

Hangry: Accidental Fasting

01.22.2023

A 2016 study tested

The reality of hunger

On our emotions

This is a true story:

Researchers divided a group of college students in half

This is ridiculous

Half the group ate like normal

Half the group wasn't allowed to eat before this session

They had them work on an assignment

With a deadline fast approaching

At the researcher's signal

The IT department made all of the computers crash

Simultaneously

Losing all their work

Then they interviewed both groups

How much money was spent on this?

This is ridiculous!

Shocking:

The hungry group reported

More hatred for the researchers

That's a quote – "hatred"

Then the control group

Is anybody surprised by this?

Did our tax dollars fund this?!?

Therefore, it's scientifically proven:

If researchers put you through a stupid test while you're hungry

... You're gonna hate em

Proof!

Another study showed

That people are 56% more likely to be irritable

If they are hungry

Who's funding all this?!?

I'm getting a little irritable

Just thinking about who's funding all of this!

Biologists tell us that is because of the amino acid

Neuropeptide Y

Neuropeptide Y prompts your body

To eat when your energy levels get low

And Neuropeptide Y

Also regulates aggression

It's the hangry molecule!

So, it would make sense

When you're running short on *physical* nutrients

To get hangry

What if that was true

Spiritually as well?

What if *spiritual hunger*

Running low on *spiritual* nutrients

Also led to emotional and relational

Irritability?

Hang on to that

Let me introduce you to a guy in the Bible named Absalom

This is one person's sketch

We don't know

We know Absalom was a prince

King David's 3rd son

We know he had long hair

And we know he was easy on the eyes

He's like me in every way

And we also know he was charming

And conniving

Now kings in those days

Were often the arbitrator of disagreements

So, people would come with their version of contractual matters

Or legal disputes

And the king would hear their case

Kind of like a judge, today

Now as you might imagine

That means that there would be a screening process

And the King wouldn't hear every case

From every disgruntled person

That's why we have HOA boards

So, a good number of people

Would come to the capital city

Sometimes traveling a long way

Petition to have their case heard by the king

But go away disappointed

Without being heard by the king

At all

Because the king wasn't available

Or their case wasn't deemed worth his time

Enter Absalom

The young, attractive, charming prince

Absalom would sit near the city gate

Alongside the road people would travel to see the king

And he would say:

"Boy, I hate that he didn't take time to see you"

"If I were king, I would have taken time to see you"

I'm picturing Absalom having billboards

And daytime TV commercials

"You deserve to be paid!"

"I'll get you the money that you deserve!", Absalom says

And over time...

Is that things still up there?!?

Get that off there

Before I get sued

Before they get the money *they* deserve

Over time

Scripture says about 4 years

Over time

Absalom gained quite a following

2 Samuel 15:6 - Absalom behaved in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and so he stole the hearts of the people of Israel.

He stole their hearts

OK, so now Absalom seizes the opportunity

To lead a coup

He “has their heart”

He gathers an army

And marches on his father

And since David was caught by surprise

His only option was to leave Jerusalem

Leave the throne

Leave the Ark of the Covenant

Take his family

And flee for his life

And that's what he does

As he was leaving the city

2 Samuel tells us

As he was leaving the city

He stopped multiple times

Along the way

Probably in grief

Probably in reflection

He stopped at the edge of the city... Jerusalem

He stopped in the Kidron Valley

He stopped atop the Mount of Olives

He actually took a reverse route

As Jesus did in the triumphal entry

Maybe some symbolism there

The king leaving the city

And the King coming back

Maybe

Here's a picture from Google maps...

Some scholars think it may have been on those stops

As he was rushing up the Mount of Olives with his family

It may have been on one of those stops

That he wrote the 42nd

And 43rd Psalms

Psalms 42:1-2 - As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for You, my God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?

You don't often see deer panting

But when a deer has exerted to the point of panting

He's often in danger or fleeing from an enemy

Which would be an excellent picture

For David to consider

When he was running for his life

David says

I'm not thirsting for water

Like a deer

My panting is for God

My longing is deeper

More spiritual

He continues:

Psalm 42:5a - Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?

Downcast is a shepherding term

A downcast lamb

Is upside down

Stuck on his back

And in danger of losing everything

Being downcast will kill a sheep after a few hours

And there's nothing they can do about it

A wise shepherd won't lecture or yell

That just scares an already frightened animal

The shepherd of a downcast lamb

Has to come restore it

Its legs don't work for a bit

Because of lack of circulation

So, the shepherd has to be gentle

Help it to its feet

Hold it while it regains equilibrium

Sometimes carry it for a bit

Until it regains its footing
And all of this
Normally
Because the sheep did something stupid
Went where it wasn't supposed to go
Did what it wasn't supposed to do
And the shepherd restores it
The only way you can
One at a time

I think that's such a great picture for our time
Upside down
Tired
Moving frantically
But feeling helpless
"Why are you so downcast?"
Asks the wise shepherd

Absalom, his son, has turned on him
Their relationship is broken
I'm sure he has lot of regrets & questions
He feels downcast

Psalm 42:5a - Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so *disturbed* within me?

The Hebrew word here translated disturbed

Literally means growling

You know like when you're in a meeting

Right before lunch

And your stomach gets a little... aggressive

And people on either side of you

Are giving you the side eye?

David's describing his soul that way

David's introducing this series

How many of us

Have grumbling souls

But think it's just a quick temper?

How many of us

Have grumbling souls

But call it anxiety?

How many of us

Have grumbling souls

But look to someone else to change

If my wife was different

If my husband was better

Maybe those things are true

But maybe you're disturbed because your soul

Is longing for more spiritual nutrition

Maybe you're spiritually hangry

In this series

We're going to address different spiritual practices

Each week

That will provide spiritual nutrients

For our souls

Today, as an introduction

I want to talk about the topic of worship

Look at these powerful words

From Psalm 95:

Psalm 95:1-2 - Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before Him with thanksgiving and extol Him with music and song.

In America today

Worship has become the music opener
Before the pastor speaks

That's not what it is

We are told specifically

To sing to God

We are told specifically

That it should be joyful, loud, thankful and with music

With that in mind

I'm declaring a change this morning

Normally, on Sundays

We keep the lights up for the first 5 minutes or so

So that everyone can find their seats

The idea

Is that we want new people

To feel at home

Not walk into a dark room, etc.

The problem

Is it's not the newer people who are comin' in late

It's the rest of us

New folks are here early

The unintended message

And this is my fault

The unintended message

Is that worship is not important

We're not REALLY STARTING

Until later in the service

Important things aren't REALLY HAPPENING

Until later in the service

That changes today

Next week

If you get here late

You'll have to make your way in

In the dark

I guarantee you

When Taylor Swift comes to Nashville

People won't come in 5 minutes late

Sorry Taylor

I had to get some coffee

Sorry Taylor

I had to park about 30' away

If you got this close a parking spot for Taylor Swift

You'd be posting how lucky you are on Instagram

Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before Him with thanksgiving and extol Him with music and song.

Look at the next verses:

Psalm 95:3-5 - For the Lord is the great God, the great King above all gods. In His Hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to Him. The sea is His, for He made it, and His hands formed the dry land.

These are not new concepts for David

These aren't new concepts for the people he was leading

It's been said

WE don't need to be taught

As much as we need to be reminded

And there's something powerful

About reminding ourselves of the goodness of God

Just this morning

We been reminded

That our souls can be at peace

Even in the midst of the darkest trial

We've been reminded that our souls are well

Because of God

This morning

We've been reminded of

The holiness of God

We've hailed God

Hail-to-you God

Hallelujah

Jesus reigns

And if Jesus reigns

Then the stuff in my life

Takes proper perspective

Psalm 95:6-7 - Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for He is our God and we are the people of His pasture, the flock under His care.

And then psalm ends with a message from the Lord

After they have worshipped God

Their heart is ready for a sermon

So verse 7 ends with:

Today, if only you would hear his voice,

What if we can hear His voice better

More clearly

After we've taken some time to worship

And if that's true on Sundays

And I think it is

Why wouldn't that be true on a Tuesday?

Or a Thursday?

I want to encourage you

To spend some time each day

In worship

We've created a Spotify playlist

If you use Spotify

That has the songs we normally sing

Search for WellSpring Christian Church and click "Profile"

I've started a new habit recently

Of just singing along

With two worship songs

To start my day

10 minutes

And yet it prepares me for the day

Better than about any other 10 minutes I can think of

Not just 10 minutes of passively listening

I'm belting it out, baby!

What if worship was designed to be a bigger part of our lives?

What if we've been trying to fix the wrong things?

And our symptoms actually have deeper meaning?

What if we've been trying to fix the wrong things?

What if our symptoms actually have deeper meaning?

Let me introduce you to a new family member

In the Hudelson household

This is Milo

Milo is about half hound

And about half... rotten

But all puppy

He likes to chew on anything

That he's not supposed to

Especially toilet paper

He loves to steal whole rolls of toilet paper

Out of our bathroom

And see how small

He can make each piece

He's pretty good at it

You've not had a good time

Till you picked up hundreds of tiny wet pieces of toilet paper

Out of a shag throw rug

But Milo loves fetch

I'll sit in our living room...

Floor

Rugs

Spin

It keeps me entertained as much as him

But what I've learned about Milo:

Is that fetch

Which has nothing to do with obedience
Or chewing the wrong things
Actually, has EVERYTHING to do with obedience
And chewing the wrong things

And if I'll build fetch into his day
Into his life
The other things seem to fall into place

What if some of our struggles
Aren't about the struggle?
What if some of our weaknesses
Are really part of a larger, deeper picture?

What if you're just hangry
Spiritually

What if today's message
Was more than just listening to the words
And then changing nothing
And instead listening to the words
And building our lives toward health?

What if worship

And prayer
Were more impactful
For the battles we face today
Then we ever gave them credit?

I've titled this message

Accidental Fasting

In fasting

You go without food

For a set period of time

As a spiritual discipline to honor God

And you get a little weak

And you may get a little cranky

Because you don't have physical nutrients

What if many of us are spiritually fasting

Accidentally

All the time

Our bodies are addicted to food

And if we go without eating for very long

We feel the effects

Our souls are addicted to God

And if we go without worshipping Him for very long
We feel the effects

What if many of us are spiritually fasting

Accidentally

All the time