

**Day 16**  
**Junk Food or Soul Food?**

**Matthew 5:6(Message)** *"You're blessed when you've worked up a good appetite for God. He's food and drink is the best meal you'll ever eat."*

We all know what it is to be hungry and thirsty. Hunger and thirst is necessary to sustain us. From the beginning of creation, we are encouraged to eat. Eating is a good thing; it beats not eating any day of the week! When the Lord placed Adam in the Garden, He also provided food for him. *"The Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. **16** But the Lord God warned him, 'You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden- **17** except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die.'" (Genesis 2:15-16 NLT)*

The problem for Adam was not that He would be hungry, but that He would hunger after the wrong thing. Since Adam, we all have been trying to fill a legitimate need with the wrong kinds of food. Jesus is telling us a blessed life belongs to those who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness. The word **"Hunger"** refers to the desperate craving a starving man has for food. He is so famished that he becomes desperate for a meal – willing to do anything to eat. When we are hungry we tend to eat whatever we feel like whether it is good or bad for us. We don't care. We just want to satisfy our hunger. But Jesus said the only people who truly will be filled are those who hunger and thirst after the right things. How hungry are you? Where and what is your hunger leading you to?

***"To be hungry is not enough. I must be really starving to know what is in God's heart toward me. When the prodigal son was hungry, he went to feed on the husks, but when he was starving, he went to his father."*** J.N. Darby

When we truly understand how good God is, we will find it very easy to hunger and thirst after Him. Our challenge is to change our natural appetites for a supernatural appetite. We follow our fleshly cravings instead of our spiritual longing. The hunger of our souls will never be satisfied or filled until we find our satisfaction in our Creator. David understood this and we see this reflected in his life as a Psalmist. There are many examples of this in the Psalms, but one of the most pronounced ones is Psalm 34.

Psalm 34 is an Hebrew acrostic poem focused on how good the Lord is. Each verse begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. In English, this would look like a poem where the first line begins with "A," the next line "B," then "C," and so on. David wants us not only to know how good the Lord is, but he wants us to actually experience God's goodness. Once you have tasted the goodness of God, there is no turning back. That's why he writes in the first part of verse 8: ***"Taste and see that the Lord is good."*** David looks at God's character, His attributes and His Power, and reminds us that none who have experienced God for themselves will ever settle for something counterfeit. He goes on to say: ***"Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in him! **9** Fear the Lord, you his godly people, for those who fear him will have all they need. **10** Even strong young lions sometimes go hungry, but those who trust in the Lord will lack no good thing."*** (Psalm 34:8b-10 NLT)

Can you imagine living a fully satisfied life? Can you find your fulfillment in Him? Even nature's strongest (strong young lions) will sometimes go hungry, but the weakest of us, who places our trust in Him, will not lack any good thing! Why would we look anywhere else? Why would we seek after that which does not satisfy? Isaiah's invitation is still valid ***"Hey there! All who are thirsty, come to the water! Are you***

***penniless? Come anyway—buy and eat! Come, buy your drinks, buy wine and milk. Buy without money—everything's free! Why do you spend your money on junk food, your hard-earned cash on cotton candy? Listen to me, listen well: Eat only the best, fill yourself with only the finest. Pay attention, come close now, listen carefully to my life-giving, life-nourishing words.” Isaiah 55:1-3a (Msg)***

You might be broke, but you can still buy. You might have spent your money on the wrong kind of foods, but you can change. The best food is waiting for you. There is a table prepared for you with everything that will nourish you and fill you completely, but it's only found in Christ Jesus. Junk food or Soul Food, the choice is yours...

#### **Reflection and Prayer:**

- **Read and reflect on Psalm 34.**
- **Make a list of all the ways that David says God cares for us; like: “He answered my prayer v2 or He freed me from my fears...”**
- ***Psalm 34:1-22(NLT) “1 I will praise the Lord at all times. I will constantly speak his praises. 2 I will boast only in the Lord; let all who are helpless take heart. 3 Come, let us tell of the Lord’s greatness; let us exalt his name together. 4 I prayed to the Lord, and he answered me. He freed me from all my fears. 5 Those who look to him for help will be radiant with joy; no shadow of shame will darken their faces. 6 In my desperation I prayed, and the Lord listened; he saved me from all my troubles. 7 For the angel of the Lord is a guard; he surrounds and defends all who fear him. 8 Taste and see that the Lord is good. Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in him! 9 Fear the Lord, you his godly people, for those who fear him will have all they need. 10 Even strong young lions sometimes go hungry, but those who trust in the Lord will lack no good thing. 11 Come, my children, and listen to me, and I will teach you to fear the Lord. 12 Does anyone want to live a life that is long and prosperous? 13 Then keep your tongue from speaking evil and your lips from telling lies! 14 Turn away from evil and do good. Search for peace, and work to maintain it. 15 The eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right; his ears are open to their cries for help. 16 But the Lord turns his face against those who do evil; he will erase their memory from the earth. 17 The Lord hears his people when they call to him for help. He rescues them from all their troubles. 18 The Lord is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed. 19 The righteous person faces many troubles, but the Lord comes to the rescue each time. 20 For the Lord protects the bones of the righteous; not one of them is broken! 21 Calamity will surely destroy the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be punished. 22 But the Lord will redeem those who serve him. No one who takes refuge in him will be condemned.”***