

Ancient Practices

SOUL FULL

ICE BREAKER: What is the best dining experience you've ever had?

Introduction: We are physical beings with physical hunger & we are spiritual beings with spiritual hunger. "Our hearts are restless until they find our rest in you." (Augustine). Pastor paraphrased it as: Our souls are hungry until they find their fill in God.

Matthew 4:1-11 *Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after he had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." 4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'" 5 Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command His angels concerning You'; and 'On their hands they will bear You up, so that You will not strike Your foot against a stone.'" 7 Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'you shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" 8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Go Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.'" 11 then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.*

1 John 2:15-17 *Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. 17 The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.*

1. What do the temptations of Jesus and the love of the world have in common? (Compare the temptation of Jesus in Matthew 4:1-11 with the things of the world in 1 John 2:16)

2. How can temptation, given into sin, damage the soul?

3. Is it fair to say that the temptations we are facing today are similar or the same as Jesus faced? In what way? (Hebrews 4:15-16)

Hebrews 4:15-16 *For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. 16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

4. Why would Jesus go into the desert alone? Can the noise and busyness of life keep me from focusing on God? (Psalms 46:10)

Psalms 46:10 *Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.*

5. What did Jesus use to counter the temptations? What scriptures do you use to counter temptations and trial?

6. Why do you think Jesus prepared to face these temptations with fasting and prayer? How do you prepare to face your challenges? (Matt. 4:2)

7. When with God's help you have overcome temptation, how do you celebrate?

8. How did Jesus choose to deal with the pressures that surrounded Him? (Luke 5:15,16)

Luke 5:15-16 *But the news about Him was spreading even farther, and large crowds were gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses. 16 But Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray.*

9. How does Psalms 1:1-3 help prepare a person for the onslaught of life?

Psalms 1:1-3 *How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. 3 He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers.*

Philippians 4:11-13 *Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. 12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. 13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.*

10. What do you think is the “secret” that Paul learned about contentment?

11. What kind of focus does one need to have in order to be content in “any and every circumstance”? (1 Tim. 6:6-8; Hebrews 13:5,6)

1 Tim. 6:6-8 *But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. 7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. 8 If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. 9 But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.*

Hebrews 13:5-6 Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,” 6 so that we confidently say, “The Lord is my Helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?”

12. Paul says that Jesus was the source of his strength. What can we do to make Jesus the source of our strength? (Phil. 4:13)

Ephesians 3:14-19 (NAS) *For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, 16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.*

13. What is Paul saying that contributes to being filled up to all the fullness of God (soul full)?

14. Pastor Zach mentioned a few “ancient practices”, spiritual disciplines: Stillness (Psalm 46:10, 131:2), Solitude (Mark 1:35, 6:31), Sabbath, Simplicity (1 Peter 3:4, Luke 12:15), Slowing down (Psalm 23:2, 1 Thess. 4:11). What spiritual disciplines do you use or can we use to fill our souls?

15. Can you describe a soul filling experience that you have had in the past?