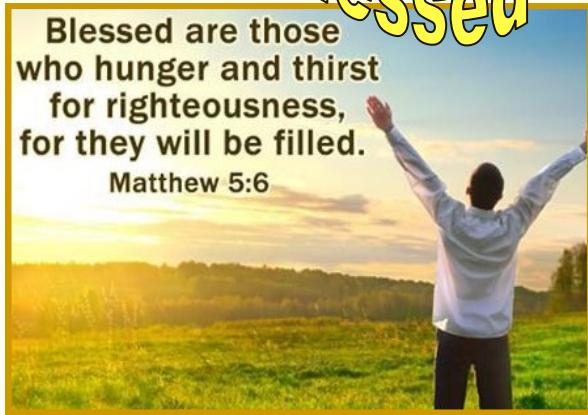


"I'm so Blessed"

The Beatitudes

Blessed are those
who hunger and thirst
for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

Matthew 5:6



What does it mean to hunger and thirst after righteousness? Does it mean that we are never satisfied until we have – righteousness? What is – righteousness? Is it Virtue? Morality? Justice? Honesty? Is it being good enough? Does it mean that we have to behave according to a certain religious or moral code?

Do we really want to hunger and thirst for those virtues, or are we content with what we know? Do we want to be confused with the facts? Sometimes I want to search for the truth in my life. Sometimes, I want to do my own thing and not have God interfering.

I think that beatitude means that I will never be perfectly happy until I have found God and put Him in control of my life. When God is in control, I can relax. However, I must constantly seek His truth because there is another very powerful source that also wants my attention and wants to rule my life.

In The Lord's Prayer, we pray for "Thy will be done." And then we try to do it "our way!" We are so human!!! Do we really want God in control, or only when we can't handle it ourselves? I can express it this way.

"We have a pact
My God and I.

I talk to Him,
He answers me.

I cry;
He wipes my tears.
I sing;
He hears the tune within my heart.

I fall;
He picks me up.
I forget;
He is always there.

I sin;
He forgives.
I stumble;
His grace is sufficient.

We walk together
My God and I,
Sometimes fast, sometimes slow,
But this I know,

We have a pact,
My God and I."

Eugene Peterson, in THE MESSAGE, translates the above parable this way: "You're blessed when you've worked up a good appetite for God. He's food and drink in the best meal you'll ever eat." I like that. If only we could constantly be on that high and let Him rule without our humanness wanting to take over!!!

A man may study
because his brain is
hungry for knowledge,
even Bible knowledge.
But he prays because his
soul is hungry for God.

Leonard Ravenhill

Then we can be honest, virtuous, and morally right, and seek justice for ourselves. When we accept that God gives us the best, and let him be in control, we will be as Peterson says "on that high" with God. But I have a problem with this many times. Researchers have developed all these personality types and have tried to put us into a mold. I don't always fit! I can be strong one minute and very weak the next. I have put God in control and then quickly take control back if things aren't happening as fast or in the way I want them to happen.

I heard one minister compare our faith to the mercury in a thermometer. He indicated that we are sometimes filled with the Holy Spirit and we are on a "high". Other times we are searching, trying to do it on our own. The trust is always fluctuating according to how much we want to be in control, or how much we allow God to be in control. The choice is ours.

Christ spoke about physical hunger in Matthew, but there is also that Spiritual hunger that we feed while we feed the physical hunger. It is difficult for

someone to concentrate on what we are saying if he is hungry. Many times we are able to give both, but it is much easier to let the other person do it.

I am sure that I am not the only person who as a child was told to clean my plate at dinner because there was someone in another country who would love to have the food I was wasting because they were starving. I wanted to say "Then send it to them." I was fortunate enough to grow up in a Christian home and my parents



"The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come' And let the one who hears say, 'Come' And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost."

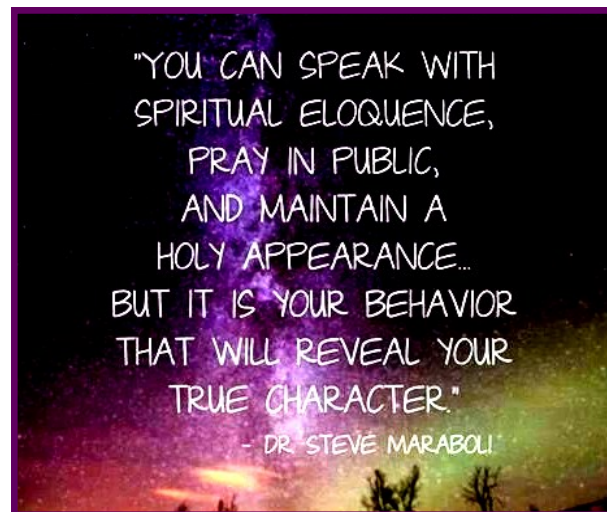
Revelation 22:17



supported missions all the time. They were trying to teach me not to waste, or sometimes just to eat something that I really didn't think I liked!

I can have that same experience with Spiritual food. I have heard many times that God is on the golf course on Sunday morning or wherever people want to be when they don't want to attend church. I believe God is everywhere so he is on the golf course and at the store! I need to go to worship with fellow believers and be fed. Everything seems to always have two sides. Sometimes I may feel that I actually get more from time with nature than I do if I go to a church and either I am not fed by the sermon and fellowship or I am not allowing myself to be fed. I do not believe there is a perfect answer to this question any more than we can send the food on our plate to the starving person in another country.

I pray that we will see the Spiritual hunger and the physical hunger in ourselves and in others. Can we dare to reach out to show how God's love can also fill that hunger.



Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, You have given us so much. Every day You are there with the best food and drink we can want. You have provided it all both physically and spiritually. Help us to drink and eat of it fully so that we can better serve You and Your Kingdom here on this earth. Let us give You the glory until we meet one day and inherit that Eternal Life with You. Amen.

1. What is "an appetite for God"?
2. How do we work up an appetite for God? What is on our desired menu?
3. How can we progress through the steps of being earthy, inspired, to spiritual?
4. How do we know when we have put Christ in control of our life?
5. What assurance do we have that Christ is always with us?
6. How is the mercury in your thermometer?

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"For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world." Then they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this bread." Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in

Me will never thirst. "
John 6:33-35

