

Beatitudes for the Workplace #4

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

Following is the fourth in Jesus' nine-part Beatitudes (Mt. 5: 3-11) about God's presence with us and in the workplace. What Jesus said long ago remains relevant for us, today.

Times change, but human nature does not. The context for Jesus' fourth message is the world's continuing ability to discourage and spiritually break us. Long ago and now, people are denied justice and freedom in their lives and work. Will there be any work – let alone, enough or satisfying work - to sustain one's self and family?

Jesus' use of *blessed* cuts through that fog of despair with God's light of hope. There is more to life than our immediate experiences, which is why Jesus spoke as he did. *Blessed* declared Jesus' commitment to make a real difference in everyone's lives, along with his ability and passion to make it so.

Hunger and thirst is powerful and timeless imagery. It expresses our feelings when our basic needs are unfilled or denied. Jesus empathizes with our feelings. He is determined to change the causes that drive them, and bless us.

Righteousness can be understood as *being in right relationship with God*. It begins with our choosing to receive what God always offers us: God's love. It continues as we respond to Jesus' passion for distributive justice, where all people participate in the blessings of Creation.

Righteousness also expresses God's sovereignty. This is God's world, governed by God's love and justice. Yes, we are free to reject or defy God. But, our decisions bring consequences. History records what happens to businesses, economic systems, and leaders who defy God and God's values. They fail! One of the reasons Beatitude #4 is popular is because God always delivers what God says.

They will be filled is a message of hope – and more. God's commitment and authority ring strongly in these words. Commitment, authority, passion and ability - God is determined to uphold justice for all people, always. Those who hunger for righteousness are filled! Those who block God's will, fail (maybe not soon enough for our liking, but they do fail)!

So what:

Jesus' Beatitude #4 is full of blessings. It begins with messages of hope and empathy. It continues with Jesus' commitment to provide for and defend our needs for right relationship. Jesus delivered his promises in the past, and he continues delivering, today. Thanks be to God!

D. Browning

11/11