

Day 3 – Cravings



Letting God Meet Your Needs

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. Philippians 4:12

It is better to be satisfied with what you have than to be always wanting something else. Ecclesiastes 6:9 GNT

If we just give God the little that we have, we can trust Him to make it go around. Gloria Gaither

What do you crave? What's missing in your life? Is it affection and attention? Maybe you crave affirmation, acceptance, or approval. Christ's words speak to us in our time of need. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest....For I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." (Matthew 11:28-29) Or, as the Message paraphrase translates that passage; "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me-watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace."

We all look for ways to fill our cravings, our needs. It may be food, drugs, alcohol, unhealthy relationships, or even something that we see as more positive, like work. We all have the same basic needs for food, water, air, shelter, security and meaning and purpose in life. But we also have emotional needs and if we don't release those needs to the Lord, those unsatisfied desires will rob us of the future that God has planned for each of us.

Acceptance is a powerful emotional need that, when it goes unfulfilled, we tend to find ways to fulfill it that are damaging to our lives, like joining gangs or pretending to be something we're not, just so we'll "fit in." But Luke 15:5-7 reminds us of just how intensely Jesus loves us. It's the parable of the lost sheep and it shows us that we don't have to go looking for love in all the wrong places. We just need to stay close to the Shepherd. Through his acceptance of us we can say, "I know why I'm here and where I belong."

Affirmation, longing for support from others, is another emotional need that we often seek to meet on our own in ways that can be very destructive. If our family and friends fail us, we may look for approval from others we'd be better off avoiding. 1 Corinthians 15:33 says, "Do not be misled: 'Bad company corrupts

good character.” It reminds us that we need to beware of making friends just to look good or to fit in with people who may not have our best interests, or God’s best interest for you, in mind. Read Romans 8:31-32 and you’ll see that you already have someone who is for you! And He is for you in a big way.

Who doesn’t love to hear applause? The truth is that we all want to win the **approval** of others. There are many who’ve spent years seeking the applause of the corporate world, only to find out that the real goal was to use someone for their own ends. When we realize that God is the only “audience” we really need to please, we can stop striving so hard. Our lives become much simpler and fulfilled. If we can learn to live for that audience of One, we’ll find a lifetime of approval and a “well done” at the end of our journey.

Have you ever watched a two-year-old throw a temper tantrum? You’ve just witnessed the need for **attention**! Unfortunately, that need can be manifested in negative ways that lead away from cheers and appreciation. But God wants you to know that you always have his attention. Psalm 139 says, “Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? God wants us to know that he’s available to us anytime we need him. Spend time with God. Bask in his presence and recognize that he is always ready, waiting and willing to listen.

We’ve all heard of studies that state that the human infant cannot thrive without **affection**. But we also know that there are many who crave affection if it’s not a part of their daily home life, and they may go looking for it in inappropriate and unhealthy ways or places. You ask, “Okay, so how can I get affection from God?” We feel just like the little boy who, when told to tell his troubles to God, he said, “But I need someone with skin on!” Yes, we do need someone with skin on, and that’s how God made us. It was his idea. So if affection is what you crave, tell God, and then wait on him. And while you’re waiting, consider looking for ways to offer affection to others who crave it, like those in senior centers or children’s hospitals, or your neighbor who lost a loved one. Be the answer you seek from God for someone else.

Our basic needs are there for a reason. They cause us to draw near to God and to each other. He allows us to have needs so that we’ll go to him and seek a lasting relationship with him. He has placed emotional needs in us so that we will seek out our brothers and sisters who may be hurting and need to know that there is a God who loves them and wants to invite them to come to him, as we hear in the words from John 14:1-3, “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me....I go to prepare a place for you...I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.”

Are cravings taking you down? Then surrender them to the only person who never gave in. Jesus is strong when we are weak and God’s Word promises that he will never test us without giving us a way of escape. When you are tempted, he’ll show you a way out. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Making if Count

Reflect on the cravings that have dominated your life. Write them in your journal and face them. Think of them as rocks in your bucket that aren't doing you any good toward accomplishing your purpose in life. Let God take those rocks from you. Know that resisting these cravings may be difficult. You may need to ask for help through a recovery group, a pastor, a Christian counselor or others in your faith community. It may not happen overnight, but there will come a day when the cravings diminish and your life is able to flourish in ways that only God could have planned.

Lord, thank you for helping me to see how these things I thought I needed were controlling my life. In reality, you're all I need. With you in my life, I can trust you to supply the rest. Give me the courage to let go of anything that's standing in the way of me living a life totally surrendered to you. In Jesus' name, amen!