

## Hungry For More Of You?

By Dan Adler

I've noticed that a trend in a lot of modern worship services is to have a lot of seeking songs - songs like "Hungry", "We are Hungry", "All Who are Thirsty", "Rend the Heavens", "Let it Rain", "More Love, More Power" and many others like them. I sing many of those songs regularly and I really do like them. But once in a while, in some services I'm in, songs like that can almost feel empty or despairing - sort of like we're waiting for something to happen to us that may or may not come true. It's like we have nothing we can do but sing about it or pray about it and if nothing happens after that service, we're sort of absolved from responsibility about our lack. Now don't get me wrong, I think it's a really good thing to have a hunger for more of the presence and power of God in our lives. So I would never discourage singing songs like these. But I think we might want to look at some Biblical passages that could enlighten us on our journey of seeking and that, perhaps, might inspire us regarding the songs we choose or write for our worship services.

Matthew 25:31-46, the parable of the Sheep and Goats, is both one of the most frightening and one of the most motivating and exciting passages of scriptures that I know. Jesus is talking about the final judgment and how He will separate the sheep (good) from the goats (bad) as they stand before His throne. The core criteria in this passage that distinguishes a sheep from a goat is whether or not this person gave drink to the thirsty, fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited those in prison and showed hospitality to the stranger or homeless. To those who didn't do those things, He says these terrifying words "Depart from me, I never knew you!" Those are words that I never want to hear - or to have anyone else hear, but there's more to this story. When both the sheep and the goats ask the Lord, when did they do or not do these things, the Lord says, "As much as you did or did not do for the least of these my brethren, you did or did not do for Me." This is a big revelation to both the sheep and the goats in this story. But fortunately, you and I get the benefit of reading this story and taking its message to heart before we ever have to hear any of this first hand.

So here's the big application for worshippers who are hungry for more of Him. If you really want to get close to Jesus, serve Jesus and love Jesus, according to this passage, the most direct way you can do that is to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the prisoner and house the homeless. In doing so you are feeding, clothing, housing and visiting Jesus Himself!! Wow! What a concept! Just think how many worship services have great sound systems and great guitar players and great bands and passionate singers singing songs seeking for more of Jesus, but never do any of those things as part of their own lives or the life of their congregation! That's a bit of a sobering thought isn't it? But on the other hand, look at the awesome opportunities all around us love and bless and serve Jesus every day!! My understanding is that this passage was the primary motivator behind the life of Mother Theresa and she found profound closeness to Christ in serving the poorest of the poor.

It's good to be hungry and thirsty for more of the presence of the Lord in our lives. It's good to pray about it and sing about it. But let's be sure that we understand that we can

also make some very significant choices that can help to serve as answers to our own prayers and songs. I'm hungry for Jesus to say to me that when He was hungry and naked and homeless and imprisoned, I, as one of His sheep, found Him and served Him as an act of worship as I ministered to the poor.