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A Heart Hungry and Thirsty for God

By Pat Chadwick



Hunger for God is the longing we have to encounter Him. It is obvious that the imagery of hungering and thirsting after God is a scriptural concept.

Christ said, *“And blessed are all they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost (Matthew 5:8).”* One of the main physical drives we have is for food and water but we also find within each person a strong desire to know God, for God has placed within mankind a hunger & thirst that is only satisfied by Him, although men try to fill their hunger with many different things. Notice that Jesus did not say those who seek for power, riches or fame etc. would find fulfillment but those who seek after righteousness, or in other words “God”. Let’s face it. We have a hole in our hearts that only God can fill.

Centuries before Christ, Jeremiah understood this longing among men and brought the word of God to men saying, *“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart (Jeremiah 29:13).”* From the beginning of time God has always

assured his children that He loves them and responds to those who sincerely seek Him and cry out for His help.

David on the run, hiding from Saul, called out to God and said, *“O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is (Psalms 63:1).”*

He was in a desolate, hot dry area, running and hiding for his life. Water was essential to his survival, yet he realized even more essential was his relationship with God. For in that relationship he received strength, hope and even joy, despite his circumstances. David’s thirst for God was greater than even his thirst for water.

David went on to say, *“Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus, will I bless thee while I live; I will lift up my hands in thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips (Psalms 63:3-5).”* The fulfillment and joy he found in knowing God superseded even His physical desires.

Enos felt this hungering and sought God. *And my soul hungered; and I kneeled down before my Maker, and I cried unto him in mighty prayer and supplication, for mine own soul; And all the day long did I cry unto him; yea, and when the night came, I did still raise my voice high, that it reached the heavens. And there came a voice unto me saying, Enos, thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou shalt be blessed (Enos 1:5-7).* Do our souls hunger for God? If not, why not?



Digging Deeper

Apostle Clifford Cole in his book, "The Revelation of Christ" p. 193-194, said about Hungering and Thirsting after Righteousness: "The person engaged in satisfying his whims by achieving the values of the world chases a mirage. Whatever he seeks has no lasting value. He is like the man who dreamed that he ate, only to awake and find that he was still famished. He is burdened by anxieties which drive him on to achieve goals that in the long run turn out to be very much like a phantom that always eludes him, or having grasped it, he finds it has no substance. He cannot succeed by his own power, and though he may for a time deceive himself, arrogantly thinking that he is achieving success, he inevitably comes to the day when all his achievements fade and he, as a person, faces the stark reality of personal unimportance and even death.

When one turns his eyes to the Christ, however, he is reminded again that these things which burden people really need not be feared. They are less important than the eternal things of life.

When our concerns turn toward the enduring things of life and we find ourselves hungering and thirsting after righteousness as Jesus commanded us to do, life takes on whole new dimensions. Hungering and thirsting after righteousness is a consuming passion.

Most of us seldom know what it is to be hungry or athirst. We have three good meals every day, snack between times, and a drink of water is as close as the nearest faucet or well. In the days of Jesus when people trod on foot across the hot barren desert roads, the experience of thirst gave meaning to the words which the Master spoke. The dozing well-fed lion is quite a different animal from the famished gaunt beast that steals through the jungle in search of his prey. So, it is the mildly interested Christian is quite a different man from one who actually hungers after righteousness."

Instructions and Helps for Hungering and Thirsting After God



To more fully understand the importance of seeking out God and partaking of *His Bread of Life and His Living Water*, let's look at God's word on the subject.

Jesus spoke truth when he said, "*It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God (Matthew 4:4).*" The bread of this world will never be able to fill man's hunger and thirst.

As a prophetic people, a people who are called to build Zion in this the last days, we must hunger and thirst for God. We need to seek Him first and often. From the prophets of the Old Testament to Jesus and on through to the book of Revelation, the people of God are depicted as those who have developed a hunger and thirst for God. ***And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely (Revelation 22:17-18).***



Might it be that the missing component in the Church today, the thing that keeps us from building Zion, is our lack of hunger and thirst for God? In the psalms David tells us what happens when we lose our hunger for God. ***Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them (Psalms 107:5). Have our souls fainted within us? Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger (Proverbs 19:15).*** Has our slothfulness in seeking God caused us to fall asleep, not even waking to eat or get oil in our lamps?

Jesus told the woman at the well a great truth when He said, ***“Whosoever drinketh of the water which I give him shall never thirst (John 4:16).”*** We find why that is true when we read: ***And blessed are all they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost (Matthew 5:8).*** Note, in the king James Version it just says “shall be filled” but in the Inspired Version, Joseph was inspired to add “shall be filled with the Holy Ghost”.



If daily we feast at the “Table of God” eating His food and drinking His water, we truly will never be hungry or thirsty, for the Holy Spirit will dwell within us. If we stay in covenant with God and daily seek Him we will be filled. ***And he said unto them, He that eateth this bread, eateth of my body to his soul, and he that drinketh of this wine, drinketh of my blood to his soul, and his soul shall never hunger nor thirst, but shall be filled (3 Nephi 9:44).***



Action Section

Let's Evaluate Our Selves,
Are you Hungering and Thirsting?



Action = Consider the following and then evaluate what place God holds in your life.

1. **Are You Missing God?** = Have you lost the ability to hunger for God? A starving person eventually stops feeling hunger. What is your condition? On a scale of 1 to 10 how would you rate your thirst & hunger for God? Everyone is driven by something and if our priorities get out of kilter so does our desire for God and then God takes second place in our lives. ***The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him (Ezra 8:22).*** Do you daily desire God? Are you hungry for Him? Is He first in your life? **Evaluate yourself!**
2. **Your Emotions can be a Thirst Indicator** = Negative emotions such as anger, depression, despair, frustration and irritation etc. can often come from “Spiritual Dehydration”. Just as starving people get past feeling hunger, people who do not drink water, lose a desire for the very water they need. Your emotions can

often be a warning to you that your spiritual body is dehydrated and in need of “God’s Living Water”. *Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me (Psalms 51:10)*. We often forget to drink enough physically because we are busy. Same is true spiritually. We just get busy and forget to partake of the Living Water. Sometimes we have conditioned our taste so we prefer soda or tea to water. We can do the same spiritually. *For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water (Jeremiah 2:13)*. Are you thirsty for God? **Evaluate Yourself.**

3. Pray to Be Hungry and Thirsty for God = Pray to feel that deep desire to be with God and seek heavenly treasures that have eternal value. *Pray always and I will pour out my Spirit upon you, and great shall be your blessing; yea, even more than if you should obtain treasures of earth and corruptibleness to the extent there of (Doctrine and Covenants 18:6a)*. Are you hungry and thirsty for God? What kind of treasure is your heart hungry for? **Evaluate Yourself.**

4. Recall what it was Like to Be With God = *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou are fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent (Revelation 2:4-5)*. Have you left your first love? **Evaluate Yourself.**

5. Hunger can be caught = What does that mean? Well, if you go into a home and someone is baking bread, and the aroma fills your senses, you will start to feel hunger. Your mouth may even start to water. The same is true spiritually if we are around people who are true Disciples of Christ, we can catch their enthusiasm & hunger for God. So, catch the hunger = Attend church often and don’t miss prayer service. *Moroni 6:6 And the church did meet together oft, to fast and to pray, and to speak one with another concerning the welfare of*

their souls. Are you spending quality time with the body of Christ? **Evaluate Yourself.**

6. Seek out Spiritual Food = Are you reading the word of God, attending study classes, learning of Him? *And feast upon that which perisheth not, neither can be corrupted, and let your soul delight in fatness (2 Nephi 6:102)*. *Wherefore, I said unto you, Feast upon the words of Christ; for behold the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do (2 Nephi 14:4)*. Do you spend more time watching TV or Movies than the study of God’s word? **Evaluate Yourself.**

7. Choose the Bread of Life and the Living Water = Check yourself & your habits, what are you filling your soul with? Are you filling up on soda pop & junk food from the world? *Oh taste and see that the Lord is good (Psalms 34:8)*. Don’t just evaluate yourself = **Make a Change. Choose to partake of the Bread of Life and the Living Water.**



What Will You Choose?