

WEEK NINE

O THE BLESSEDNESS OF THOSE WHO HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS – THEY WILL BE FILLED!

BIG IDEA

GOD KNOWS OUR HEARTS

and when we thirst to be good and just, he will fill that longing

PREP

- Hide a large bottle of a favourite drink, with a ribbon tied around the bottle.
- Have enough cups ready for everyone.
- Create your treasure map so it leads to the drink – see example in the appendix.
- Get ready a glass of water and ¼ cup salt.

WHAT GOES IN THE BOX?

- Your treasure map.
- A raw egg and a marker pen.
- Pens or pencils.



OUT OF THE BOX

- Take out the treasure map.

We are going on a mission and we have to follow the clues on the map to find the 'treasure'. Here is a clue. It is 'liquid' treasure.

- Appoint a leader, and everyone work together to follow the clues and find the large bottle of drink. When you find it, put it in the centre of the table. Leave it there but don't get the cups out yet.

Questions

- **When do you think that a bottle of drink would be treasure?**
Yes, when someone is really thirsty – then drink is all they want.

- **What does it feel like to be thirsty?**
Tell us about a time you have been really thirsty.

God wants us to want righteousness so much that we are really thirsty for it, just as we are thirsty for a glass of water on a very hot day.

- **What do you think righteousness means?**
'Righteousness' in this Beatitude means two things

1. That we have a deep longing to do what is 'right.' To do those things that please God. Some people are good just because they don't want to get into trouble, other people are good because they want a reward for their good behaviour, or because they want others to notice them and praise them.

However we are truly 'blessed' when we do the right thing even when no-one is watching. We are truly blessed when we do the 'right' thing simply because we love God and our hearts are filled with His love. We are truly blessed when we want to please God by helping others.

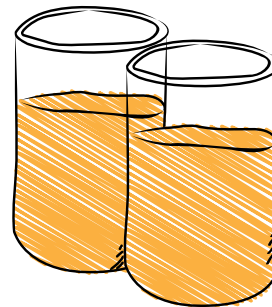
The second part of thirsting for righteousness means:

2. We have a deep longing to see justice for the oppressed. This means we want to rescue and help those who are being mistreated, those who others are being mean to. We want things to be fair, and for them to be treated well. Thirsting for righteousness means having God's heart of love for others, and being prepared to stand up for what is right, and stand against what is wrong.

We are righteous when we really desire what God desires.

“ HEZEKIAH SOUGHT GOD
WHOLE HEARTEDLY - AS A
RESULT HE WAS VERY
SUCCESSFUL. ”

- 2 CHRONICLES 31:21 -



READ

- Pour a cup of the drink for each person.

Listen carefully to this story, and you can begin drinking when you hear about someone in the story who was thirsty for God.

“ A very important man from Ethiopia, who worked for the Queen, was riding in his carriage on his way back from Jerusalem. He had been there to worship and was reading aloud some of Isaiah's words that were written on a scroll. God knew what the man was longing for in his heart and sent the Holy Spirit to tell Philip to talk to him. So Philip ran alongside the carriage. “Do you understand what you are reading?” he asked the Ethiopian. “How can I?” the man said. “I have no one to teach me. “ Then he begged Philip to come into his carriage and teach him. So Philip helped the man understand that Isaiah's words were about Jesus. He showed him many other verses from the Old Testament about Jesus too. So the man believed in Jesus and asked Philip to baptize him right there when they passed some water. After Philip did that, the Lord took him away and the Ethiopian got back in his carriage rejoicing as he went home.” ”

Acts 8:26-40

WEEK NINE

FAMILY TALK TIME

This Ethiopian man really wanted to know more about God. Because he was very thirsty to know God, God answered his heart's prayer and sent Phillip.

Questions

- How did this man show he was thirsty to follow God?
- When did you feel thirsty to know God better?
- When did you feel thirsty to be more like Jesus?

God treats us all with justice and love. But it is not enough that we are treated with fairness and love – God wants us to thirst for others to be treated that way too.

Does anyone know the story of William Wilberforce? What was he hungry for? Here is a clue!

OUT OF THE BOX

Edward the Egg

- Bring out the egg and fill a glass with water. Carefully place the egg into the water and watch it sink.

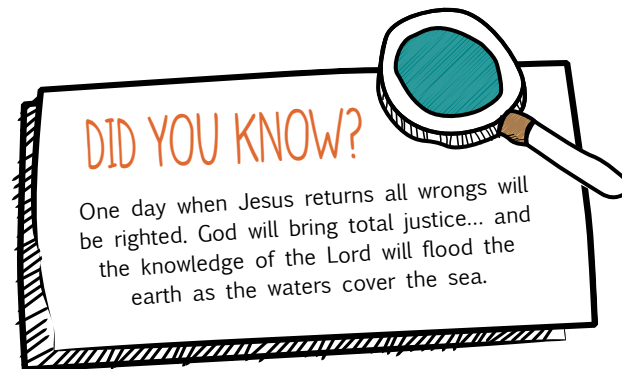
This egg is called Edward and it is like someone who has not been treated fairly. It has sunk to the bottom of the water because it is feeling sad and defeated.

- Take the egg back out of the water with a spoon, and set it aside.
- Add ¼ cup salt to the water one spoonful at a time and as you stir it in make the point that each spoonful represents a person.

These are other people who are standing up for Edward and making a difference.

- Place Edward back in the water and this time watch the egg float – it is now being supported by those who are seeking justice and fairness.

You may like to use a vivid pen to draw a smiley face on the egg!



READ

William Wilberforce was a member of parliament in England from 1784 -1812. He loved God and was moved with indignation and compassion when he saw how slaves were treated. He knew God loved these people and he longed to bring them justice and fairness. Slavery is when people own other people, and treat them cruelly and harshly as though they were not persons at all. William fought all his life to bring about the end of slavery. William and his friends talked to everyone they and worked hard to get the law changed so that slavery was abolished. Often William was ridiculed and excluded by others, but, as he was dying in July 1833, the law to ban slavery was finally passed. Thousands of enslaved men, women and children were set free, and others no longer lived in fear of being captured and made slaves. God used William Wilberforce in a special way because William thirsted for righteousness and worked very hard to make it happen for people who could not speak up for themselves.

EXPLORE

Where would you really, really like to see more of the fairness and goodness that God wants?

Some of the things God wants us do:

Righteousness in Action

- Think about the following scenarios. What could, or would you do in these situations to bring God's righteousness?
 - There is a new girl at school. The big, tough boys in your class are teasing her and being mean. Today you saw two of them in the cloakroom taking some of her lunch (no one else knows they have done it except you and the two boys, because they saw you watching.) If you tell the teacher, the boys will know you reported them. If that happens you know they will start teasing and being mean to you too. What do you do?
 - You are the best in your class at sport, and the relief teacher has chosen you to be the captain of the team in your PE lesson. That means you choose the rest of the people on your team. However one of the kids says that is unfair, because you have been the captain for the last three PE lessons, and you are meant to take turns. What do you do?
 - Your family is watching TV together and the programme shows a terrible drought in the African country of Somalia. Because there is no water no food is growing, and people in are starving. Even some of the children and babies are dying. What can you and your family do?
- Take the paper and pen from the box and write down good things you really want to see in your world.

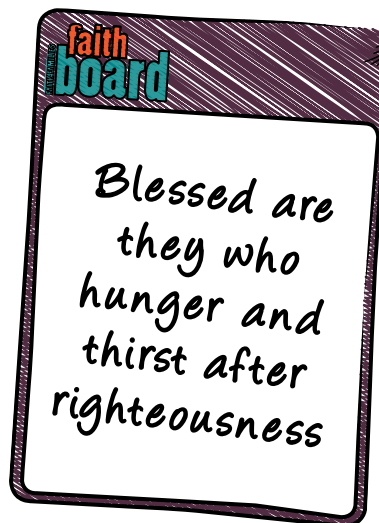
The Bible teaches that life isn't fair now, but Jesus promises that he will be with us through unfairness. And He will bless us if we long to do His will and help make wrong things right.

PRAY

- Pour more drink for everyone.
Before you take a sip, tell God about something you know that really needs to be made right. "Dear God use me to bring fairness and goodness."

LIVE

This week read together Isaiah 58:6-11 and discuss.



OTHER IDEAS

- As a family try re-writing this Beatitude in a way that helps you understand its meaning more fully, e.g. *Happy are those who have a passionate concern and eagerness for goodness and justice, for God will completely satisfy them.*
- Read Yertle the Turtle by Dr Seuss and talk about what is – or is not- just and fair for all... *"I know, up on top you are seeing great sights. But down at the bottom we, too, should have some rights."* ~ Dr. Seuss. When do we need to speak out like little Mack?
- Next time you are at the supermarket check for products with a fair trade label.

CHECK OUT WHAT YOU NEED FOR NEXT WEEK...



