



February 18th

Physical and spiritual hunger

- on what do we depend for life? -

Matthew 4. 1-4

1Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2After fasting for forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3The tempter came to him and said, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.' 4Jesus answered, 'It is written: "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."

Deuteronomy 8 2-3

2Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. 3He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

Manna - meets hunger but highlights dependence on God

Psalms 63. 1-5

You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water.

I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands.

I will be satisfied as with the richest of foods;
with singing lips my mouth will praise you.

Matthew 5.6

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness

Matthew 25.

I was hungry and you gave me no food

John 6.51

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live for ever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.'

1 Peter 2. 1-3

1Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. 2Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, 3now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Revelation 7.16

"Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat down on them," nor any scorching heat.

REFLECTION & PRAYER

Note - those things on which you depend for life each day.

What sets you up for the day at breakfast-time?

Even if you do not see each other every day, are there people that you need to know are there?

In what ways do you recognise your dependence on God?

Take a look at a newspaper - identify articles that refer to or demonstrate hunger, whether it be physical or spiritual.

Use these to shape your prayer for the world and yourself.

Reflect - On a scale of 0-10, how hungry am I for God? What makes me hungry for God?

Wisdom from Wesley

Beware of quenching that blessed hunger and thirst, by what the world calls 'religion': a religion of form, of outside show... Let nothing satisfy you but the power of godliness, a religion that is spirit and life - you dwelling in God and God in you...

John Wesley

Prayers

The joy of our hearts has ceased; our dancing has been turned to mourning. - Lamentations 5:15

The fields are empty - the sowers have fled,
the schools are empty - the children are taken,
the clinics are empty - there is no medicine.
The camps are full;
full of the homeless, the hungry, the desperate,
full of the heart-sore, the violated, the traumatised.
Lord,
drive fear and despair from the full places,
fill the empty places with hope for the future. Amen.

Almighty God, it is difficult to see children suffer, especially from hunger. We ask You to give them daily bread today (Matthew 6:11) and end their persistent hunger. Provide the food they need to grow and thrive. Pour out Your grace on hungry families, especially parents straining to feed their children despite dwindling resources.

"For he ... fills the hungry with good things." –Psalm 107:9

Thank You Lord for being our Bread of life – the One who satisfies our soul's deepest desire with the joy of salvation. Open people's eyes to recognise You as the only Bread of life for their spiritual hunger.

"Then Jesus declared, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'" –John 6:35

FURTHER INFORMATION & READING

World Food Programme website: www1.wfp.org

‘In a world where we produce enough food to feed everyone, 815 million people – one in nine – still go to bed on an empty stomach each night. Even more – one in three – suffer from some form of malnutrition.

Eradicating hunger and malnutrition is one of the great challenges of our time. Not only do the consequences of not enough – or the wrong – food cause suffering and poor health, they also slow progress in many other areas of development like education and employment.

In 2015 the global community adopted the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development to improve people’s lives by 2030. Goal 2 – Zero Hunger – pledges to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture, and is the priority of the World Food Programme.’

It has been estimated by the World Food Programme that 98% live in developing countries, countries that perversely produce most of the world’s food stocks. So why is this the case?

A look at the **top 10 worst affected countries** helps us see what obstacles are making them hungry and why.

<https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/the-worlds-10-hungriest-countries/>

End Hunger UK is supported by the URC and other churches.
<http://endhungeruk.org>

The Trussell Trust, offers some personal stories from the UK
<https://www.trusselltrust.org/what-we-do/real-stories>

What is real hunger? - an exploration of other factors behind a sense of hunger.

<https://psychcentral.com/lib/what-is-real-hunger/>