

Ignite: Hungering and Thirsting

Objective: By the end of the lesson the student will understand what it means to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Bible Verses:

Matthew 5:6

I Peter 2:2

I Corinthians 3:1-2

Matthew 4:4

Psalms 42:1-2

John 14:8

Romans 7:18

Micah 6:8

Psalms 23:1-6

John 7:37-38

Essential Question? What do you think it means to hunger and thirst after righteousness (Read Matthew 5:6)?

Teacher Note: Chart the responses on a whiteboard.

Opening:

How could hunger and thirst lead to happiness? Well think about it like this-do you want righteousness as much as a hungry person wants food or a thirsty person wants drink?

Teacher Note: Make sure all scriptures are read out loud in the class by student volunteers.

Content:

It's like when a new born baby needs milk-when we begin our Christian walk we should be seeking God's word like a new born needing milk (I Peter 2:2). In Texas a normal mesquite tree uses 55 gallons of water a day in the summer. That is why so many of them are destroyed. The water is better used for grass. That's why if a mesquite tree stops drinking it is dead. Just like if you don't eat and drink God's word you are dead.

Food and drink also help us grow. We develop as Christian's just like humans move from babies to children. As we develop we need to increase the complexity of our spiritual and physical nourishment (I Corinthians 3:1-2).

When you are hungering and thirsting for physical food you will be very innovative about finding it. If you are lost in a desert you might find water in a cactus plant or locate wild berries to stay alive. In a spiritual sense we want to find every nugget of knowledge from God's word (Matthew 4:4).

We have to be seeking God like an animal searching for water (Psalm 42:1-2). Notice what Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough (John 14:8). This gives you a better picture of what we mean by hungering and thirsting for righteousness. God is righteousness and when we find Him we can finally be satisfied.

Paul realized in our flesh we are not as good as we want to be (Romans 7:18). But by reaching out to God and having a relationship with Him we can get closer to the good we want to be. None of us are good enough without God, but as long as we desire (hunger/thirst) righteousness God will stay in relationship with us.

Micah 6:8 teaches us to walk justly, love mercy and have humility. Only by studying God’s word will we build up these characteristics. Only when we know the right way to act will we be thinking about our motivations and actions. Just like the constant need for food and drink we have to constantly be thinking about the right actions we take.

People are running through life trying to be happy. They look for happiness in physical things like possessions, relationships, food, drink, drugs and money. None of these things will bring lasting happiness. When we have a relationship with God we will be in need of nothing else (Psalm 23:1-6).

Independent Practice:

Have the students break into groups and discuss what activities in their life have made them happy. Were there things they used to do often that they don’t do as much now? Ask them to discuss their favorite food and drink. What happens once you eat and drink too much? You don’t want anymore. Emphasize to them after they report back to each other that nothing in life can satisfy us as much as a real relationship with God. When we truly understand His plan and purpose for our lives we will be satisfied with whatever circumstances we are in

Close/Reflect

Read John 7:37-38 to conclude. The living water here is a symbol of God’s Holy Spirit. When we commit to God and get baptized we are on the road to satisfying our spiritual hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Any final comments or questions?

Sources: The Zondervan 2000 Pastor’s Annual, by T.T. Crabtree, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999).

