

Lessons From the Sermon of Jesus on the Mountain Part 19

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled:” (Matthew 5:6 KJV)

We continue in this message to study on how we hunger and thirst for righteousness from studying the life of the righteous Cornelius:

“1 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, 2 A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. 3 He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. 4 And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. 5 And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: 6 He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do. 7 And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually; 8 And when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa. 9 On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: 10 And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, 11 And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending upon him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: 12 Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. 13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. 14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. 15 And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. 16 This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven. 17 Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, 18 And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there. 19 While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. 20 Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them. 21 Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come? 22 And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee. 23 Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him. 24 And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and he had called together his kinsmen and near friends. 25 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. 26 But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. 27 And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together. 28 And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath

shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. 29 Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me? 30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, 31 And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. 32 Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee. 33 Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. 34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: 35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. 36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) 37 That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; 38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. 39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: 40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; 41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. 42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. 43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. 44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.” (Acts 10:1-48 KJV)

In our previous message we mentioned the following points about Cornelius and how he was a righteous man in what he did and in what he received from the Lord:

- 1. Cornelius was a devout man**
- 2. Cornelius was a man who fear God**
- 3. Cornelius was a man who fear God with all his house**
- 4. Cornelius gave much alms to the poor people**
- 5. Cornelius was living a life of consistent prayers to God**
- 6. Cornelius was living a life of fasting**
- 7. Cornelius was of good report among the people of God**
- 8. Cornelius was assured by the Lord**
- 9. Cornelius was a righteous man who took the warning of God**

Now let us continue:

10. Because of the obedience of Cornelius God changed the attitude of Peter: After Cornelius obeyed God and sent people to Peter, the Lord spoke in a vision to Peter that he and the church should consider the Gentiles, who are willing to obey God, as clean, *“9 On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: 10 And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, 11 And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending upon him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: 12 Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. 13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. 14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. 15 And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. 16 This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.”* (Acts 10:9-16 KJV) God sent such vision to Peter to convince him to consider the Gentiles as clean people when they will decide to live their lives for God and to follow the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord. *When we live righteous life that pleases the Lord, the Lord Himself shall change the heart of the people and give us favour toward them.* Peter and the rest of the Jewish in the church they were non receptive to the Gentiles and they would not consider them clean and fit to be in God's church but here God opened the door for them to be accepted with the people of God. God spoke to Peter that he should not call the people that He cleansed as common. While Peter doubted about the vision that he saw, the men sent by Cornelius arrived, and at that time God spoke to Peter that he should not be afraid to go with them. God told Peter, that He Himself had sent them, *“17 Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, 18 And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there. 19 While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. 20 Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.”* (Acts 10:17-20 KJV) *When we live a righteous life that God desires, He will not only accept us and assure us, and comfort us, but He will change people hearts and their stand toward us and He will give us favour and promote us further in His Kingdom.* Cornelius came from the Gentiles, who their lives are polluted with violence, injustice, fornication, multiple marriages, feast and food sacrificed for idols, but Cornelius chose rather to obey God and live a righteous life for Him, and for this cause the Lord work out for him to have favor from the church.

11. Cornelius was humble before God as he obeyed God to do the righteous things that the Lord wanted him to do: *“5 And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: 6 He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.”* (Acts 10:5-6 KJV) God spoke clearly to Cornelius that he need to send to Peter, the apostle of Jesus, who will tell to him of what he need to do further in the way to hunger and thirst for righteousness. Cornelius immediately obeyed God and sent for Peter. *In the same way we need to humble before God and accept to communicate with the church that God had placed us in.*

12. Cornelius was humble before Peter in accepting the correction that he needed to receive: *“25 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet,*

and worshipped him. 26 But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.” (Acts 10:25-26 KJV) Righteous people may not know all the truth of God, but they are humble to accept correction and admonishment with all humility. *We should not kneel down at any feet of the men of God. But we need to listen and obey the Word of God that the Lord is sending through them.* The warning of God to Cornelius is to send to Peter so he will tell him the next step in his life and what God wants him to be. Some other person than Cornelius will not bother to send to Peter, especially he was in Caesarea and needed to send to Peter in Joppa, who was in the house of Simon the tanner, which was on the sea. It is a journey, he needed to send people to travel, he needed to spend, it is a discomfort to him, as well as he might not find him. With all that Cornelius chose to obey God. *Whatever circumstances around or whatever circumstances you are in, the Lord still wants you to obey Him and comply with His instructions. God will aid you when you obey Him; He will provide all your needs and lead into the way that He wants you to go.* All what was Cornelius doing was righteousness, but God wanted him to hunger and thirst further for righteousness; he needed to send for Peter to instruct him how to do that for God. *To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to listen to the Biblical correction and the teaching that we receive from those whom God had placed over us in the Lord.*

13. Cornelius was waiting to receive the Word of God and what God is sending to Him through Apostle Peter: *“And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and he had called together his kinsmen and near friends.”* (Acts 10:24 KJV) Cornelius told to Peter all what had happened to him and how God spoke to him to send for him, and how he immediately sent for Peter, *“Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come.* Then Cornelius said further to Peter, *Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.”* (Acts 10:33 KJV) *To hunger and thirst for righteousness we need to wait patiently to receive the Word of God and what God is sending us of teaching through His church.*

14. Cornelius had invited his relatives and his friends: *“24 And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and he had called together his kinsmen and near friends. 27 And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together. 33 Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.”* (Acts 10:24, 27, 33 KJV) Righteous people and those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, will invite their friends and their relatives to come and hear the Word of God so they can come to the right faith. When God spoke to Peter to go he needed to go to Cornelius to tell him what God wanted him to hear. Cornelius when he sent for Peter he invited his kinsmen, and his relatives in addition to his household in order to hear the Word of God. *To hunger and thirst for righteousness we need to invite our friends, our relatives in addition to our household to hear the Word of God.*

15. Cornelius and those who were with him were not offended to hear the truth: *“28 And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. 29 Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have*

sent for me?” (Acts 10:28-29 KJV) Righteous people will not be offended to hear the truth. Many when you speak the truth they will react and get upset. But what we noticed here, when Peter spoke the truth to the people who were in the house of Cornelius and he told them what he passed through before he came to them, and how his feelings were contrary to them, for they were considered unclean for him, but they were not offended. Peter was not tactful to speak to them. He did not need to make introduction or need to cut half of the story to go into the heart of the subject. Why now people at once get offended when the truth is told? Because now a day the speech in the churches are flatteries, that is why the people cannot bear a direct instructive Word.

Righteous people and those who hunger and thirst for righteousness are humble people and will not get upset, react or get angry when they hear the truth or what the people speak about them. Peter did not need to be tactful in the way he spoke to them; he spoke frankly and they were fine in what they heard. I am not saying to be non tactful, but righteous people suppose not to be offended if someone is telling the truth and the reality. *To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to be humble and will not get upset, react or get angry when you hear the truth or what the people speak about you.*

16. Cornelius, his house, his kinsmen and friends received Christ when Peter preached the Gospel to them: The following was the message of Apostle Peter, “*34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: 35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. 36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) 37 That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; 38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. 39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: 40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; 41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. 42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. 43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.” (Acts 10:34-43 KJV) Peter introduced to them Jesus, what He did, His miracles, His works against the devil, His approval from God, His death on the cross, and His resurrection from the death. Peter also told them about himself chosen with others to witness all these things; they even ate and drank with Jesus after His resurrection, and they were commanded by Jesus to preach to the people and to testify that is He who was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. Peter also confirmed to them that the prophets testified and wrote about Jesus, that those who believe on him shall receive forgiveness of their sins. While Peter spoke, they received the Word of God and received Christ as Saviour and Lord over their lives. *To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to receive Christ as Savior and Lord over your life.**

17. Righteous people need to repent and receive Christ to be saved: Righteous people they are humble people who are willing to repent of their sins and receive Christ when He reveal Himself to them. The Scriptures informed us that the Church in Jerusalem confirmed that Cornelius and those with him they repented: “*When they heard these*

things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.” (Acts 11:18 KJV) Christ revealed to Cornelius and to the people with him through the message of Peter, and God granted them repentance. *To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to repent of your sin and live your life for God.*

The proof that they received Christ, they got baptized with the Holy Spirit, “*44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.” (Acts 10:44-46 KJV).*

18. Righteous people need to receive the Holy Spirit baptism: “*44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.” (Acts 10:44-46 KJV)* *To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.* Here the Holy Spirit Baptism of Cornelius, his household, and his friends and relatives came before the water baptism. God possibly allow that to confirm to Peter and those who came with him that they are truly by now are believers in Christ.

19. Righteous people need to receive water baptism: “*Then answered Peter, 47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.” (Acts 10:46-48 KJV)* Cornelius, his household, and his friends and relatives they were water Baptized. *To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to receive water Baptism.*

20. Righteous people need to be organized and put in God’s Church: *5 And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: 6 He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.” (Acts 10:5-6 KJV)* The Lord made all these arrangement that Cornelius need to send to Apostle Peter to hear from him so he and his family, relatives, friends and his ministry will be included in God’s church. Cornelius was a blessing to the Church of God, through him the church of God expanded to Caesarea and got increased. Cornelius and the people with him were Gentiles, the Lord saved them and included them in His church. The apostles and the brethren in Judaea glorified God after they heard the report of Apostle Peter of how the Gentiles received Christ, “*When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.” (Acts 11:18 KJV)* Further the church in Jerusalem, in a future event, while they were deciding about the churches of the Gentiles, Peter testified about what had happened in Cornelius house, “*7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. 8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; 9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.” (Acts 15:7-9 KJV)* Upon the testimony of Apostle Peter, Apostle James ratified, in saying the following: “*13 And after they had*

held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: 14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. 15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: 17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.” (Acts 15:13-17 KJV) The Gentiles in including them and organizing them to be part of the church, then they are involved with the great commission of the Lord. This is fulfillment of the Word of the prophets to His church. Righteous people they are part of God’s church, they work in unity with the church, they will be a blessing to the church and they will be blessed by the Lord through the church. To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to be part of God’s church, to work in unity with the church and to be a blessing to others and get involved in the great commission of the Lord.

My dear and beloved:

- To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to repent of your sins and live your life for God.
- To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to receive Christ as Savior and Lord over your life.
- To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to receive water Baptism.
- To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to be humble and will not get upset, react or get angry when you hear the truth or what the people speak about you.
- When we hunger and thirst for righteousness, and live a righteous life that God desires, He will not only accept us and assure us and comfort us, but He will change people hearts and their stand toward us and He will give us favour toward them, and He will promote us further in His Kingdom.
- To hunger and thirst for righteousness we need to humble before God and accept to communicate with the church that God had placed us in.
- To hunger and thirst for righteousness we should not kneel down at any feet of the men of God. But we need to listen and obey the Word of God that the Lord is sending through them.
- To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to listen to the Biblical correction and the teaching that we receive from those whom God had placed over us in the Lord.
- To hunger and thirst for righteousness we need to wait patiently to receive the Word of God and what God is sending us of teaching through His church.
- To hunger and thirst for righteousness you need to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- To hunger and thirst for righteousness we need to invite our friends, our relatives in addition to our household to hear the Word of God.
- To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to be part of God’s church, to work in unity with the church and to be a blessing to others by fully involving in the great commission of the Lord.

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the death on the third day to give me eternal life.

Let us confess and renounce our sins to the Lord. Let us renounce our worldliness, our idols and the wrong plans and the wrong ways of life that contradict the Word of God. Let us renounce our stubborn us, pride, lack of humility, complacencies and the lack of commitment.

Let us commit ourselves to live in holiness, to listen and obey the voice of God and to do diligently what He is asking us to do. Let us commit ourselves to be in unity and harmony with the church that God had placed us in. Let us commit ourselves to obey the teaching that we received and imparted to our families, friends and relatives. Let us commit ourselves to get fully involved in the great commission of the Lord.

Lord, I commit my life to be willing to hunger and thirst for righteousness and to do the principles that I learned from your Word in this message. Lord, I commit myself to hearken to your voice and to the instructions of your Word. Lord, I commit myself to preach your Gospel to my family, my household, friends and relative.

Lord, I pray for my Brothers and Sisters who had humbled themselves before you to live the righteous life that you want them to live and apply the principles that we learn from your Word in this message. Lord protects them and provides all their needs. Lord comfort them and assure them that you are with them and leading them in their lives. Lord fills them once again with the Holy Spirit and makes their lives’ testimony attractive to others so that people will believe in you and start to follow you and live according to your Word and your righteousness. Lord use them to evangelize and to make new disciples of yours.

Lord, I pray for us as a church to help us, protect us, and provide for us to go on in serving you and do your work and your will. Lord fills us once again with the Holy Spirit and enables us to evangelize and to reach new people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and with the Word of God. Lord, we pray that you will enable us to plant new Bible studies and new congregations for the church. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us, and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus’ name, Amen.

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