

Man Seeks

Man seeks a threefold perfection: first, he seeks a physical satisfaction, pursuing things which are necessary for life itself, and such things which merely adorn or enhance it; second, an intellectual satisfaction, pursuing things that creatures lower than him cannot understand or experience at all; and third, a spiritual and divine satisfaction, consisting of the things which we seek by supernatural grace, but cannot fully attain in this life.

Those who are only interested in the first, the Apostle says, are those whose god is their belly, and who are earthly-minded men (Phil. 3:19). Those who seek intellectual fulfillment pursue the sort of knowledge and virtue that brings honor to man. This type of happiness includes the attainment of moral and civil virtues. To show that there must be something beyond this, we only need to remember that man's desire would languish unfulfilled if it stopped here, desiring as it does an infinite happiness which no finite thing can offer.

For man is not content either with mere physical continuance, or with such things as win the praise of men. He longs, even hungers and thirsts for a food which cannot sustain the body or satisfy the senses, something even beyond the capacity of his reason. He seeks something divine and heavenly, which he can more guess at than conceive.

He seeks for it, and although he does not know exactly what it is, yet his desire is so great that he sets aside all other delights and pleasures to find what he merely dreams of. If man's soul only served to give him physical life, then he would be satisfied with those things that sustain his life, as are other creatures who seek nothing further and have no greater purpose. But it is not so with us.

Even if a single man had all the beauty, riches, honors, knowledge, virtues, and perfections possessed by all men, he would still seek and thirst for something more. Even in this life, then, our nature demands a more divine perfection.

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