

# Sermon on the Mount – Blessed are Those Who Hunger

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## MAIN VERSES

[Matthew 5:6](#) • [Matthew 5:48](#) • [Luke 14:26](#) • [Mount Job 13:6](#)

Hey, everybody. It's good to see you on the Lord's Day. So we're going to continue, surprise, a series of the Sermon on the Mount, and we're inching through the Beatitudes. And has it been okay so far? A little bit of a new perspective on the weight of the introduction of the Sermon on the Mount, known as the Beatitudes, or the blessings, which we've discussed is not quite the correct word as far as how we understand a blessing today. The word is meant to bring a sense of irony to the entirety of the Sermon on the Mount, more so than the word blessed. So the word makarios, the word that's translated as blessed, it means the fortunate ones. It's how you would describe someone else who has a lifestyle that is lavish or just filled with good things. Blessed are you, Elon. Blessed is Elon Musk. Makarios is Elon Musk because he gets to, as I said, play with rockets and he's so much money, right? It's the good life. Man, they have the good life. The good life belongs to the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. The good life belongs to those who mourn, who have been crushed by grief and despair and mourn for that in their own lives, but also for how it takes place in the world because they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek. I got some feedback on last week's message. People said it was heavy because that word meek really is translated more often than not as afflicted, with that context. Blessed are the afflicted, those who have been taken advantage of because they don't really matter other than how they benefit others, objectified individuals that have no value. Blessed are the afflicted, for they will inherit the land. They will be the ones that have the power. Blessed, the good life, are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness because they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. The good life goes to the pure in heart, for they shall see God. The good life belongs to the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Oh, the good life. That belongs to those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Man, the good life, that belongs to the people that endure persecution and that have slander thrown against them falsely on

account of Yeshua. These are people. These are the good life. It's so counterintuitive. It's almost dark, especially as we spoke about the good life belonging to those who mourn. And if you know what mourning means, it just has this dark premise. It's almost crossing the line to even suggest that's the good life. But these are the ones that are comforted. And the general idea of this ironic framing that Yeshua does when he's speaking to his four disciples on the mount and being heard by the crowd is that this is the type of people that is already at the threshold of the doorway of the kingdom of heaven that is being ushered in. These are the ones that are going to cross over. These are the ones that are the most likely out of anybody to experience the fullness of what eternal life is in this world and the next and this consummation of God's kingdom on earth. These are the attributes of the people that God has in mind and Yeshua has in mind.

## The Grouping of the Beatitudes

Now, a little nerdy moment. So you notice that there's nine Beatitudes, and generally it's assumed that they were meant to be grouped together as little triads. So the first three are a group, and we've just exhausted, went through the first triad of the Beatitudes. We have the second three and the third. So blessed are the poor, those who mourn, those who are meek. All kind of have their own grouping of Beatitudes. Those who've experienced being pushed down by whatever circumstances. Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, who are merciful, who are pure in heart. It's this other category. And then you have the peacemakers. And what happens when you're a peacemaker generally? And not the kind that has, not our peacekeepers like military, I mean, right? Not those. Generally, if you're a peacemaker, you do not escape unscathed. And the next two follow along. Blessed are those who are persecuted. Blessed are those who are slandered relentlessly on account of following this rabbi named Yeshua. And so today we're going to focus on number four, which is located in Matthew chapter 5, verse 6. It's blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

## Hunger and Thirst

Hunger and thirst. What does it mean to be hungry and thirsty? I don't know, but sometimes I want to be filled with food, and I guess it's a hunger, right? You know what it's like to have hunger. And okay, if you fast on Yom Kippur, yes, it is awful to go 24 hours without food. I'm glad I'm reaching somebody today. This is good. Hunger. No, what's it like to hunger? Now, we get hunger pains, sure. But if you don't have anything to eat, if you're constantly at a place where you're hungry, it begins to gnaw at you a little bit. It begins to irritate you. I'm not having any accusations about hangry people that I know and hear, but it goes beyond that. For people

who are stricken with hunger all the time, it almost becomes a part of your life, and eventually you forget about it. You forget about it because you get used to the gnawing. And that sense of your body alarming you that there is an empty space that needs to be filled. Thirst. Gosh. When I was a little kid, I think the earliest memory of me being thirsty, that's odd, was probably nine or ten years old. And I had been playing out all morning and riding my bike out all over the neighborhood with all of my friends because it was the 90s. Ten years old or 11 or 12 years old. And I was gone for hours. I didn't bring any water. You don't bring water with you when you're a kid. You drink out of the water hose whenever you can. You get that taste. But I finally got home after hours, and I was so parched. And I went in the kitchen, and we didn't have any water. And for some reason, I didn't really want tap water. And we had a two liter of Sprite that was hot sitting in the corner. And I remember grabbing this thing and drinking some of it out of the bottle. And I remember I couldn't stop. And I remember hot Sprite tasted like the most wonderful thing in the world. It imprinted on me that I have the memory today that this Sprite tasted so good. I drank half the two. I mean, I just drank a liter of it, just a little kid. Because I could not physically stop. My body would not let me stop. And later on in life, when I found myself doing extracurricular stuff or military-related stuff or whatever, when I was a teenager, I remember that same sensation, but with water. When I was so thirsty and I grabbed a bottle of water and I could not stop. I see my kids do it. Ben, you all right? You just can't, your body knows. Thirst, but to be that parched, that urgency of trying to find something that will resolve the situation that is causing distress and anxiety and trauma on your body, desperation, but you can't find it. That is how Yeshua describes the type of people that form the kingdom of God when they look to the world and they thirst and they hunger and they have this emptiness and this pain, but this hope, this zeal to see things different, to see things change, to see people acting like they're supposed to be acting, but when they look out, it's not there. They've never experienced it. And so they have to settle for the hunger pains or the thirst or the parchedness of their mouths until one day, hopefully, maybe, it will come. That's heavy. It's heavy.

## The Meaning of Righteousness

Thirst for righteousness. Now, what is righteousness? Well, the majority of Christians are people of faith. For us, righteousness means to be right. And in this regard, we all love righteousness, right? Yeah, it's the us-ness of being right. Oh, righteousness, the meaning behind the biblical sense, the context, one of those religious words that we only use when we're either quoting the Bible or we want to have a formal conversation that's very religious with someone else. But righteousness, biblical context, is living in right relationship with God, but also in right relationship with people around you. So it's living in right relationship with God.

The way to do that, though, is to seek justice for people of the world. Seek justice for the people around you. Seek equity for the people around you. Seek kindness. Being that person. The right relationships in dealing and interacting with people in the right way, if you will. Engaging, meeting, empathizing, serving, producing rightness. Not whiteness. Rightness. The righteous produce a community that seeks right relationships in the way that God promotes. That's why Yeshua compares his followers with being perfect like God. At the end of [Matthew 5](#), verse 48, he compares his followers to being perfect like God if they show love and kindness and service to everybody, not just who fits in their little section. You show it to people you don't like, and you show it to people who don't like you. Be perfect, for your Father in heaven is perfect. Because that's the price of righteousness, right relationships. [Psalm 145:17](#) speaks of this. It has this proclamation of the character of God. It says: The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and he is kind in all his deeds. So this is the standard that we're supposed to meet according to Yeshua. All of a sudden, we don't like righteousness anymore. Be perfect like your Father in heaven. God has an eye out for people that would pursue the difficult task of seeking that and taking on the blunt weight of that labor on behalf of others to create that right relationship. It's a difficult thing that Yeshua expects his followers to do. Go have right relationships with other people, but they don't want to have right relationships with me, so...

So, yeah, but they don't like me. Whatever, I'm trying to be kind to them. They don't want anything to do with you. That's one thing. But if someone is slandering you or making it difficult, forget the slander part. Let's take that and throw that out the window. Forget that word. Someone's making it difficult for you to have a relationship with them. Yeshua calls you to attempt to bear the brunt of that, to seek a right relationship. I'm not talking about abuse. I'm not talking about things of that category. I'm speaking about people being people. People being people. Are there people that you encounter in the world that you don't like? Maybe it's likely due to personality traits, right? Anybody? No. Great. We're there. We're there. Fantastic. I'm not, but we're there. Bear the brunt of what that takes.

## A Story About Connection

One of my really good friends, Mr. Matt Knapper over in Louisiana, he's been here many times. Love him. When we first met at the temple conference that we were studying about the temple down in Florida in 2015, I didn't like this guy. Gosh, I thought he was just quiet. He's quiet when you first meet him. And I took that as a sign of arrogance. And I took this as a sign, I don't like this guy. I didn't like him, didn't like him. And we engaged with each other for several days. And then finally, I came to the point where I admitted, I really don't like him. Just don't

like him. Super smart. He speaks in a way that makes me feel dumb. But when I try to engage with him, he never gives anything back. It's not fair.

So the day we were leaving, I'm hugging my buddies that I came there with. We're in the lobby. And I said, I can repay. I can repay what he's given me. And I don't have to hug him. But I said, you know what? I will pursue this. I don't want to, but I will pursue it, see what happens. I gave him a big old hug. We became really close friends after that. We played video games every week. We've been doing it for the past five years. We text every day, back and forth. I texted him this morning.

He has no idea why I perceived him as being haughty or quiet. He had no idea. He was just trying to be himself. But something about how he was acting triggered something in me that I'd struggled with before, and I reacted to that. People being people. And sometimes you have to realize that people are people. People are not that label that you want to give them. Okay? People are not that label. Even if they're acting like the label, people are not the label.

## Beyond Labels

Those Republicans, those Trump followers, those Biden supporters, whatever — these are people that have an opinion in a very niche portion in their life that they might be vocal about every four years. But they have parents and they have kids and they have brothers and sisters just like you. They may or may not believe in God. They may or may not be Christian, whatever. They have a philosophy. They go to work. They've experienced bullying sometime in their life. They've been flipped the bird going down the highway just like you did when you weren't paying attention and cut someone off. These are people. These are people that likely got yelled at by their parents or experienced childhood trauma like you may or may not have. These are people who have experienced trauma and great things in life, joy and depression and heartache and mourning, just like you.

You have the capacity to empathize with every human being, to connect with them on some level, even in the unimaginable. And Yeshua promotes that as the first step of being his follower and how you engage with people and bearing that weight of that knowledge, of that other person being another human being that is in need of love and kindness, forgiveness, grace, mercy, everything that you have and want to receive. And that's a hard thing to take on. Hard thing.

Now, a relationship takes two people. I can only do so much. You're right. But what seems like so much from one person is another person's bare minimum, and that's typically how we treat

relationships. I tried my best. I sent him a text message. He never responded. It is our job as Christians to seek and implement the same level of righteousness as Jesus himself demonstrated during his ministry. And that sets the bar really uncomfortably high, but that's the calling. That's what we strive to do. We're not perfect, duh, but this is the pursuit. And so how far are we willing to try to pursue this example that Yeshua left us?

## Righteousness and Right Relationships

So now that we've discussed the meaning of the religious word righteousness, to be in right relationships as a community, we see it has more to do with justice and equity and mercy than anything else. You are starving to see people interact with each other in the right way. That's what that means. And when we say the right way, we mean the right way that God had in mind. We are starving, and we thirst for that. As if the wolf is lying down with the lamb, and as if the lion cares more about its relationship with the antelope than eating it. So it becomes a vegan and begins to eat grass. That's [Isaiah 65:25](#). That's a Bible verse, right? The wolf will lie down with the lamb, and they will feed together. They care more about the relationship than eating each other. The lion chooses to eat straw totally like an ox, chewing a cud. The serpent is going to eat dust. Good. They shall not hurt or destroy on my holy mountain, says the Lord.

Now this is speaking metaphorically of a time when no person would ever live at the expense of another. No creature in the new creation, no one, nothing would ever live at the expense of another. They would enjoy and live with each other, right? Love it. Prophetic visions of what God's kingdom looks like when it manifests. We're starving to see a world where creation yields to righteousness, which means giving up what you want or even what you think you need so that you can further the community of heaven on earth. That includes justice. And it's hard for us to imagine a world where woke wolves and pansy pacifist lions are demonstrations of the kingdom of God. But that's what we're given. And I think it's beautiful.

## Justice and the Hunger for Change

What we can imagine is a world that treats injustice more seriously. And we all have a lens for what that looks like, right? When we think justice or injustice in the world. A lot of it probably depends on our background and what we've experienced and the exposure we've had in our lifetime. You have protests all over America against perceived fascism that is forming, where people put their lives on the line to go protest for their convictions. You have massive protests where the black community puts their lives on the line to go and protest injustice. You have

massive groups of people that show up and try to overtake a government building because of a conviction of injustice.

Why? Because we all know and feel that something is wrong. All of us, collectively, on some level, feel that something is wrong. And it lingers. And it aches. And it feels like there's an emptiness and we need to do something to fill it. And after a while, people — I'm not talking about Christians, I'm talking about people — after a while, people can't stand it anymore. People can't stand it anymore.

So, people protest. And people protest peacefully. And they protest with soft voices. And nothing happens. They get ignored. They write their politicians long letters. They make the phone calls. They even vote into power who they think will help them. Only for those elected officials to join Congress and become millionaires in exchange for ignoring the very same voices that elected them. Then people get angry. Generally. This is all over the world. If you see international news, people get angry because nothing's working. So they get violent. Because what else do you do to try to get the attention of the people that told you to follow these rules, but they didn't work?

So people get violent, and they start smashing windows, and they start setting things on fire and destroying government buildings and city property, and they start blocking downtown with tractors and spraying manure all over government buildings. The French, man. Oh, man. I mean, it was amazing to see. They have a history, though. They're good at revolution, right? This is what they do. I don't know. But people do these things because they're not getting noticed. They're not being heard. So they escalate. This is people, human nature. This is what we do.

## The Cost of Silence

But now they're criminals. And in the U.S., well, that's why we have that 13th Amendment. Remember? Perfect setup for the 13th Amendment. Tell the people how they're supposed to voice their grievances. Don't listen. Wait for them to escalate. Put them in jail. Four cents an hour. Of course, I don't condone violence as a Christian. I don't. Absolutely not. I don't agree with it. But I understand it. I understand it. I understand how a people that feels constantly oppressed, exploited, and violated could at some point snap and forget these rules. So they fight back. And historically, that is called a revolution. It is the very premise and foundation on which our country was founded.

Those are the people that Yeshua is speaking to here. Because they know the aching. Yours is the good life. Your frustration, your pain, your despair. Yours is the good life because your thirst and your hunger for a better world that is being refused to you will be filled. You will be filled. Oh, I thirst to see more people come to church. Yeah, righteousness. I thirst to see more people come to the knowledge of Yeshua.

Follow Yeshua. Amen. That would be amazing, right? That would be amazing to see more people come to the realization that the shackles of this world, the shackles of our mind, the shackles of our heart that are around our heart would be released from them. And sometimes we think that's righteousness. I absolutely want and yearn for all that, but I don't think that's exactly what Yeshua is speaking about right here. He's speaking about us walking out into the world and impacting people on a first impression basis to show them that we stand for something that is revolutionary, but not how the world expects it. This is speaking to a people who thirst for the world to be right, or at least a world that acknowledges what is wrong.

## Standing for Something Revolutionary

Last November, on Sunday, November 12th, deputies were dispatched in a town in Florida, California, which is always a great setup for a story. Now, the police got there. They were taking the accounts. The boyfriend came back with the car, and he was arrested. Very peaceful. Pat him down. Checked him. All good to go. Put him back in the police car. So he either stole the car and decided to bring it back because he felt bad, or maybe his girlfriend didn't want to be his girlfriend anymore. I don't know. We don't know. That's why there's due process, right? So he was restrained with handcuffs, and he was placed in the back of the law enforcement vehicle, an SUV. And as the one police officer was still questioning the young women at this apartment complex, and the other officer had just loaded him in the car, he's good to go, he shut the door, and then a gunshot occurred right there. And the police officer panicked. He pulled his service pistol, and he started reporting, shots fired, shots fired. And he started rolling on the ground, screaming, shots fired. I guess trying to roll away from the act immediately. Shots fired, and he raised his pistol up, and he just emptied. I mean, what do you do? There's a guy inside this car that's shooting at him, so he emptied all 17 rounds of his, what I assume is a 9mm Smith & Wesson M&P pistol with a tactical red dot equipped on it. Emptied it into this SUV, continued to say he was under fire, and then he screamed because he had gotten shot. He had been hit. Didn't know where it was coming from. I've been hit, officer down. His partner that was questioning the girls pulled her pistol. So where's it coming from? He said, the car or the guy in there. So she emptied her entire pistol into this vehicle. And it had to have been scary. Except

that's not exactly what happened. What happened was the police officer parked under an oak tree. And after he had loaded the individual in the back of the vehicle, an acorn had fallen from the oak tree and hit the windshield. Yeah, but he said he was shot. He was not shot. He looked like a fool rolling around on the ground and it was embarrassing. It was embarrassing. Fool. Looked like Michael Scott screaming parkour on the ground. "I'm hit!" Roughly 34 rounds of ammunition pointed and rapid-fired at a young man that was handcuffed, that had been read his rights, that was restrained inside of a police vehicle, that had been searched. An acorn fell from a tree and scared an officer that was ready tactically. I mean, he had his pistol loaded out like Call of Duty. It had the big red dot already on it. I mean, for gun owners, you don't just walk around with a red dot. I mean, this guy must have been like the Punisher, right? He was ready. He resigned the next day because it's wrong, right? I mean, that was wrong. He messed up, right? He resigned the next day and an investigation was done. And of course, it came back. How do you think it came back? Like it typically does when there are police shootings. Widespread most of the time. It's clear to us that the investigation produced no evidence that this officer maliciously acted. And he truly believed like his life was in danger. So there's no charges. He got to walk away. Walk away.

## An Acorn and Injustice

Now, I draw a focus to this because if you had accidentally done that, would you have been charged? You would be a felon. Which means you would have lost your job, not going to be able to get a good job ever again, you're not going to be able to vote, and so many other things that would ruin your life. This officer got to walk away. Pontius Pilate—an acorn hit the top of his car. That is injustice. That is injustice. That is not right. That is wrong. I have family in law enforcement. Support them heavily. Great guys. Want them to stay safe. Absolutely. But even they acknowledge justice is justice when it comes to law enforcement or not. It doesn't change because you have blue lights in your car. And the issue is that sometimes that does. In fact, [Leviticus 4, 5, and 6](#) contrasts how much more those in leadership, those who have authority over other people, are more responsible for their sin. Specifically in Leviticus, accidental sin. They have to bring more of an offering. There has to be more of a repentance for accidental sin, and it's wrong. And the sad thing is that thankfully, the young man in the back, nothing hit him. He laid down to play dead because that's likely what he was taught to do by his parents in the event something like this happened. And nothing hit him. There's videos from both sides. So you have a car and two officers from either side. You can look up the video and it's embarrassing. I'm embarrassed. I'm almost embarrassed for the guy as foolish as he looked, the police officer. But thankfully, this is an account where someone didn't die. But this same

situation happens a lot, and we don't hear about it because the cams don't get released or it doesn't go viral. And those are the situations many times where people don't survive, and yet people just get to walk away.

## Equal Weights and Measures

In 2022, in New Jersey, there was a young woman who was driving intoxicated on her way to Applebee's. She was 21 years old, and she hit a signal. What's it called? The light signal poles, right? And it fell, ripped a chunk of her bumper off, sitting in the middle of the intersection, and the whole light thing fell over in the middle of the intersection. Someone called police, and they came. They said it was a white car. It drove away. They saw a white car in the gas parking lot next door, and the bumper was missing. So they began to question this young lady. I don't know why a piece of my bumper is missing, but that's not my bumper over there. No way. Okay. And then she started to name drop my dad, John Lee. He's a deputy in the sheriff's department. Can you call him? So they called the deputy, her father. And you know what happened. He came out to the gas station. He looked around. And you're expecting like, what would you do? What would you do if this was your child? They are in big trouble. But you have positional privilege. Right? You have the authority to, come on guys, can we like something, I mean, can we, something a DUI, just push that away. Not this father. He says, listen, I'm not here to interfere. I want to ask some questions. And I don't know if there's footage of him even talking to his daughter. Daddy, daddy. So he looks at everything and he says, yeah, go ahead and do the DUI test on her. Here, field sobriety test. She failed. Now, there's multiple articles out there. Some of them say that he arrested his daughter and put the handcuffs on her. I'm not sure if that's the case because this is police jurisdiction and he was the deputy, but he was there helping load her into the car to go to jail. And he gave her a hug and she says, Daddy, and he says, No, you're going to jail. That's justice. That's equal weights and measures. That's not abusing your positional privilege to only benefit you and yours. But I have children now, and I cannot imagine what they're going to be like at 21, Evelyn. But I was looking at the comments of some of these videos and articles, and people were just, oh, I couldn't imagine. I could never do that to my kids. Put handcuffs on my kids, load them into the police car, not interfere to try to leverage to get them off the hook. And I would bet every single parent in here would empathize with that notion. I mean, it's right, but this is your kids now. This is your family now. I mean, there's a difference, right? This is what you actually care about. This deputy, in this moment, understood justice. And I don't know this guy, he might be unjust 90% of the time, but in this moment, he understood equal weights and measures. Because tomorrow, guess what? He's going to go out and arrest someone else's 21-year-old daughter for doing the same thing. Justice, righteous,

right relationships, justice. And how you interact with each other in your community between people as you instigate and tickle the kingdom of God to go forth. God's reign. Because in God's kingdom, you're not better than anyone else just because you have a position of authority, especially your own family. I cannot imagine because that's our instincts.

## A Hard Verse About Family

Jesus speaks of this in a very hard verse. He speaks of this in Luke chapter 14 and 26. He says, if anyone comes to me and does not obey, Hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters. Yes, even their own life. Such a person cannot be my disciple. And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. Now, some would read this as Jesus commanding us to actually hate our children and our parents. And sometimes I wish that we would think about things a little bit clearer. Because no, this is hyperbole. This is an inflated expression to drive a point home.

## Taking Up the Cross

Yeshua used a lot of hyperbole throughout his ministry. "Hate your kids. I'm bringing a sword. Slice up everybody. If you cause your eye to sin, take a sawzall to it." He also speaks of camels jumping through needles.

We have such an issue with Yeshua using hyperbole as a teaching method. But it's quite effective. Sometimes we try to negotiate with the text a little bit. Some people could not stand to think that a camel going through an eye of a needle was purely hyperbole or metaphorical. So they made up this story about some gate being in the side of Jerusalem called the camel's gate. It was really small and camels walked through it. You hear that a lot, and that's just simply not historically accurate. It's hyperbole. Gosh, it's so far out that you can't help but at least taste the point.

"No, hating your kids and parents." This has to do with righteousness. It's speaking and asking: Are you willing to stand up for righteousness and justice even if it includes and applies to your own family? Are you willing to do that? Are you willing to handcuff your own daughter for the sake of creating a community of heaven on earth where justice is a standard of living? Are you willing to do that?

And then he follows it up in verse 27: "If you can't carry the cross and follow me, you don't qualify as my disciple. You cannot be my disciple." And sometimes I read these verses and I become very discouraged because I'm not sure I will ever fully get there. Maybe. But I've come

to realize that it shouldn't be a discouragement. It should be a trajectory. It should be something that's always pushing me, like a pressure cooker, forward in every situation, in every experience, forward—asking me the same question every time I stumble upon the opportunity to leverage justice in my favor: Will you do it or not?

## Speaking Wickedly in God's Name

People criticize megachurches for being platforms for motivational speakers, and I can see that. I see that. But the same type of people don't want to hear the actual words of Yeshua. Sometimes we just want to be the Pharisee that feels justified in judging others because they are the righteous ones, right? The right relational ones in how they see it.

In chapter 13 of Job, Job is responding to his friends and he says this. He says in [Job 13](#), 6, "Will you speak wickedly on God's behalf? Will you speak deceitfully for him?" One of the most used weapons of injustice and unrighteousness, aka wickedness, is to speak on God's behalf in a way that is unjust and unrighteous. A way that does not establish right relationships with other human beings. We speak in the name of God in a deceitful way, in a way that leverages power in our favor and over others.

Has anyone ever looked back throughout their faith journey and maybe went through a phase where this was common practice in your life? To be able to reach for that can of spray paint called God and just spray it over assertions that you speak to other people—a very frequent occurrence. "God told me you need to repent," instead of, "Hey, what are you going through?"

You can always tell the agenda and how it's framed because there's always a why when someone's finding themselves in a life surrounded by the shackles of sin. There's always a reason. "Why are you struggling with this?" There's always a why. And I know no one entertains sin in their life here. They don't have any moths in their closet, as Jeff would say. But for everyone else, there's always an excuse for why that sin is there—that habit, that addiction, whatever. "I was abused as a kid." "I'm stressed at work, maybe." Maybe that's the why. "I don't have a good marriage, so therefore I'm compensating for it in various ways." "I'm going through a midlife crisis, so I'm just doing things." There's always justification, even if it's weak and even if we hate it. There's always some justification.

But when it comes to someone else struggling with that same type of thing in their life, it's just who they are. It's that label. They need to repent. I cannot show kindness or empathy to someone who is clearly living in sin. If they want me to be kind to them and love them, they

need to repent first. Why is that? Why are we so black and white when it comes to how we measure up to other people or how we measure other people compared to us?

## Hungering and Thirsting for Justice

Well, like one highly respected Jewish leader once thought to himself: If Jesus knew what type of lifestyle that woman who was anointing his feet right now, man, if he just knew, he wouldn't be here. Wouldn't be here. That's [Luke 7](#), the story.

And so the question is: Do you hunger and thirst for people to start acting right? For everyone to engage with one another in rightness—the rightness of God, the rightness of a community of heaven? Does it gnaw at you when you go outside, when you hear stories about what's happening all over the world, when you know what's happening with your neighbors and your community? Does it gnaw at you? Are you parched? Do you just wish you could do something sometimes and you don't know—there's nothing—and you feel powerless?

Will there ever be a day when justice is poured out and the world will simply be made right? Yours is the good life, for you will be filled. This is who Yeshua is talking to.

And hopefully that one verse resonates with your heart because of the things that you agonize over on a daily basis in the world.

## The Weight of Following

But it's not unfortunate—it's heavy. If we're willing to pick up the cross and follow, the responsibility to instigate that rightness begins in us. Even if the world rejects it. That doesn't change the world and kingdom that we're a part of. And guess what? Our kingdom's bigger than theirs. Ours just approaches conquering a little bit differently, and it doesn't look anything like the world. And according to Yeshua, it's effective enough.

## Be the Instigator

And so please stand as we conclude services today. And if you need prayer today, we have a prayer team on either side of the stage. And if you're going through something in life, if you need to pray for someone else, guys, what an opportunity to spend this time doing just that today.

I don't know where you're at today, but I hope that revisiting the Beatitudes will encourage you to open your eyes and look at the world for what it is. Look at the people who are protesting.

Look at the people who are no longer holding up signs—they're throwing things. Look at the people that are crying out. Get hungry for the sake of injustice and the sake of unrighteousness in the world. And step out, and no matter how small or how big, be the instigator for the kingdom of God being manifest on earth.

Alvina Malkinu, our father, our king. Father, we thank you for this opportunity to dive into the hard words of our king, Yeshua—words that don't make any sense from a worldly mindset, but we have been called into a new creation with a new mind conformed around you and your word. Father, I ask that the Holy Spirit within us would continue to give life, give wisdom, give strength, give understanding, and give that empathy towards others, that we would no longer see people as the world tells us to see them, but we would remove the label and see other humans and simply ask, "What are you going through?" We thank you, Father, for the promises that you have given to us and the hope that we will be filled. In Yeshua's name we pray. Amen.

Sh'mothra'i Adonai Chava. Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one. Blessed is the name of his glorious kingdom for all eternity. May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord lift up his countenance toward you and give you peace. Shabbat Shalom.

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