

What Do You Crave?



PREVIEW

If you study the life of Jesus, you will see He was drawn to desperate people. Many of those with whom He interacted needed a miracle, deliverance, or something only Jesus could bring. Jesus noticed those who were willing to do whatever it took to get what they needed. These people were willing to do some crazy things to get to Jesus, even when people around them were trying to keep them away from Jesus. We will discuss today how we can live our lives in such a way that we can get the attention of Jesus.

PRAISE

Have you ever had a sudden craving or urge for a particular kind of food or restaurant? (Have a few students share their experiences.) Maybe it's late at night and you suddenly need Taco Bell. Maybe you have been doing homework all day and you're suddenly hit with a craving for a large pepperoni pizza. We've all been there at some point in our lives. We've all had a sudden urge for something and we can't focus or continue on with our day until we get it.

PARABLE

When you're in the mood for something, you don't want to stop, back down, or be satisfied until you get what you're longing for. I'm not talking about food; I'm talking about your hunger for God on the inside that will be reflected on the outside. Conversely, your hunger for the things of the world on the inside will also be reflected on the outside. If you're hungry enough to seek first the kingdom of God, it won't matter to you what you have to sacrifice to get to Jesus, because what you might have to let go of pales in comparison to the things God has for you.

(Read Rom. 8:18 and Phil. 3:8–10.) Being hungry for Jesus means you have to have the same level of hunger for the Cross. Being hungry for Jesus means you have to be willing to suffer persecution. Being hungry for Jesus means you have to be forgiving when people talk about you behind your back. Being hungry for Jesus means you have to be ready and willing to go through pain and endure heartache from friends and family.

PRESENT

(Read Mark 10:46–52.) Jesus and His disciples had just passed through the gates of the city of Jericho, followed by a “great multitude,” when they encountered a blind man named Bartimaeus. We don’t know how long he had been there begging alms. The Bible doesn’t specify how long he had been afflicted with blindness, but it was long enough for him to be in desperate need of a miracle. He cried out to try to capture the attention of Jesus above the noise of the crowd.

Bartimaeus was very specific in identifying Jesus. He referred to Him as “Jesus, thou Son of David.” This phrase appears seventeen times in the New Testament. It denotes more than a statement of physical genealogy; it is a messianic title. You see, when people referred to “Jesus as the Son of David,” they meant that He was the long-awaited Deliverer, the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. So Bartimaeus was identifying Jesus as the One who had come to save them from their sins, the One who had come to fulfill all Old Testament prophecies. And one of those prophecies was that the Messiah would heal all diseases and infirmities. It was as if Bartimaeus was saying, “Jesus, I know who You are and what You can do for me. I’m going to do whatever I can to get to You, even if I have to yell my head off!”

PRACTICE

What happened when Bartimaeus called on the name of Jesus? Jesus stood still. When you focus on the name of Jesus in the middle of your darkness, when you remember the name of Jesus in the middle of your mess, when you shout out the name of Jesus in the middle of your circumstance, Jesus will stop and look to see who’s calling. Jesus commanded Bartimaeus to be brought near.

(Read Ps. 42:1.) Jesus stood still when He saw Bartimaeus’s hunger for Him. People tried to quiet him so he wouldn’t cause a disturbance. But staying quiet would have caused Bartimaeus to miss his miracle, and he wasn’t about to let anyone or anything stop him from getting to Jesus. He wasn’t going to rest until he got what he craved. If you crave the things of the world, your hunger will never stop. If you crave the things of God, you will be satisfied and filled. So what is it that you crave?

PRAY

Thank You, Jesus, for today's reminder that we need to be seeking after the kingdom of God. We know our craving can only be truly satisfied by You. You are the only One who can bring peace, life, hope, and restoration into our lives. Let us crave You more than the world. Let us call out to You and run after You. Help us to let go of the things that are dragging us down so we can be the true disciples You have called us to be. Let our souls long for You because we know You will fulfill our heart's desire if we seek you first. In Jesus' name, amen.

PLUS

If time allows, ask the following questions and encourage all club members to participate in the discussion:

Why are humans designed to crave things?

Why do you think cravings differ from person to person?

How do you overcome cravings for negative things (physical or spiritual)?

In what ways can we focus our desires toward God and away from the world?

Like Bartimaeus, how do we shut out the haters in our life and keep moving toward Jesus?