

What are you longing for?

Take a moment and think – what is it you are longing for in your life at this time? What does your heart yearn for?

Now let me ask you another question – what do you think God is longing for?

YOU !!! From Genesis 1 to Revelation 22 the key message is God's pursuit of man. God created man in His image and he walked in the garden with him.

Let's look at Genesis 3:9

"God called to Adam and said "Where are you?"

How do you hear God when He says that. For much of my life I heard it from an angry God – a disappointed Father. But in more recent years I've heard it very differently – a cry out of the loss of what He had designed Adam for – to have a relationship with Him. Why else did he send His own Son to die on a cross?

John 3:16 – God so loved the world – this means every individual – each made in His image for His delight and relationship.

Paul tells us in Ephesians 5

*²⁵Husbands, love your wives, **just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,** ²⁶that He might **sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,** ²⁷that He might present her to Himself **a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.** ²⁸So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹For no one ever hated his own flesh, but **nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.** ³⁰For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. ³¹"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."³²**This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.***

We are called to be the Bride of Christ and this is the identity we (the whole church worldwide) shall have before He returns

Rev 22:17 – The Spirit and the Bride say come

A Bride who is totally abandoned in wholehearted love for her bridegroom.

A Bridegroom who calls us to experience the deep things of His heart, His emotions, affections, and desires for us.

The Bridegroom message starts with experiencing Jesus' love or affections for us (Eph. 3:18-19) and knowing the deep things of His heart (1 Cor. 2:10). As the Bridegroom God, the revelation of Jesus desire for us awakens our love for Him. Jesus delights in us, enjoys us, values our work, cares about our welfare, is committed to our greatness, provides for our success, and partners with us in His work

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³⁰ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the first commandment. (Mk. 12:30)

He desires exclusivity and abandonment in our love for Him. A man does not marry his wife out of mercy, but desires her exclusive love and partnership. There is joy in wholeheartedness as we feel the power to love without reservation. Having something to die for gives us something to live for.

But how is God drawing us into this place – by addressing the longings of the human heart that he placed in us as part of his incredible plan. So what are these longings – this morning I want to look at 7 longings of the human heart. I'm sure we'll all recognise these longings. Our problem is that the world seeks to fulfil these longings but it cannot satisfy. How many lives have been ruined by satisfying human longings with things of the flesh. It is God's desire to empower our hearts for new measures of enjoying Jesus by answering these seven longings. In the overflow of enjoying God, we will find power to extravagantly love Him.

The Lord built these seven desires into every human heart to reflect aspects of His own glorious personality. He will bring us into the knowledge of who we are in Christ, especially related to our bridal identity. As He does this, He will satisfy these "designer longings" that He sovereignly put into each one of us. God desires to free us from the dominion of the "inferior pleasures" of sin and the flesh by introducing us to the "superior pleasures" of the gospel.

That He (Jesus) might...cleanse her (Church) with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.(Eph. 5:26-27)

A. Longing #1: The longing of assurance of being loved by God v. seeking approval from others

1. There is a craving in every heart to be pursued, delighted in, and enjoyed, first by God and then by our families and friends. Understanding God's affection for us is where we begin our journey in the "romance of the gospel," where our heart is exhilarated in God's love. In the gospel, we are beckoned to receive God's embrace.

Sustain me...refresh me...for I am lovesick. (Song 2:5)

If you find my Beloved...tell Him I am lovesick! (Song 5:8)

2. The most prevailing stronghold of the mind is related to the fear of rejection. When we understand **what** Jesus did on the cross, then we can understand **why** He did it.

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3. Most people desire romance. Such desires are powerful and sometimes devastatingly painful. Many have experienced the pain of being scorned and rejected in love. God wants to use our disappointments in love to drive us into His holy romance.
4. However God enjoys and delights in us even now, with spiritual immaturity! (Lk. 15:4-5, 8-10, 20 – the lost ...). Jesus corrects us with His discipline, He does not reject us. He corrects us because He so desires us. We often mistake correction with rejection
For whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights. (Prov. 3:12)
5. The Bridegroom King desires, pursues and enjoys us as His Bride. When our heart is assured that we are deeply enjoyed, then something powerful is awakened within us. Over time, this truth changes our emotional chemistry. It seems too good to be true, but it is gloriously true.
I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me. (Song 7:10)
6. Jesus longs to satisfy our deep longing to be enjoyed. He does this by revealing to us that we are pursued and desired by Him. In the assurance of being enjoyed our hearts will be set afire.

B. Longing #2 - The longing to be fascinated v. Looking for the next fix.

Your eyes will see the King in His beauty... (Isa. 33:17)

One thing I have desired...all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD... (Ps. 27:4)

1. There is a craving in every human spirit to be fascinated and to marvel. We long to be awestruck and filled with endless wonder. The secular entertainment industry has identified this human longing and has targeted it commercially.
2. God answers this longing by unveiling the **beauty** of Christ Jesus. In these days, Jesus is being manifested as beautiful.

*In that day the Branch of the LORD (**Jesus**) shall be beautiful and glorious... (Isaiah 4:2)*

3. A new anointing is being released on the Church to perceive Jesus' beauty in order to answer our craving for awe and wonder.

C. Longing #3 – The Longing to be beautiful v. obsession with appearance

To give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning (Isa. 61:3)

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Let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us... (Ps. 90:17)

For the LORD takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the humble with salvation. (Ps. 149:4)

1. Every one of us longs to possess beauty and to feel beautiful. The glorious news is that the beauty that God possesses is the very beauty that He imparts through redemption. His beauty is transferable to human beings through Jesus! This is a staggering concept! God imparts His beauty through redemption to formerly demonized, hopeless, sin-ridden people. A beautiful God created us in such a way that we long to possess and feel His imparted beauty.
2. Our culture has an obsession with physical appearance as it seeks to answer this legitimate longing in a wrong way. Most people pursue beauty at great lengths because we feel so unsettled and unhappy when we feel ugly. Our heart vigorously chases after the realm of beauty.

D. Longing #4 – The longing to be great v. having to prove ourselves; pursuit of riches

Whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave (Mt. 20:26-27)

Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven... whoever does and teaches them (God's commandments), he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Mt. 5:12-19)

Whoever humbles himself... is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (Mt. 18:4)

1. In the core of our being, we long to be successful and noble. The great God created us with a pursuit of greatness deep within our emotional genetics. Sometimes we misunderstand this longing and assume that we must repent of it, but this isn't true.
2. We cannot repent of the God given longing to be great, but only of pursuing it in a wrong way. We were made for greatness and honor. Jesus declares that His people would one day be exalted to His very right hand.
3. He meets this longing for greatness and nobility by granting His Bride a position of authority that surpasses even the highest ranking angels. In the embrace of our Bridegroom King, we co-rule with Him.

To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My Throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. (Rev. 3:21)

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4. As the Church takes hold of the truth of who we really are as honoured and esteemed heirs of God's Throne, then our lives will portray a divine inner strength and a fierce determination to be wholly His.

F. Longing #5 – We long for intimacy without shame v. The one relationship where we are accepted as we are without judgment, fear of loneliness

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. (1 Cor 13:12)

For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, I speak concerning Christ and the Church. (Eph 5:31-32)

1. Intimacy involves not only our knowledge of His secrets, but also His knowledge of our secrets. He understands all the secret aspects of our life that are unknown, unnoticed and misunderstood by others. To be fully known without shame and to be free of fear of being left alone is exhilarating.
The secret of the LORD is with those who fear Him... (Ps. 25:14)
2. Because of our value to Him, we are invited into this mysterious realm of Divine knowledge. God put this longing in us because He wants us to find our satisfaction in what is in His heart. He will share His secrets with us forever.
3. He has many secrets that He will reveal to His Bride, ones that the angelic and demonic principalities and powers do not yet know. He trusts us with the secrets that even the highest ranking in the angelic host do not know.

The manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the Church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places... (Eph. 3:10)

4. **He has intimacy in our victory and prosperity** He knows the depths of our longings, dreams and intentions to love Him. Even our failed intentions to love Him are seen. Much of our life is unknown as it goes unnoticed and misunderstood
5. **He has intimacy with us as He feels our pain and struggle with sin.** He forgives us, feels our pain in failure, and protects us by not disclosing the vast majority of our sin. He knows our shameful deeds, yet believes in us and treats us with honour.

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6. **He has an intimacy with us in our sacrifices.** In the heroic struggles of the martyrs and in all the heroic struggles that every believer goes through to walk in faith and obedience, there is an intimacy in the pain of that of which He has already entered in.
7. **He has intimacy in knowing the passions of our heart.** He knows the depths of our longings, dreams and intentions to do good. He knows your longings and your dreams. He knows the cries of your spirit, the longings you have in time and eternity.

G. Longing #6 – The longing to be wholehearted and passionate v. the need to pursue the good cause

You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart... (Mt. 22:37)

1. God will restore the First Commandment to first place. We desire the ability to give the deepest affection of our heart back to God. The “joy of lovesickness” is exhilarating. Oh the joy and power of being lovesick for Jesus. Loyal love frees us from the burnout of spiritual boredom.
2. He imparts to us the power to be passionate because He is a passionate God. We cannot function properly until we have passionately given our heart to a Person and purpose beyond ourselves. ***If we don't have something to die for, then we don't have anything to live for***

H. Longing #7 – The longing to make a deep and lasting impact v. the need to make sense of life “What's it all about?”

Whoever gives one of these...only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward. (Mt. 10:42)

For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. (Heb. 6:10)

1. We are desperate to live with meaning and to work in that which is filled with relevance and significance. We desire to make a contribution to the lives of those we care about. God designed us to long to make a difference in the lives of others. We delight to share things that cause others to be changed and brought into joy and goodness. This longing is satisfied by service that results in eternal impact and rewards. We need to know we are making a contribution that is significant to God and one that He esteems and remembers forever.
2. Working together with Jesus to awaken other hearts in love is essential to our emotional health
I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. (3 Jn 4)

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3. Jesus called us to work together with Him in the holy mandate that the Father gave Him to disciple the nations (Matt 28:19). We find great pleasure in walking out the Second Commandment instead of continuing in self centered isolationism

For unclean spirits...came out of many... and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. There was great joy in that city. (Acts 8:7-8)

4. We love to communicate to those we love that which excites them. They are exhilarated and we are exhilarated in their exhilaration.

WHY?

Supernatural emotional strength will be vital in light of the coming global crisis of social, spiritual, economic, political and emotional disruption. Only satisfied people that are happy in God will be equipped to stand in that hour. Thus, the seven longings related to our bridal identity are significant for today. Paul prayed that we would be strengthened with Divine might in the inner man (Eph. 3:16). God will do this as He releases truth in our inner man.

Grant you...to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man.(Eph. 3:16)