might consider taking a proactive approach instead of waiting for a spiritual mother to drop into your lap. Who are some women you respect and admire? Ask if you can spend some time with them. (Coffee? Lunch?) Invite them to be a part of your life.

The bottom line is that the mother-daughter relationship doesn't always feel like a Hallmark card. This holiday may be a reminder that you want your relationship with your mom to be better. Don't spend the day wishing you had a different mom; do what you can to make your relationship as strong as it can be.

Start now. Write down three things you respect about your mom or three ways you plan to make peace. No flowers or mushy cards required. *****

Merciful (from p. 2) “How can ordinary women extend mercy to others? We begin by stepping into the shoes of another woman, feeling her pain, sensing her uncertainties, seeing her world crumble. Then and only then can we begin to live her life and think her thoughts and fight her battles. We don't put ourselves into the life of another in a brief moment but rather by living our lives in her shadow and trying over a period of time to walk where she walks and feel what she feels.” So whose shoes does God want us to walk in this week? for a while? (next week, more Beatitudes)

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help, and comfort here & away

Madge Wallace—lung cancer; at Good Sam Hospital, Lafayette, rm 5211; chest tube draining fluid and air in chest cavity

Mark Campbell—in rehab at St. Anthony's Hospital, rm 710, 720-321-2710, after head injury; may be released mid-week but may need long-term care

Nell Free—new pacemaker

Matt Reames—home, no abnormal pressure on brain; further tests required

Judy Strand's son Joe Huff—recurrence of neurological symptoms, black-outs, from brain injury he suffered in a 2007 car accident

Alexander Gintchin's classmate, Jack Miller—2 brain tumors; age 6

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Logan Corray; Rocco Sangellino Jr;

Addison Tope; Pat Wilkes—asthma

Pearl Chapman—leg pains; pancreatitis

Rod Green—thyroid trouble

Autumn Hadders—epilepsy

Kirk Johnson—worsening MS; needs help around his house

Menards—aging; **Lloyd**, staph infection on toes from diabetes; **Virginia**, now legally blind from rapid macular degeneration; high BP

Sandra Perry—neuropathy from diabetes

Judy Sartin—spinal stenosis; pain

Lynda Szymanski—COPD, lung *****

Job concerns **Andrew Tope** and **Frank Savarese** are seeking jobs. **The Menards' son** is out of work.

Traveling **Lauren Gonzalez** is in WI and AL visiting family until Tues. **Pat Campbell** is in AR caring for her parents until end of May.

REJOICE Congratulate **Lindsey Bennett**, who graduates from high school, and **Lisa Ward**, who graduates from Metro State with a BA in behavioral science, sociology, psychology, both next wk
Expecting **Marie Carlson**—July 1 girl
Amy Vander Kooi—August, boy



Exposing current thoughts & trends

Honoring Mom by Erin Davis

Today is Mother's Day, a holiday dedicated to telling mom how great she is and showering her with love, gifts, and words of affirmation. But ...What if your mom isn't so great? What if your mom has disappointed you? Or you just can't seem to get along with her? Or she's not in the picture at all? There isn't exactly a Mother's Day card dedicated to saying all *that!* If you find that it's hard for you to express love to your mom this Mother's Day, here are a few points to ponder.

Honor—No ifs, Ands, Or Buts Over and over in scripture, God commands us to "honor" our parents: *"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you,"* Ex. 20:12; 21:17. See Lev 19:3; 20:9; Deut 5:16; 27:16; Pr 20:20; 23:22; 30:17; Mal 1:6; Mt 15:4; 19:19; Mk 7:10; 10:19; Lk 18:20; Eph 6:2-3; Col 3:20. Notice that there is no escape clause at the end of these verses. God doesn't say honor your mother, unless she really gets on your nerves. Or honor your mother, unless her rules seem unreasonable. Or even honor your mother, unless she's been a really crummy mom. In fact, scripture doesn't talk about what kind of moms should be honored at all. That's because God knows that we will want to find loopholes and push back against this particular commandment. But it is absolute.

To honor means to treat with respect. That doesn't have to mean warm fuzzies, but it does mean to talk to your mom respectfully and to honor or follow her rules. Even if your relationship with your mom is less than perfect right now, look for ways to **honor** her this Mother's Day. Try ...

- 1, Choosing not to argue or talk back for the entire day. (No eye rolling either!)
2. Doing what she asks the first time.
- 3, Writing her a card or letter that tells her what you respect about her. (I think you can think of at least one thing!)

Be a Peacemaker There are always two sides to every story. If you have a difficult relationship with your mom, it is likely that you are both at fault. *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God,"* Mt 5:9. If we want to be recognizable as God's children, we need to make peace. Ask God for discernment and ask yourself these questions: *continued on p. 3*

Westside church of Christ

meets at
13789 W. 8th Avenue
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(303) 233-5683

Pastors

Larry Campbell (303) 462-4987

DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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This morning: *"God's Love in the Image of Motherhood"*
by Jim Reingrover

This afternoon:

A Walk in Their Sandals Series
"Noah," by Kory Tope