

Most of us don't understand real hunger. We've never gone days without eating. We live in a nation where food is abundant. We have become accustomed to eating routinely. We talk about having three meals a day not a meal every three days. We complain about being hungry when we have to fast before a medical procedure. The real "suffering" of such fasts is not the lack of food; it's the abstaining from food that is readily available in our pantries and refrigerators.

Many of our New Year's resolutions involve food. "This year, I'm going to eat healthier." "I'm going on a diet and changing what I eat." Very few people actually have a plan that involves eating less or less often. The most popular diets are the ones that deprive the body of one type of food while allowing indulgence or even over indulgence in another.

It is, then, no wonder why we can't properly understand and appreciate Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5:6. How can we properly comprehend hungering and thirsting for righteousness when we have never felt the discomfort and suffering of real hunger and thirst? We don't understand the single-mindedness of a person who is truly hungering. To a person who is truly hungry or thirsty, the only thing that matters is food or water. As Christians, we are to be singly focused on God and his righteousness. We should pursue it with an unquenchable passion; one that will not be distracted or deterred from reaching its goal, which is to honor God by living in obedience. It is then and only then that we will be truly satisfied and filled. That is when happiness is found.

Scripture: Matthew 5:6

I. Are You Hungry?

A. **The Hunger**

1. Physical hunger reveals our need for nourishment for living
2. Spiritual hunger reveals our need for God to truly live

B. **The World's Menu**

1. The world's menu is designed to satisfy your taste buds without providing the nourishment needed to grow
2. The world's menu seeks to feed man's hunger for:
 - a) Power - "He's power hungry."
 - b) Praise - "She's starving for attention."
 - c) Pleasure - "Satisfy your sexual appetite."
3. The world's menu is vast because nothing on it will truly satisfy
 - a) Substances
 - b) Sexual immorality
 - c) Success
 - d) Stuff

e) Sports & Entertainment

C. The Word's Menu

1. The Word's menu is designed to satisfy your nutritional needs so that you can grow and be strong
2. The Word's menu seeks to feed man's hunger for:
 - a) Relevance - We were made for God's glory
 - b) Redemption - We were saved for God's glory
 - c) Reward - We can spend eternity glorifying God
3. The Word's menu has one item on it because that one item is all-sufficient
 - a) Jesus and his teaching (both preached and practiced)

In Jesus' day, hunger was real for much of the population. That's why when he taught the disciples to pray he taught them to petition the Lord for their "daily bread." They didn't have an abundance of food like we do. One of the greatest images of heaven is of a time of a great banquet with feasting. This image resonated with the people because they didn't leave Temple and go to an all you can eat buffet.

The beauty of the Lord's promise in Matthew 5:6 is not just that food will be provided but that the hungry and thirsty will be filled. He provides more than we can ever consume. He has imparted Jesus' righteousness to us for the sake of our salvation, but he encourages us to come and feast upon his Word. He longs for us to long for him and his ways. He wants us to desire to be obedient like a hungry man desires food or a thirsty man desires water.

So as we come to our time of invitation, I ask you "Are you hungry?" Are you pursuing God's glory and righteousness with the dogged determination of a starving person? If not, then maybe you need to reassess your priorities. Maybe, you're filling up on the empty calories of the world's menu rather than feasting on the exquisite cuisine of the Word's menu. If so, stop settling for something that will leave you hungry and satiate your appetite with something that will leave you happy.