



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast

February 23, 2025

“The Beatitudes: Righteousness Matthew 5:6”

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.” (NRSVUE)
“Those who are hungry and thirsty to be right with God are happy, because they will be filled.” (NLV)

The words **“righteousness”** and **“righteous”** appear hundreds of times in English translations of the Old and New Testaments. Sometimes they refer to God: “God is righteous and passionate about righteousness. Sometimes they refer to a human virtue: the righteous will flourish and the wicked shall wither.” [from Speaking Christian, by Marcus J. Borg.]

However, in modern English, “righteousness” can carry negative connotations. It can suggest self-righteousness, a holier-than-thou attitude, or rigid moralism. But in the Bible, righteousness is a deeply positive word. It means “doing what is right”—living in alignment with God’s will, treating others with fairness and compassion, and seeking a life that reflects God’s character. Often, this meaning is applied to individuals, calling people to integrity, honesty, and faithfulness.

Amos 5:21-24

*I hate, I despise your festivals,
and I take no delight in your solemn
assemblies.
Even though you offer me your burnt offerings
and grain offerings, I will not accept them,
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted
animals
I will not look upon.
Take away from me the noise of your songs;
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.
But let justice roll down like water
and righteousness like an ever-flowing
stream.*

But righteousness is not just personal; it is also about how society is structured. In Scripture, righteousness and justice are closely connected. A righteous society is one where fairness, mercy, and dignity shape political, economic, and social life. This is what Amos 5:21-24 emphasizes. God rejects empty religious rituals when they are disconnected from justice. Festivals, offerings, and songs mean nothing if they do not lead to a world where righteousness flows like an ever-moving stream.

Hungering and thirsting for righteousness means longing for a world where God’s justice prevails, where the poor are cared for, where the oppressed are freed, and where love defines human relationships. Jesus promises that those who deeply desire this will be filled—not just with personal holiness, but with the joy of seeing God’s justice take root in the world.

A closing prayer: Gracious God, You call us to hunger and thirst for righteousness—not just in our own lives, but in the world around us. Help us to seek justice, mercy, and love in all we do. Let justice flow like water, and may our desire for what is right lead us to action. Fill us with Your Spirit, that we may live as reflections of Your goodness. Satisfy our thirst with the joy of seeing Your Kingdom take root. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

- God’s Peace, Vance

Prayer box: let us pray for the souls of our departed friends and family members and those who mourn for them. Let us pray for comfort and healing for Connie, Diane M., Patti, Holland, Steve, John H., Debbie, Brenda, John P., Lynn and Maggie. Lord, hear our prayers!