**Sunday 24th July 2016 Message**

**You are meant to be hungry – not starving**

**Grapes**

**Introduction**

Hunger is a gift from God, starvation is a plan of the enemy.

This morning I believe God wants us to focus on being spiritually hungry for more of God. We know that in the natural to be hungry is evidence of being healthy. If our children lose their appetite, then we know something is not quite right. If I lost my appetite I reckon Linda would think I was dying. Yet when it comes to spiritual matters we tend to ignore the fact that sometimes we lose appetite for the things of God, in fact sometimes we can be starving ourselves from Gods best and not think much of it.

In the natural we get hungry when we have not eaten, but in the spiritual there is a different dynamic at work, we get hungry when we eat. There is a lot of Moorish taste in the things of God, that we should want more, and do not worry you will not get fat as God has created in you a spiritual vacuum that He desires to fill.

***Eccl 3:11 He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. NIV***

If you do not think you have capacity for the things of God think on this verse, He has set eternity in the hearts of men. There is eternal space, eternal desire, put into the hearts of all people, the question is have you tasted anything of God that you want more?

***Ps 34:8 Taste and see that the Lord is good; NIV***

For me tasting the presence of God, tasting the love of God, tasting the power of God, tasting relationship with God, tasting anything of the reality of my heavenly Father, is more morrish than eating one Oatie biscuit, and I cannot eat just one, if I was allowed I would eat the whole packet in one go.

An experience of the infilling presence and power of our Father should make us hungry for more, and that experience has been made available through Jesus Christs death and resurrection. It is not an experience available for a few favoured people. It is not for the well educated, the rich, the holy ones, the young, the old, but to everyone. Wrigglesworth a great healing evangelist of his time had once tasted of the reality of Jesus in his life that he became hungry for more. He was an illiterate plumber until he was 56 years old before he was hit (by the power of God. He had a banquet encounter which convinced him that the great gift of Holy Spirit was available for everyone to make heaven principles a reality in the heart, mind and body of everyone who wanted it – An encounter with God is available for everyone.

Have you truly tasted the reality of Gods power in your lives? Are you wanting more, or are you satisfied with what you have?

**Why does God make us hungry?**

We have a clue as to why God has given us an eternal hole in our hearts which should be hungry for more of Him, in the words of Moses

***Deut 8:3 He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers 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. NIV***

Hunger humbles us. It makes us aware of our need for things outside of us. It makes us aware of our dependency on God to live life in abundance.

We cannot live life to the full as God desires for us too, without an intimate relationship with our heavenly Father.

God has placed within the human heart heavenly desires for justice, peace, love, acceptance, forgiveness, prosperity, honesty, generosity. No matter how hard we try in our own strength we cannot fulfil those desires in this world corrupted by injustice, fighting, hatred, rejection, un-forgiveness, poverty, dishonesty and selfishness, because we are so focussed on our own ways and gain.

**Is God hungry?**

At the start of the Bible and the end of the Bible, no matter whether you read it like a Jew from back to from, or like a westerner from front to back. God has revealed His eternal plan, and His eternal desire.

His desire is to have a close/intimate relationship with mankind. He wants to live with them, walk with them, and talk with them.

His plan is to have undefiled world in which people can have eternal life, no sickness, no decay, no tears, joy unspeakable, love unfathomable, peace unmeasurable.

In between the beginning and the end of the Bible we have revealed the struggle of mankind to live in and out of relationship with God. Throughout we see God revealing Himself and His love for His creation. The ultimate manifestation of this was His show of love in the gift of Jesus Christ.

***John 3:16-21 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. 19 This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. 20 Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. 21 But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God." NIV***

Believing in Jesus is the first taste of eternal life, that is not just believing He was a person who existed once in history, but believing His eternal existence and in all that He has said and done for you.

I was journaling yesterday as I asked God this question – “Are You hungry daddy”

This is what I believe He said to me.

Yes, son I am hungry. I am hungry for more people to accept the gift of life and power that I have offered them through Jesus. I am hungry for the love of people. I am hungry for a church to move in the power that I have given them in My Spirit to make manifest My goodness and My power. I am hungry for the world to know I can heal their hearts, their minds, their bodies, their relationships. I am hungry for the world to know My glory by those who love Me walking in the fullness of everything I have made available to them and through them. I am hungry because I see what I have planned, I have tasted of what I have planned and I want more.

**Hunger moves you**

Without hunger you stagnate and become happy with the present situation. People who are not hungry for something different will carry on doing the same thing, hoping for something better but and getting the same results. Some would describe this as a sign of madness.

If you are hungry for food you will get off your backside and go and get food from the kitchen if you have any in your cupboard. If you do not have food in the kitchen you will be moved to go out and buy some if you have money. If you do not have any money or food at hand you will be moved to work at the best, beg or steal at the worst.

If you are hungry for more of God you will spend time with Him, you will recount testimonies of what He has done so far in your life, you will read what God has said He will do in and through you in the Bible, you will read testimonies of how God has used people in the past, how He has healed, delivered and transformed lives of so many throughout the generations. You will spend time with others who have a real close relationship with our heavenly Father. You will wet your appetite by tasting of the goodness of the Lord and grow in faith and expectation that He will plant a meal of supernatural experience through you for you and others to feast upon.

Hunger causes you to dream of better and bigger things. When you are satisfied with what you have you will be stuck in the present when you are meant to be pursuing the eternal future and bringing what is in heaven onto earth. You are the future now because you are in relationship with a Father who has a future for you which is available even now.

Have you stopped dreaming about what your life could look like if you allowed God to totally invade your world. Have you stopped dreaming about what your family relationships could look like if you partnered with God to bring about kingdom realities? Have you stopped dreaming what this town would look like if Gods power and love invaded not only the hearts of the many but the systems of principles of authorities and businesses.

***Psalm 107:33-38 He turned rivers into a desert, flowing springs into thirsty ground,***

***34 and fruitful land into a salt waste, because of the wickedness of those who lived there.***

***35 He turned the desert into pools of water and the parched ground into flowing springs;***

***36 there he brought the hungry to live, and they founded a city where they could settle.***

***37 They sowed fields and planted vineyards that yielded a fruitful harvest;***

***38 he blessed them, and their numbers greatly increased, and he did not let their herds diminish. NIV***

Note verse 35 God will turn deserts into pools of water. He intends to take what appears to be dead, lifeless, draining into something refreshing that can bring life. If you think the systems of this world are lifeless and draining, look up to the God who waters the earth.

Why is He going to do this? He is going to do this for those who are HUNGRY for Him, so that they can establish a different city where they can live. Not just the salvation of souls, but a completely different order. You Gods people will plant vineyards and see a bountiful harvest and increase in great numbers – if you are HUNGRY for Him.

Your hunger pulls on heaven – all that God has planned He wants to see His church hungry for, because as a Father He desires to feed His children with every good thing.

Hunger builds into you a transforming influence. No matter what you or I think of Trump, he has a hunger for a different America which is influencing people. There is a hunger raging in the world for a different order that is taking over because it is a hunger inspired by ungodly motives and has been grasped by the enemy. As spiritual watchmen we must watch, pray, warn and resist far right, fascist politics which is on the rise, and in disguise, if we do not want another holocaust. May your prayers be that the hunger in the hearts and minds of people be directed towards God.

**Hunger and thirst after righteousness**

***Matt 5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.***

***NIV***

For those who hunger and thirst after being right with God, you are a blessed people and God promises to fill your desire to be right with Him.

You will never be right with God (righteous) by what you do and what you think is right. We are only right with God when we believe in Him and yield to His plans and purposes. That is why Abraham was reckoned by God as righteous, because He believed what God said and lived his life accordingly. Likewise, we are made right with God when we believe in Jesus Christ as the Lord of our lives and live in submission to Him. It is our belief which makes us righteous and shapes the way we live.

It’s okay believing a chair will support you weight, but sitting on it shows you believe in its ability to do so.

To me righteousness with God is more than being declared by God that I am in a right relationship with Him. It means I have accessed all that God has made available to those who live in righteousness. Because in God’s plan it is right for those who walk with Him to have eternal life, it is right for those who walk with Him to be whole, it is right that those who believe should be free from the power of sin, it is right for those who believe in Him should be full of peace, it is right for those who believe in Him to live, speak and do the same things Jesus did.

Self-righteousness is an ugly thing, it is full of pride, and contrary to the imputed righteousness that God has granted to those who believe in Jesus. The church in many quarters has portrayed a self-righteous, toffee nosed attitude as bad as the Pharisees had in Jesus day. If you want to be righteous in Gods eyes you can have that by being hungry for His influence in your life.

The verse I have quoted from Matthew 5:6 comes in the middle of what is known as Jesus teaching on the beatitudes. If you have looked closely the verses prior to this talk about the blessing of being in lack, the ones following this verse talk about the blessing of being in plenty. The Christian life is one of a challenge to be in hunger and full at the same time, there must always be a spiritual awareness that as full as we think we are there is always more with God. God has promised to fill us with righteousness, now think about that, with all your faults and failings, God has promised if you are hungry for His gift you can have it.

The old saying goes, “You are what you eat.” I wonder what that would make some of us? This maxim applies not only to our physical body, but to our spiritual being as well. Throughout scripture we find the simple truth, “it’s what is on the inside that really counts.”

The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks. (NIV)

Put simply we become what we eat. Whatever we feed our minds, whatever we seek to have fill our lives, whatever consumes our time and energy–these things determine who we really are.

**Concluding Comments**

Taste and see that the Lord is good. Hunger and Thirst. Depend on Him

It is time to repent, to turn away from contentment with life as you know it now, and turn towards the life as God has for you now and for the future.

To receive all that God has for you requires a conscious decision to believe in Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Saviour. Some of you here may not have made that decision but mark my words it is the best decision you can ever make. Some of you here will say I have made that decision but I am hungry for more, hallelujah, expect to be filled again this morning. Some of you may say that you are not hungry, you have lost your hunger for more of God, and want that restored, hallelujah it is time to repent.

If you are in any of those places, needing to give your life to Jesus, wanting to be hungry, wanting more of Him, would you stand as we pray.