



# SERMON NOTES

From In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley

## HUNGERING AND THIRSTING FOR GOD, PT. 2

KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 63:1-8 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE: Matthew 16:18; 28:19-20 | Hebrews 10:25  
Revelation 3:15-16

### ► SUMMARY

The feelings we have toward other people are determined by how well we know them, and this, in turn, influences how we relate, respond, and behave toward them. These same truths also apply to our relationship with the Lord and govern whether we hunger for Him or not.

### ► SERMON POINTS

In Psalm 63:1-8, David expresses his longing for the Lord with his actions, acknowledgments, and commitments. David ...

- Seeks the Lord earnestly.
- Sees His glory and power.
- Acknowledges that God's loving favor is better than life.
- Commits to bless the Lord as long as he lives.
- Prays in His name.
- Is satisfied with the Lord as with the richest of foods.
- Praises God from a joyful heart.
- Remembers the Lord at night and meditates on Him.
- Confesses that God has been his help.
- Sings for joy because of His protection.
- Clings to the Lord.
- Recognizes that God is the one who holds him.

These are descriptions of an intimate relationship with the Lord. No matter what David faced in life, he always drew closer to God and found comfort, stability, and joy in Him despite all his hardships and sufferings.

To many people, God is more of a stranger than the delight of their lives because they haven't gotten to know

Him. They seldom think of Him, have no passion for Him, and have relegated Him to the periphery of their lives. Even though they may attend church, God has a very limited place in their lives during the rest of the week.

Every person is born with a vacuum within their souls that can only be filled by the Lord. When someone is saved, the Holy Spirit places a yearning for God in the heart. As it's nurtured, hunger for the Lord grows, but if He's neglected, that appetite diminishes. Then the pleasures and pursuits of the world and the lusts of the flesh become more appealing, and God is crowded out.

### The Purpose of Hunger for God

There are several reasons why the Lord gives believers a longing for Him.

- 1. To Love Him.** God created us as an expression of His love, and gave us a desire and hunger to love Him in return.
- 2. To Transform Us.** He gave us a yearning to know Him intimately and become the person He designed us to be and accomplish what He wants us to do.
- 3. To Know Him.** The Lord wants us to know His love, goodness, mercy, and kindness and avoid the disappointment and disillusionment that lesser pursuits produce.
- 4. To Protect Us.** An intimate relationship with God is a protection against temptation and provides the stability needed to endure the trials and storms of life.
- 5. To Mature Us.** A passion for the Lord produces growth in our knowledge of Him and results in less fear and anxiety and greater peace, joy, and contentment.

## Distinguishing Between Hunger for God and Hunger for the Things of the World

When we nourish the hunger the Spirit of God places in us, we'll move toward the Lord in our thinking, affections, and actions. Every aspect of our lives will be affected by our yearning for God. We'll find our satisfaction in Him while at the same time hungering to know Him more.

If we lack this kind of longing for God, we'll try to find satisfaction in the pleasures of this life. But material possessions, achievements, and relationships provide only temporary satisfaction. Eventually they'll disappoint, leaving us searching for something or someone else. But nothing in this world can fill the spiritual void that God has placed in the human heart.

The world offers what pleases the flesh—the natural part of us that's selfish and sinful. But the Lord offers that which gratifies the spirit—the person we truly are in Christ.

### Indications of a Life That Hungers for God

- 1. Love and desire for God's Word.** The Bible is our only source for discovering who the Lord is. So those who hunger for Him are eager to read and meditate on His Word in order to know His thoughts, desires, attributes, works, ways, and commands. As they apply biblical truths, they gain knowledge, wisdom, strength, and guidance for life and see the blessings of obedience and the painful consequences of sin. Seeking the Lord in the pages of Scripture is like digging for nuggets of gold. With each truth and principle discovered, they gain greater faith in the Lord and deeper worship of Him.
- 2. Time spent with the Lord.** When we yearn for God, we'll want to spend time with Him in His Word and prayer. Our prayers will become a time to express our love, worship, praise, and gratitude to Him as well as our requests. We'll be more secure in His love and care for us, and our trust in Him will grow stronger.
- 3. Increasing freedom from temptation and the appeals**

**of the world and the flesh.** As our knowledge and love of the Lord grows, our desire for the world and its pleasures will diminish.

- 4. Longing for fellowship with other believers.** Loving God's people flows from loving Christ. Attending church, being taught God's Word, worshipping together, and serving one another will be the desire of our hearts.
- 5. Passion for sharing the gospel with others.** Those who are growing in their knowledge and love of the Savior are eager to tell others about Him and the salvation He offers to those who will believe in Him.

### Steps for Cultivating Hunger for God

- 1. Trust Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.** Only those who've been saved and receive the Holy Spirit can have a genuine hunger for God.
- 2. Make a commitment to pursue an intimate relationship with Him.**
- 3. Ask God to create in you a heart that yearns for Him.**
- 4. Read, study, meditate, and apply God's Word.**
- 5. Confess and repent of sin.** As the Holy Spirit uses Scripture to reveal sin in your life, confess and repent of it right away. Your relationship with the Lord cannot progress without genuine confession and repentance.
- 6. Be consistent in these steps.** Hunger for the Lord is not developed with a sporadic approach but by a persistent pursuit. When you falter, don't delay in beginning again.

### ► RESPONSE

- Do you consider God an intimate friend, or is He more like a distant stranger to you? How has your knowledge of God affected your perception of Him?
- What longings dominate your life? Where do you seek satisfaction? What place does a God have in your search for fulfillment?
- Are you presently cultivating hunger for the Lord? If not, what's keeping you from doing what's necessary to achieve this goal? What changes are you willing to make in order to develop a longing for Him?

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