

1. (Thanksgiving month---makes me hungry and of course hunger and thirst are common human urges which I will be focusing on all month-- Scripture frequently reference this to **convey a consuming desire** such as) Isaiah 55:1-2 (spoken at a time when Israel had consuming desires for almost everything but God. It was Isaiah's attempt to turn Israel's appetites back to heaven. Perhaps Jesus was thinking of this in)
2. Matthew 5:6 (Both of them speaking of what I call a)
3. Holy Hunger (having that overwhelming desire to be satisfied only in God--to channel our desires and appetites not toward the senses but toward the kingdom. Like David he speaks of blessings and promises connected to it. It has two components)
  - a. Developing a defining desire for discipleship
  - b. Prioritizing the attaining of it (it is creating the desire to know God more deeply and the satisfaction of attaining that desire by being constantly in his presence.)
4. (Summed up by Jesus as) Righteousness-- Romans 1:17; 2 Corinthians 5:21 (and it is important to note exactly what this means--more than just following a moral code--included for sure, but goes beyond that to Christ himself--who imputes or gives us his righteousness which is the righteousness of God. It is that all consuming passion to fill completely up on the essence of God; that desire to eat and drink the richest fare understanding that it alone satisfies while everything else is just a substitute and see here is where it gets real)
5. God of our Bellies--Philippians 3:17 (there are plenty of substitutes--tasty temptations that whet our appetites--driving desires in directions other than righteousness. We live constantly in that tension--maybe illustrated by Jesus tempting a hungry Jesus to turn stone into bread. So what really drives us? Where is our passion? What are the gods of our bellies that seek to redirect our desire? To overcome them and truly hunger and thirst after God takes work; discernment; discipline bc the belly fruit may look good, taste good, but its end is more hunger, more empty promises, more harmful demands and eventually destruction. Whereas if we can direct our appetites toward heaven, we will find fulfillment, satisfaction and triumph. I think of Psalm 37--where God promises to give us the desires of our heart if we commit and trust him--those desires being reflective of heaven though not of the wicked that David describes in this text--God laughs at them, knowing their day will come; while promising those who thirst after him total completeness. So what drives our appetites--righteousness or the god of our belly? Are we like the deer panting for the water or Adam and Eve lusting after the fruit?)
6. (Finish with this biblical call) 1 Peter 2:2-3 (and if you have tasted the goodness of the Lord, then you understand the language and illustration in the text--to crave it. Again it is about appetites and what drives them; what we delight in and prioritize; if it is the holy hunger that truly drives us. The easiest way to frame this is--let's get off the junk food that the belly craves and develop a driving appetite for things of the Spirit--the righteousness of God; do the work in the gym of our soul and prioritize the kingdom first!)