

J.R. Miller:

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness â€" for they shall be filled." Matthew 5:6

It strikes us somewhat strangely at first, that there should be a beatitude for dissatisfaction. We know that peace is promised to the Christian, and peace is calm repose and satisfied restfulness. The words "hunger and thirst" appear to suggest experiences incompatible with rest and peace. But when we think a little more deeply, we see that spiritual hunger must form a part of all true Christian experience. Hunger is a mark of health. It is so in physical life; the loss of appetite indicates disease. Just so, a healthy mind is a hungry one; when one becomes satisfied with one's attainments, one ceases to grow. The same is true in spiritual life. If we become satisfied with our faith and love and obedience, and our communion with God, and our consecration to Christ â€" we have ceased to grow.

Invalids often die amid plenty â€" die of starvation; not because they can get no food â€" but because they have no appetite. There are many professing Christians who are starving their souls in the midst of abundance of spiritual provision, because they have no hunger. There is nothing for which we should pray more earnestly and more importunately, than for spiritual longing and desire. It is indeed the very soul of all true prayer. It is the empty hand reached out â€" to receive new and richer gifts from Heaven. It is the heart's cry which God hears with acceptance â€" and answers always with more and more of life. It is the ascending angel that climbs the radiant ladder to return on the same bright stairway with blessing from God's very hand. It is the key that unlocks new storehouses of divine goodness and enrichment. It is indeed nothing less than the very life of God in the human soul, struggling to grow up in us into the fullness of the stature of Christ. Such spiritual hunger never fails of blessing.