

Hunger for God

by George Verwer

George Verwer emphasizes that true discipleship is marked by a deep hunger for God and a genuine desire for a relationship with Him.

Duration: 37:48

Scripture: Psalm 34:1-4, Psalm 34:10, Psalm 37:4, John 5:39-40, John 12:43, 1 Corinthians 15:58

Topics: "Hunger"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker recounts a powerful experience he had in Madras, India. He describes waking up early in the morning to attend a worship service led by Brother Buck Singh. The service lasted for hours, with continuous singing, praying, and music. The speaker emphasizes the power of this worship and attributes Brother Buck Singh's success in bringing souls to God to the genuine devotion and absence of gimmicks or human theories. He encourages the audience to come undone and rely on the grace of God rather than relying on human efforts or seeking blessings through external actions. The speaker also mentions the importance of Bible teaching and the abundance of resources available in the English language compared to the lack of resources for reaching Muslims in India. He concludes by urging the audience to be still and know that God is with them, sharing a personal experience of finding solace and strength in God's presence during a challenging day.

Transcript

I want you to open your Bibles to the 5th chapter of John's Gospel, starting at the 39th verse. Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me that ye might have life.

I receive not honour from men, but I know you that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not. If another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

How can ye believe which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only? We've been discussing in these messages various phases of discipleship, what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, what it means to live in obedience to Christ, and it's very clear, you know, that we must do it. Throughout the epistles it's clear, it's not just a message of the Gospels. I believe every basic teaching in the Gospels is clearly backed up by teaching in the epistles.

We think of the words of John, that we should walk how? Even as he walked. And so it is God's plan for us to live as Christ lived. This isn't just theory, it isn't just so much air, so many words, something we can have another meeting of, something we can write another book about, something we can put on top of the banner at our next Bible convention.

This is something real, something practical, something vital. Sometimes the men in the world are wiser in their day than we are. And it was H.G. Wells, the famous agnostic, in his book in which he blasted Christianity, it was H.G. Wells who said, not long after the Lord Jesus Christ died, those who claimed to follow him gave up practicing his revolutionary, that's the word he used, principles.

And it's so true, the Church has managed to hold on to the shell, to hold on to the noise, to hold on to all the outward structure, and has missed the hard core of what Christ talked about. This is the thing that almost sent me to the road of agnosticism. As I met more and more key evangelicals, more and more quote-unquote men of God, I went from Bible school to Bible school, and Christian institution to Christian institution, and found tremendous speakers, tremendous teachers, tremendous talkers, and few walkers.

I became very depressed, discouraged. And I've met hundreds of young people who are the same way. Let us be realistic, the majority of evangelical young people in England today, that is, those real in evangelical circles, are denying faith before the age of 25.

And our dear older folk wonder, what's happening? Must be the latter days. Hardly believing that it could be that there's something wrong, something basically wrong, even in the lives of those who are considered so highly amongst us. At one convention after another, I heard messages on the epistles of Paul.

I used to sell audio Bible studies from house to house. Brother Dale and I did this to get some money for Mexico, to add on to the little bit we were praying in with our feeble faith. And the audio Bible studies was Bible college on records from me.

No need to go to college, bring the college right into your home. Only cost you about 50 or 60 quid, we got 20 of that, and it was a good deal. And I'll listen to those records, my tremendous Bible teaching.

You could get 20 of the leading Bible teachers in the world right in your living room. At the terminal. Bible teaching at its best.

And we flocked to the conferences to get Bible teaching at its best. And what have you done for us? So I've gone to these places, I've gone and read these books. You know there's more than a thousand books in the English language that cover the appalling epistles.

Could you believe it? In the Urdu language to reach 50 million Muslims in India, we've got one book and it's poorly written and miserably translated. But in the English language to cover the appalling epistles, to expound them and pull out of them oftentimes what there isn't there, there's more than a thousand books. So we can go to our conferences and you're probably lining up for next summer's already.

I will hear another exposition on the depth of Colossians. It is a very deep epistle. But my great question tonight, to follow after what Brother Keith has said, is in the midst of all this, where are the Apostle Pauls? I would like you to answer that.

I want to meet them. I'm hungry, starving to meet men of that caliber. Men who it can be said of, for three years they seeked out, night and day with tears to warn men and women.

Men who mocked at the stripes that tore across their backs. Where are these men in the 20th century? And it's because we have separated our theology from our lives and we're trying to put them in two categories, that we are not finding these men in our nation. We have many sincere men.

We have many great preachers. Definitely. Golden tongue, silver tongue.

We've got many great preachers. But where is one who can stand tall for years with tears, cease not to warn men and women night and day? And I want to speak tonight about tears. The mock of a disciple.

Tears. Or shall we say, one of the mocks. Look in your Bible to 1 Corinthians, I mean the book of Acts, excuse me, chapter 20, and we see the Apostle Paul.

He wanted to serve the Lord. Now everybody here uses that phrase, theology, don't we? I'm going to serve the Lord. My, if I could only find my place in the Lord's service.

There's all kinds of frustrated Christians trying to find their place in the Lord's service. But you know, God's far more concerned about your finding your place in the Lord than finding your place in the Lord's service. And I don't believe it's near as important tonight that you know where you're going as it is you know how you're going there.

And I'm not referring to your mode of transport. In whose strength? You're going behind the iron curtain. That's wonderful, but in whose strength are you going? You're going to the muggle world.

Wonderful, but in whose strength are you going? You're going to India. You're going to evangelize. You're going to be a disciple.

Raise your banner. We're off to India. But in whose strength are you going? I dare to say that most of us, even many of us who are leaders in this so-called movement, don't even know the beginnings of what God really wants to teach us.

Let us never think we have arrived, for at that point we will be at zero minus one. I want you to look at the Apostle Paul to continue on with what Brother Keith said and to see how he served the Lord in verse 19 of chapter 20. Serving the Lord, it says, with all humility of mind and with many tears and temptation, which means really trial, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews, and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you and have taught you publicly and from house to house.

Notice those words, serving the Lord with all humility of mind and with many tears and trial, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews. It doesn't say serving the Lord with great preaching, with large literature distribution, with tremendous campaigns behind the Iron Curtain, with great exploits in Turkey. It says he served the Lord with humility, tears, and trial.

You see, discipleship is first of all a matter of heart. Until your heart is right, everything else is wrong. This is why I know some fellows that know when everything is wrong, but I praise God for them.

I know their heart's right. Guys that have minds, that would add up two by two next to anything, but I know their heart's right. I know that they're hungry for God.

And this brings me to the real thing that is burning on my heart tonight, the real mark of a disciple, the real thing that is at the core of discipleship, the real thing that gets way beneath anything else I believe we've talked about up to now. The core of discipleship, the rock, the base, is hunger for God. The disciple above

everything else, more than he's loving, because most of us, as much as we want to, as much as we desire to find ourselves so often, not loving.

But down beneath that is this great factor about a disciple that marks him as a disciple. He's hungry for God. That's the greatest proof I have that I'm a disciple.

I'm not talking about myself being a disciple in that I've kept the Sermon on the Mount or certain creeds or oaths, or that I've sold all my possessions, that I live ruggedly or sleep on floors or climb through windows giving out tracts, not referring to that at all. But the reason I know that I'm his child and that he's doing something with me and that he wants to make me a disciple, a real disciple, is this incessant, impossible-to-stop hunger for God. Do you have that tonight? If you do, you're on the right road.

You might be a failure. You can join in my club for failures. You might have made your 1,898th blunder this morning.

You can join in my club for blunderers. But if you're hungry for God, if you want to know your Creator, if you want fellowship with the One who created you, if your desire is to know Him, to walk with Him, to breathe with Him, then you're on the beginning, you're on the right road to discipleship. Look with me for a minute at a few verses in the Old Testament.

To these men of God who walked and knew Him, we remember what it was said of David. What did God say about David? David was a man who lived in purity all the days of his life. Is that what God said? He couldn't say that.

David was a pillar of strength. He couldn't say that. But what did God say of David? David was a man after my heart.

David was a man as seen in the Psalms who was hungry for God despite his failures, despite his backslidenness, despite his away. He was hungry and thirsty for God. Look with me at Psalms, Psalms 46, verse 10.

I mean Psalm 42, verse 1. This isn't a psalm of David. We'll read that next. Here we read, And the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee.

Can you say that tonight? Can you pray that tonight? As the deer, away from the water for many days, panteth after the water brooks, my soul panteth after thee. You read history. You read the history of the Church back right to the first century.

You'll always see it. The mark of the disciple, the mark of the man of God. He was hungry, hungry to know God, hungry to know righteousness.

Look at Psalm 37, verse 4. Here we see David, the man after God's own heart. And it says, I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

My soul shall make her boast in the Lord. The humble shall hear thereof and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt his name together.

I sought the Lord, and he heard me. And look down. I sought the Lord, and he heard me and delivered me from all my fears.

Verse 10. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good things. They that seek the Lord shall not want any good things.

Are you hungry tonight? Hungry to know Christ better. Hungry to know God better. This is the mark of a disciple, of a follower of Jesus Christ.

After all, who is the man who's really going to know God? Who is the man who's going to really have an intimate relationship with God? Is he the clever one? The one who knows how to beat everybody in praying, leap over everybody in preaching? The one who distributes the most books? The one who can answer all the theological questions? Is he the one that the Lord draws nigh to? Or maybe it's the one who's a tower of strength, almighty one. Years he's lived above all men, strong. He's done great things for God.

Unfortunately, he sort of knows it. Is this the one God is going to draw nigh to? Is this the one God is going to reveal himself to? Or maybe it's the Bible student, the one who's got all the ins and outs, from Genesis to Revelation. You can't touch him with a 40-foot pole.

He's got every answer in context and out of context. You can't touch him. He knows the Word of God.

He has the longest prayers in the meetings, and they're loaded with tremendous Scripture verses from Ephesians and Colossians and Revelations and all over the place. Is this the one God draws nigh to? Is this the one that God reveals himself to? Or maybe it's Mr. True Disciple, in the wrong sense of the word, the one who's got everything right down to a tee. He's checked every possession.

It's all committed to the Lord. He's sold everything. He's got one suit.

He should have two, because the one is too dirty to wear in any meeting. But anyway, he's a real disciple. He's been on a limb twice.

He knows what it is to sleep on the floor. Tough. Is this the one that God draws nigh to? Look at the Scripture.

Psalms 34, David cries out in the 18th verse, The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, as David such as be of a contrite spirit. The one who in brokenness, the one who in his sense of failure, his inadequacy, his inefficiency, falls at the cross and says, God have mercy on me. Unto him the Lord will draw nigh.

I don't know about you, but that gives tremendous encouragement to me. Do you remember the story? I think we've already said it during these days, but many of you, perhaps all of us, need to be reminded of it. The two men that came to the synagogue and the one that went right up there towards the front, and he stood on his toes and he said, Oh God, I thank you that I'm not like other men.

He probably thought of the man who had so many possessions, told, thank God I'm not like him. He probably thought of that young fellow that had never been on a Pharisee campaign, saying, God, I'm not like him. Thank God I'm not like other men.

And he prayed a great prayer that he learned at Bible college. Another poor guy, way off in the distance, bent over, beating himself. God have mercy on me.

What a misguided man. Who did God draw nigh to at that moment? That great theological discoursesman throwing out words that meant nothing? Was it he who was justified? Was it he who got the blessings? No. He went away with his rogues of self-righteousness and knew nothing of justification nor blessing.

But that one who came, as it says in this very chapter, with a broken spirit, with a contrite heart, God, you know I'm a failure. God, you know I'm a phony. God, you know I've done this, I've done that.

I'm a sinner. Have mercy on me. He was blessed.

He was justified. I can't explain it. But it's one of the reasons I believe the book.

No man would have thought of this. This is contrary to human ideas. All of humanity, all of history from the very beginning of time said you do something and you get something.

That's what all of world religions teach. Every single religion is the same barrel of nothing. You do this, you get this.

You do this, you do this, you do this, you do this. We know that the Jews had so many laws. We know that our dear Muhammad in France had so many things they must do.

If they go and have the fast, and if they go to Mecca, and if they do this, and they do this, and they do this, and do this, and do this, then someday, bless him, God comes down through Jesus Christ and through the Word of God and shatters all human theory. Human theory would say, you'll be a great disciple, you live according to the laws of the Sermon on the Mount, you go around the world and give out a half-million tax, you go on a campaign and shine the shoes of some other brother and prove that you're humble, and then you'll get a great blessing. If you want a blessing tonight, you must come undone, realizing you'll never shine anyone's shoes but by the grace of God, except with false motives.

You'll never give any tracks out except by the grace of God. You'll never last two months, even on this next campaign, but by the grace of God, and so I plead with you, don't wait any longer. Come now to the fountain of blessing and take that which is free of charge.

Paul, writing to the Galatians, says, Have you begun in the Spirit? Now will you continue in the flesh? Many think, I'm saved by grace, but now, my Christian life, I'm going to work my way out. This is a serious mistake. You are saved by grace and you'll serve by grace.

It's the only way. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart and save as such as be of a contrite spirit. Turn over just a page to Psalm 37.

Look at these words. Verse 4. Delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. You know why many of you are not finding the will of God in these days? Because you're delighting in other things.

You're delighting in the enthusiasm, the adventure bubble of Operation Mobilization. All over the world in twenty days in the back of a Bedford lorry. Tremendous.

And if that merit is there, even if it's on the unconscious level, you're delighting, delighting in the fellowship, the enthusiasm of it all. From place to place we go. One minute we're going across the English Channel.

Next minute we're going over the Alps. Next minute it's across the Bosphorus. Tremendous.

Where are you going next year, Brother Keith? If you're delighting in a work, if you're delighting in an organization, if you're delighting in a movement, sooner or later, you're going to be very discouraged. And I have discovered most Christians are delighting in some kind of a movement. Everybody has their favorite movement.

Have you ever noticed that in Christian service? Everybody has their favorite movement. With one it's just admission, another one is still to the fellowship. We all give different names to our movements to make them distinct.

Ours is the most distinct. Operation. Well, no one has that name.

No one's that crazy. And we delight in it. We delight to see how it ends.

We delight to know that we're considered those that are enduring hardship. To be a part of it all. We really get satisfaction in it.

So along we go. Like one great... I can't give you the word. It might not be acceptable in this case.

But might God deliver us of it. Might we go out in this work delighting in the Lord, Jehovah! Then when the oil bubble pops you'll be praising Him on the top of your voice. Might we go forth delighting in Him so when the lorry breaks down it means nothing.

I know some people who are very happy. You know, I've been told I met someone who had 45 reasons why Operation Mobilization is fun. And when they heard the 45 reasons you know what they did in Spain and what they did here and all of a sudden the reputation began to crumble and it wasn't a great group of disciples now it was a group of nobodies and they were making mistakes and they weren't organized and the leader, ooh, we even found out that he sins once in a while.

Oh, the bubble popped and there he was. A deluded disciple. A would-be disciple.

Don't delight in other things. Our God is a jealous dog. He will not share His glory even with organizations that claim to be spiritless.

He will not share His glory with me. He will not share His glory with any preacher, with any healer, with any movement. That's what we see in that chapter in John when Jesus Christ said to the disciples, How can you believe? How can you believe which seek honor one of another and not the honor that cometh from God only? I want to be able to believe God for great things.

I want to be able to believe God for finance. I want to be able to believe God for laborers. I want to be able to believe God for assemblies and souls and victory in the lives of those I'm working with.

God has often said to me, I'll tell you, How can you believe which receive honor one of another? How we feed on it. How we feed on it. And the mark of a disciple is that he's hungry for God.

He wants the honor of God. He wants the world done. Thou good and faithful servant, day after day he lives for it.

He craves it like the deer craves the water of the brook. Hunger for God. Delight, delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Some of you, in all sincerity, because one thing I know about most who come on OM, of all their weaknesses, our weaknesses, the one thing I know about the hundreds and hundreds that have come into the ranks of this group of fools is that they are sincere. And God does know your heart. Might it be that way even as you get more answers to your questions.

But one thing I know, that God is very clear in his word concerning the fact that he wants all of you. He doesn't want half. He doesn't want three-fourths.

He wants all your attention. Some of you are very, very busy men. Always many activities.

There's always so much to do. And you go running around trying to settle all the problems, straighten up this, do this, straighten up here, get this arrayed, get the meeting going. And God is standing in front of you.

He says, My child, my child, come up and speak with me a while. Excuse me, I've got a meeting. Away you go.

And I want you to turn to Psalm 46, verse 10 and see what God wants to say to some of us tonight, especially to me. Psalm 46, verse 10. Be still and know that I am God.

Be still and know that I am God. When's the last time you did that? I want to tell you the only thing that has ever carried me through, the only thing that has ever given me the power to go another day in this spiritual zoo, is God. I was coming in the underground this morning and I didn't feel like going through another day.

Have you ever had that? Another day at the desk, another day giving out some text to people who oftentimes don't want them, another day answering questions, picking up telephones, another day... I didn't even myself want to go through another day. I went into my little office and I put the map of India up in front of me and I played a little tape that I brought back from the holy convocation of Brother Bakht Singh in Madras of Indian music. And I sat down and took my shoes off and closed my eyes and went 14 or 7,000 miles across Madras and I was sitting there and I remember that morning so vividly and I wept.

We got up at 5 in the morning and I remember the night before Brother Bakht Singh announced that I have the announcement on the tape. He said, now some of you have to leave early Sunday so in order that you all might get your heavenly portion we're beginning at 5 o'clock our worship service. And I thought, 5 o'clock, they had a night of prayer the night before.

And I remember that morning they sang chorus after chorus and song after song and one man prayed and another man prayed and prayed and prayed and prayed and went from 5 o'clock in the morning to a quarter of one in the afternoon. And I saw the power of that work. I saw my times given Brother Bakht Singh probably several hundred thousand souls.

We don't have any publicity. We don't have any gimmicks produced by our highbrow Madison Avenue boys that have us all to see. He was a man of praise.

He was a man who was hungry for God. He wasn't very clever. He's made his mistakes and got criticized by everybody and his brother because of it.

But he was hungry for God. He was a man after God's heart. He was a man who spent hours and hours in prayer and you couldn't interrupt him with a pile of elephants.

He wanted God at any cost. Get up at 5 in the morning but get with God. Sure there's problems.

Sure there's struggles. But there in the midst of it God honors that kind of thing. And I want to tell you if you go through these days you can sell 50,000 pounds of books.

You can do all kinds of things with a hand. But if you don't get to know God better. If you don't get time with God.

If you don't get to know his fellowship, his communion. If you don't learn to delight in him. To go out in the woods or under your car or somewhere and just be still.

Just as we say in America I don't know if you're allowed to say this here but I'll say it. Just shut up and listen. That's the mark of a disciple.

He's hungry. He's hungry for God. And if you're hungry if you feel that uneasiness that desire for more to know Christ more intimately to know God more fully to walk with him to talk with him then you stick with us for this year.

Unite with us in prayer. But if yours is some non-secondary motive Christian activity gospel work this or that as good as it might be withdraw your application. Please.

I want to read these words in closing from a man I respect very deeply. His name was Tozer. And he said this, listen.

In this hour of all but universal darkness one cheering gleam appears within the fold of conservative Christianity. Within this fold there are to be found increasing numbers of persons whose religious lives are marked by a growing hunger after God. God himself.

They are eager for spiritual realities and will not be put off with words nor will they be content with correct interpretations of truth. They are a thirst for God and they will not be satisfied till they have drunk deep at the fountain of living water. This is the only real remnant or harbinger of revival which I have been able to detect anywhere in the religious life.

In the midst of this dark world religious confusion abounds. Religious superficiality has blinded the eyes of a multitude. A multitude of theologies and theologians and conventions and books have blinded us, have led us astray and there's one remnant.

In the midst of it all there are few who are hungry after God. They want more and they realize that in their flesh there is nothing but in Him is everything and they want Him. They don't go for campaigns to this country or to that country as much as they go on crusades to know God in a greater way.

That's what this work stands for! And as long as I'm living and breathing it will be my cry. Why? I haven't linked myself with O.F. I've linked myself with the living God. That's the only link that counts.

That's the only link that will ever be bent and twisted by the stupidity and the selfishness of man. Link yourself with God. Pray before His mighty hands.

Humble yourself and take your place at the cross and know the reality of His power, His life, His resurrection. The marks above all else. He's hungry for God and Jesus said, Blessed is he who hungers and thirsts after righteousness for he shall be filled.

He shall be filled. Praise God. It's true.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/21/SID21418.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/george-verwer/hunger-for-god/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net