

## HUNGRY FOR GOD – WHAT’S FOR SUPPER?

### INTRODUCTION

As a guide, you can live 3 minutes without air, in a harsh environment — it's snowing, say — you have 3 hours to survive without shelter. After 3 days, you need water or you'll die although some people some people have survived 8 to 10 days without water. You can make it 3 weeks without food, but we know that Jesus fasted for 40 days and so have many people from our time.

The point is that without food and water, the body starts to close down and sooner or later you will die.

We don't often think about it, but in the spiritual realm it's much the same. The Bible is full of references to eating and drinking of spiritual food. We need to eat of the Word of God, the Bread of Life and drink from the river of life, if not we will find ourselves spiritual anorexics, weak and without growth.

That's what this whole weekend is about – restoring and reviving our hunger for God.

### MESSAGE

#### AN ASTOUNDING STATEMENT

Jesus made an astounding statement:

**John 6:33-35** "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."

- Firstly, Jesus clearly distinguished between food for the body and food for the spirit. Bread that comes from heaven is spiritual manna, it feeds our spirit.
- Secondly, the disciples realised that they needed that bread. They said "Lord always give us this bread". **They were hungry, but they thought He was talking of physical manna like their forefathers ate in the wilderness.**
- Thirdly, Jesus identified Himself as that bread. Our hunger must be for Jesus, He is the spiritual food that we need.

But then come the astounding words... **"he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst."**

Jesus said the same about the living water when He spoke to the woman at the well, **"John 4:13-14** Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; **but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst;** but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

Surely this means that once we have come to Jesus, we won't be hungry or thirsty again?

**But we are hungry and we are thirsty – let me explain the difference:**

The key is found in another statement Jesus made, in His Sermon on the Mount. In **Matthew 5:6**, Jesus says, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

When Jesus says that those who come to Him will never hunger and those who believe in Him will never thirst, He is saying He will satisfy our hunger and thirst to be made righteous in the sight of God.

- The moment we are born again, we eat the spiritual Bread, Jesus Christ who makes us righteous once and for all – we are not born again over and over. Therefore, we only need to eat of that bread once.
- When we are born again, the Holy Spirit indwells us and the river of Living water begins to flow in our innermost being, **John 4:14** "the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life"
- That water starts flowing and doesn't stop – it leads and feeds unto eternal life!

***My first challenge to you tonight is this: Have you eaten the bread of righteousness? Is the river of living water that leads to eternal life flowing strongly within you? If not, tonight is your opportunity to eat and drink that which satisfies eternally.***

If we have eaten this bread and have this living water, what are we still hungry for?

We are hungry for a deeper and stronger relationship with God! Once we have tasted and seen that the LORD is good and our lives are focused on Him, we should want more and more of Him! This is where "deep cries out to deep".

The Psalmist describes this hunger in Psalm 42:

**Psalm 42:1-4** (NKJV) As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? 3 My tears have been my food day and night, While they continually say to me, "Where is your God?" 4 When I remember these things, I pour out my soul within me. For I used to go with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, With the voice of joy and praise, With a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast.

- The writer reveals a yearning for God.
- They reveal a desire to be in God's presence.
- They reveal a desire to be with the multitude, praising in the house of God.
- They reveal a desire to keep a pilgrim feast – a feast was a feast, they would rejoice and eat physical food in the Lord's presence.

***So where are you tonight? Does your soul long for something deeper with God?***

- ***Do you desire His presence?***
- ***Do you long to praise Him in His house with His people.***
- ***Do you want to come and feast at the table set for you in the presence of your enemies as per Psalm 23?***

## **JESUS SET THE BAR WHEN IT COMES TO SPIRITUAL FOOD.**

Once, when Jesus and the disciples traveled through Samaria on the way to Galilee, they stopped at a well in a Samaritan town and we read the account of Jesus and the Samaritan woman.

The woman was surprised when Jesus asked her for a drink of water because Jews didn't talk to Samaritans. But she was even more surprised when Jesus began to tell her details about her life. Jesus knew that she had been married five times and that the man she was living with wasn't her husband.

When Jesus told the woman that He was the Messiah, she was too excited to care about getting water from the well. She left her jar behind and ran into town telling everyone what she had just experienced. Samaritans only followed the first five books of the Bible. They didn't have the whole truth. But they were hungry. They wanted more. When the men of the town heard the woman's words, they went out to see Jesus for themselves.

- Notice that when the disciples went to town, they didn't bring back people who needed to be healed or someone they had raised from the dead or someone that needed deliverance. All they brought back was lunch.
- But when the Samaritan woman went to town, she brought the whole town back with her to hear the good news of Jesus.

While the people of Samaria gathered around Jesus, the disciples urged Jesus to eat. He answered like this:

**John 4:34-35** (NLT) Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. 35 Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!"

You see, the disciples wanted to fill their bellies with food but God wanted to fill a city with revival – That was Jesus priority and that was His food!

**The standard Jesus set for spiritual hunger was to do the will of Him who sent Him.**

- And God's will is always going to have something to do with drawing mankind to Himself.

### ***Are we like the disciples, trying to feed our physical hunger?***

- That implies chasing after worldly and flesh-satisfying things like what we will eat, drink!
- Jentezen Franklin described this state in this manner: “We can become like that today – so full that we have no hunger for more of God and no passion for His work. We can easily become so full of ourselves that we need to be emptied through fasting and prayer. Physical hunger can bring back spiritual hunger. If you break through with **spiritual hunger and passion, power will be released**. Where there is hunger, there is passion. And where there is passion, there is power. Whenever we see the release of power in the Bible, it follows someone so hungry and passionate for God that they didn’t care what others thought.”

### ***Or are we like the despised Samaritans?***

When the Samaritan woman told the townspeople about Jesus, He became their first priority, they left everything they were doing and went to Jesus.

God is looking for people who will not lose their hunger and who will not lose their passion for Jesus. They are the people who God can bless and increase. The more God increases them, the hungrier, the more passionate they become and the more kingdom power will be released in and through their lives as a result.

### **WE NEED TO STAY HUNGRY**

John Westerburg who helps startup companies, small businesses and entrepreneurs become successful and who also writes about the topic wrote this: “The difference between winning and losing is how much you want it. And wanting it bad enough doesn’t mean you’ll automatically make it. The most important part, if you’re a creative, if you’re an entrepreneur, if you want to get into the ring and go a few rounds with fate, is staying hungry.

The people who change the world, they stay hungry. They look at what they want to do, and they look at what they want to change, and they don’t resign themselves, they don’t call it a day. They don’t say they’re satisfied.

The hunger is what drives you. The hunger is what makes you excited to wake up in the morning, and it’s what gives you the power you need to keep gunning for your goals when you take a hit, or you’re reeling from a loss.”

As Christians we need to stir up the same hunger, day by day if we want to win this race we are running.

Paul wrote this:

**1 Corinthians 9:24-27** Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. 25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. 26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

**Philippians 3:12-14 (NLT)** Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

- We have to stay hungry.
- We have to run to win.
- We must leave the past in the past.
- We must strain forward.
- We must be disciplined.

There is a great prize at stake! If we lose our hunger, we lose the prize!

## **CONCLUSION**

How hungry are we for God? We need to feed that hunger, we need to stay hungry so that passion and power can be released. We must never be satisfied with bread alone.

Jesus said, "My food is to do the will of My Father". This is the food we must be hungry for – When we are hungry for God, we are hungry for what He wants.

I close with what Jesus said in **Matthew 6: 31-33** "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'" 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Seeking God's kingdom first is what hunger for God is all about!