

God's Answer for Your Most Intense Craving

There are times when I wonder will I ever get to the point where I'm there... you know, that place where finally the hunger for one more relationship, one more affirmation, a better home, job, body, future becomes more of a reality than a desperate prayer request. I wonder if I will ever wake up one morning, look around my home, look at my family, my career and the balance on my bank account and simply nod my head and say—yes, it's enough. It seemed like the harder I pressed to get “there,” “there” seemed to move farther away. I felt an unmistakable hole in my heart that going to church, smiling, serving, and telling people “I'm blessed,” couldn't fill.

Secretly I was broken and ashamed about how much I coveted a better life, more stuff, more peace, more rest and more of the inexplicable magic that would somehow make my life seem less mundane. I wanted to know if all the smiling pics of my Christian Facebook friends were truly happy. Were they so enthralled with their careers and families that they had reached this place of contentment that had always eluded me?

On the other side of my craving for more was the shame I felt about my own ingratitude. I felt ashamed of my superficiality—the way I felt when I compared my life to others. But despite my self-condemnation, I couldn't shake the hunger, the craving for more.

I got to a point where I couldn't stand it—I couldn't stand me and I couldn't stand the stirring I felt when I compared my life to the one I had always imagined myself living. In a moment of quietness, when the tears were falling and I didn't know what to pray, I simply whispered the words, “Help me ...” and just as quietly, the comforting words of Deuteronomy 6:5 came to mind, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and

with all your soul and with all your strength.” For a moment I was stunned, but I began to understand why the ache for more stayed lodged in my throat – I was missing more because I had chosen to love less.

Loving the Lord is about allowing Him to be first, a priority of the heart that views life as an expression of God’s love for us. He gave His life for our lives and sustains our lives through His Word. Every day, loving God is staying present in the moment –thankful that the past is covered by his sacrifice, He is with us in the present and our future is in His hand.

Loving Him with our soul requires an intimacy with God that goes beyond casual church attendance to an invitation into the chamber of our hopes and dreams. Are we willing to pour out our frustrations and fears, missed expectations and unfulfilled dreams to the One we love? Do we really believe the Lord can handle hearing the secret soul-hurts and unspoken desires we’ve tried to manage on our own for years? So often, our cravings for more are a sign of our sense of inadequacy and fear about the things we lack in our lives. When we love the Lord with our soul, we give Him an opportunity to cleanse our hearts, trading our dreams for His and receiving faith to believe that you and I, his beloved daughters are the apple of His eye, the one who He’s given his life for so we would experience life to the full today and for eternity.

Loving Him with our strength is the most powerful love of all because it pushes us to the place of great strength and weakness. We pour out our strength by recognizing how great He is, and we humble ourselves in worship. With our heads high, arms outstretched and mouth wide open we bend ourselves toward the One who made us and yield words of praise and adoration that declare His love, invite His presence and reveal His tender care for us. When we spend ourselves in worship, we find ourselves bankrupt in desiring the things of the world. We become consumed with the One who emptied Himself for us and

we want to use our lives to reflect who He is and all He's done.

His love causes the striving to cease. Yearning for the temporary pleasures that come from getting more stuff can never compare to the restoration, hope and peace we find when we celebrate the many ways He has loved us, and His invitation for us to love him.

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