

We are hungry

by Joel McClure

We are hungry for true community. We have tried to find it in the crowd on Sunday morning, but there must be more. We have tried to find it by living vicariously through the lives of characters on the television, but they vanish like the fragile fog. We need you to help us see what true community is. Help us by pointing to the perfect community of the Father, Son, and Spirit. Help us by pointing to the community of faith as God intended it to be. Help us by demonstrating that kind of community. Dwell with us and let us dwell with you. Let us share with each other so neither of us is lacking anything. Help us by simply being present. Feed us with your silent presence. Feed us with the Bread of Life.

We are hungry for answers to life's difficult questions. We are hungry for an end to our confusion. We are hungry for words to explain our feelings and thoughts. Help us by struggling through these questions with us. Help us to untangle the mess that confusing language has made in our minds. Help us by giving us language to describe our experience. Help us by showing that you are confused as well. Help us by working through it with us. Feed us with a clear word from God. Feed us the Bread of Life.

We are hungry for God's message to us. Help us to know that God is not silent. Help us to know that God responds to our questions and requests. Help us to understand the Bible. Help us to understand who Jesus was and is. Help us to understand what salvation means. Help us by listening to our questions, knowing our needs, and asking God to speak to us through you. Help us by listening to God without your own agenda. Help us to hear Jesus when you speak to us. Feed us the Bread of Life.

We are hungry for safety. We are hungry for someone to listen to our fears and not laugh. We know they are irrational, but they are there nevertheless. We know they may sound silly, but please, just hear them without calling us silly or stupid. Just let us talk until we have finished--hear us out--then listen beyond our words and hear our heart. Feed us with answers from God. Point us to truth in the Scriptures, not your or anyone else's philosophy. Help us by giving us anchors to keep us steady as well as to pull us out into deeper waters. Feed us by offering us open ears and open hearts. Feed us by pointing us to Jesus. Feed us the Bread of Life.

We are hungry for someone to demonstrate the compassion of God. We live in a world that rarely shows us that we are valuable. We live in a world that takes without mercy. We live in a world that moves on to the next useful thing without considering the fact that we are still here. We live in a world that consumes without compassion. Feed us by loving us for who we are, not for what we can provide for you. Feed us by loving us as we are, not only if we clean ourselves up and make ourselves pleasing in your sight. Feed us by loving us when we are acting like an enemy. Feed us by suffering with us out of your love for us. Feed us by being like Jesus who left the heights of heaven to come and walk among us. Help us by receiving us with all our imperfections. Feed us by joining us in the heartache of our demolished childhood, and help us to discover healing. Help us by pointing to One whose brokenness makes us whole again. Help us by staying with us as we struggle through a lifetime of healing. Feed us with your continuous loving presence. Feed us the Bread of Life.

We are hungry for love. We are hungry for someone to love us for who we are, not what we can provide for them. We live in a world that defines our value by our usefulness. Help us by showing us that we have value regardless of how we benefit you. Help us by showing us that we are loved, simply for being us. Help us to feel valued by wasting time with us. Help us to feel more valuable than your schedule or your agenda. Feed us by being Jesus with us. Feed us the Bread of Life.

We are hungry for hope. We are hungry for a way to live that is different and better than what I live now. Do you hear us? Do you understand that we already know that our lives are messed up? Do you hear us crying out for a better way to live? Help us by demonstrating the life of Jesus. Help us by giving us ways to make His life a reality in our lives. Help us to know how to walk in his steps. Teach us how to pray by being pray-ers. Teach us how to live in the presence of God by being people of God's Presence. Help us to enter into the life of God's kingdom today, not after I die. Jesus told us to be perfect as his Father in heaven is perfect. Help us to make that a reality. Help us to see that it is possible. Help us to see that it is good. Feed us by showing that it is possible to live like Jesus did. Feed us the Bread of Life.

We are hungry for laughter. Do you see how we try to escape the burdensome tragedies that overwhelm us every day? We have Leno and Letterman and Murphy, but we want a reason to laugh with joy, not at the diminution of other people. Help us to find the freedom that brings laughter. Help us to discover the hilarious grace that comes with a clear conscience. Help us by being able to laugh at yourself, because then we can laugh at ourselves too. Help us to know that we will not be belittled because we are sure of your love for us. Help us to know that we cannot be diminished because we are loved by God. Feed us with your laughter. Feed us with the joy that comes in knowing Jesus. Feed us with the Bread of Life.

We are hungry for honesty. We are cynical because we live in a world of duplicity. Help us by letting your guard down. Help us by letting your "yes" mean "yes" and your "no" mean "no." Help us by not hiding behind your words. Help us by making yourself vulnerable. Help us by showing us your authentic self. Help us by destroying our suspicions because of your transparent heart. Help us by reaching out to us with open arms. Help us by showing us the God in whom there is no shadow. Help us by showing us the God who cannot lie. Feed us by pointing us to Truth. Feed us the Bread of Life.

We are hungry for pictures to guide our experience. We do not want technical jargon or even religious sounding words that are foreign to us. Teach us with the simple, common images that communicate the Truth. Help us by speaking like Jesus who used wheat, bread, water, wine, birds, flowers, salt, and light. Give us images that shape our thinking. We think in images. Help us find the right images. Feed us by giving us a mustard seed. Feed us by pointing us to the Light. Feed us the Bread of Life.

We are hungry for clarity. We are bombarded with words. We are tired of cute alliteration. We are tired of clever word plays. Help us by giving us one clear word from God. Help us by being simple, not simplistic. Feed us by thinking through the complex questions we have and understanding them enough to explain it to a child. Feed us with the simple beautiful Word. Feed us the Bread of Life.

We are hungry for grace. We believe that we must "measure up." We believe that we must be clean before we can come to God. Help us by showing us that God meets us where we are now. Help us to understand the meaning that grace is a gift, not something we become worthy of. We don't know how to open our hands to God. Help us to open our clenched fists so we can freely receive what God freely gives. Feed us by being gracious to us. Feed us by sharing the grace you have received from God. Feed us the Bread of Life.

We are hungry for peace. Strife is abundant in our world. We do not have the sanitized past or present you may have had. We identify with the shattered lives you see on the talk shows. What is bizarre to you is not far from our normal. We are hungry for peace-filled existence. Help us to find that. Feed us the Bread of Life.

We are hungry for forgiveness. We know the mess we've made of our lives and yours. Help us by loving us past our failures. Help us by sharing with us the forgiveness you have received from God. Help us by pointing to the forgiveness God has made available through Jesus. Help us by reminding us of the security of God's forgiveness. Help us by not holding our past failures

against us. Feed us with your unwavering friendship. Feed us by forgiving us more than seven times, because we will surely fail you. Feed us the Bread of Life.

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