

HOW TO
BE FOUND
By the Man
YOU'VE BEEN
LOOKING
FOR

michelle
mckinney
hammond



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1
Love Hunger

*In the days when the judges ruled,
there was a famine in the land...*

RUTH 1:1

So begins the story of hunger, longing, unfulfillment, and even starvation. I am actually fascinated when I meet a woman who has an active dating life. As I travel the country speaking to and greeting women, the number of those who have not had a date in years is staggering. The common complaint is that all the good men are taken, in jail, or gay. Many women have decided to steer their passions in other directions—toward their careers or other self-fulfilling habits like shopping or being involved in social or charitable activities. Yet in each woman's heart the hunger remains to be loved by that one man who will come into her life, sweep her off her feet, and rock her world.

Turn on your television any day of the week and it is clearly evident that when it comes to the search for love, we are in a state of emergency. The plethora of matchmaking stunts reveals the urgency of men and women, no matter what race or class, to try to find true love at all costs. Some people are even willing to embarrass themselves on a national scale to compete for the attention of a bachelor or bachelorette. The looks

of disappointment and the level of frustration displayed after not being chosen *by a stranger* tell the tale. People are desperate. Men and women feel their options for finding a lasting, committed relationship are quickly vanishing, along with their hopes to fulfill their deepest longing: to love and be loved.

The hunger for love can do strange things to a woman. It can cause her to question herself and her worth. She can plummet to new depths of insecurity and despair, getting caught up in late-night eating binges, compulsive self-consumption, bitterness, frustration, paralysis, and letting herself go physically. Putting life on hold until the knight arrives only heightens her aggravation because she is now not only *alone*, but also bored. This leads her on a more frenzied search for something that will put out the fire of yearning that nestles deep within the soul.

Her search for love swings the gamut from endless conversations with other friends in the same situation to unproductive seasons of self-involvement that include self-defeating, unhealthy habits. Many a meal is eaten while pondering the resounding question, "Where have all the good men gone?" As the answer appears more and more elusive, resolutions are drawn that life can go on without the special man. Yet hunger ignored simply burrows deeper into the inner recesses of the heart and manifests itself in other ways. The problem with hunger is that it is real. How we feed it has an effect on our health—physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

When we are hungry physically, and we are not in the position to have a balanced, healthy meal, we have a tendency to settle for junk food. We choose empty calories or something that is filling but also fattening, seemingly satisfying but not nutritious. When we are hungry emotionally, we can make choices that are just as unhealthy. We settle for what is available: no-win relationships with men that we know are not good for us, who

could never be prospects for a committed relationship. This is when we discover that empty relationships can be more harmful than empty calories. Many times we emerge from these relationships with more baggage, more disabling deadweight, and an even deeper hunger from all the negative experiences we endured for the sake of having an “affirming moment” here and there.

No one should crucify herself for wanting love. The longing for love is a natural human emotion. It is a spiritual instinct, built into the center of our souls by the Author of love Himself: God. God also longs for love from all of His creation. He placed this hunger inside us to cause us to reach first for Him, and secondly for one another. We should desire to love and be loved. But the desire for love should not rule us to the point where we look for it in all the wrong places, trying to fulfill our longing with unhealthy alternatives, or becoming paralyzed by our yearning.

I have always warned people that it is not a good idea to go grocery shopping when you are hungry. When our eyes are bigger than our stomachs, we have a tendency to make bad choices and end up with things that we do not need. Everything looks good when we are hungry. We will pay a high price for hunger that is out of control. At the end of the day, we still will not be satisfied. Those women who have settled for *something* rather than having *nothing* in the area of relationships have found themselves more miserable than when they were alone.

How did our hunger become so overwhelming if it is a God-given instinct? We might say that from the moment our mother Eve and her husband, Adam, shared a bite out of the forbidden fruit in the garden, women the world over inherited the consequences of her little afternoon snack. The punishment for deciding that God was not enough to fulfill all of her desires landed her in a place where her appetite would never be satisfied. Validation and affirmation from her husband, Mr. Adam,



Man Fact:

A man can never totally satisfy your craving for love. His humanity will not allow him to.

would never hit the spot in her heart where she wanted it to. Eve would always need more from him than he could give. This desire would rule over her, consume

her, and become an overwhelming hunger unable to be satisfied until she realized that God was the only One who could fill it.

You see, God had reserved a spot in Eve's heart for Himself. He would never allow a man to fill the spot He created for Himself because then there would be no need for Him. And He will never allow that. According to His original design, once He was allowed to sit on the throne of her heart, she would find all of her deepest desires fulfilled by Him. The man would just be the icing on the cake of her life. Her security and all that she needed would be fulfilled by the One who had created her and loved her most. However, she canceled His reservation when she decided to become "independent," to "make her own choices," and to allow something else to become more important than her connection to Him. But once she made her own choice and launched out into the deep of her own desires, she found herself hungrier than ever. I believe we inherited her hunger.

So how do we handle relationship hunger in a healthy manner? Many women have asked, "If God isn't going to give me the desire of my heart, why won't He take the desire away?" Let me help you out here. He is not going to take away your desire. He gave you that desire. You are to *have* desires; however, you are not to allow your desires to have you. He will help you to master your desires if you allow Him to.

"Well, how do I do that, Michelle?" you ask. First of all, deal with the reality of your hunger. The interesting thing about hunger is even though we may feel hunger, the body does not go

into starvation mode immediately. The body is able to feed on itself for 40 days before it begins to react negatively to not having food. The first reality about love hunger is you will not die without a man in your life. Can you exist and actually thrive instead of just survive? The answer is absolutely yes! I am a witness.

Your hunger is not bad unless it is controlling you—overtaking your every thought and coloring your decisions. If this is the case, it is time to take back control. First step, get a love life. “Exactly how do I do that?” you ask. “After all, that is why I bought the book.” True, so let’s take it one step at a time. I am going to break this down into something you can use. If you are willing to do the work, I promise you that the truth will equip you to make yourself free. Along the way, you will find confessions in call-out boxes. I suggest you hide these confessions in your heart and let them roll around in your head until they become a part of you.

First, feed on the sources of love that God has already placed in your life. That would include God first, then you (yes, you!), and thirdly your neighbors: friends, family, and even other men. Yes, this truly can be accomplished. In order to make wise selections that are nutritious to your body, as well as your heart and soul, you must be full and whole already. The full soul will loathe even the honeycomb, but the empty soul will find even a bitter thing sweet. Remember the opening verse to this chapter? It said that when the judges ruled, there was a famine. When your flesh or emotions rule, you become a prime candidate for a famine of the

Personal 
Confession:

I will no longer allow my hunger to drive me into the arms of those who are undiscerning of my worth and undeserving of my heart.

heart. But when God rules, your heart is fertile ground for joyous fulfillment, regardless of if there is a man in your life or not.

Your relationship with God sets the stage for how all of your relationships will play out. Remember that the first famous commandment (not suggestion) from our heavenly Creator is: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.” This is followed by the second commandment that everyone knows, even if the person has never cracked open a Bible: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” You cannot love anyone else properly until you love yourself, and you cannot love yourself properly unless you love God and have a passionate, intimate relationship with Him.

The One who made you loves you most. He will tell you many wonderful things about yourself, as well as His plans for you, that should have you beaming and feeling pretty good about who you are. After all, if you listen to Him long enough, you will come to believe you are pretty special, which indeed you are. However, if you are not connected intimately to the Source of love, the voices of people who dispute how fabulous you are become louder and drown out His still, small voice that whispers such great reassurances of your worth. As someone once said, “What you continually hear is what you will believe.”

Once we have accepted the lie that we are not special, lovable, or desirable, we only have limited recourses in recovering any small ounce of self-worth—like putting down other people. Making them look bad will surely make us look better, or so we think. Unfortunately, that is just not true. We usually end up feeling worse than ever. Even if we are able to veil our inner loathing and control our criticisms of other people, we can fall prey to the spirit of rejection. Driven by our own lack of self-esteem, we sabotage relationship after relationship, while constantly justifying these failed relationships with our own self-debasement.

Ah...but when we are connected to the original Lover of our souls, we are brimming over with validation and affirmation that liberates us to celebrate people and even encourage them to higher heights of wonderfulness.

In Matthew 4:4, Jesus states, "Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." Notice He did not mention other relationships as a means of sustenance. After all, Adam survived and even thrived while walking and talking with God all by himself before Eve was presented to him. He did not even realize he had a need until God brought it up! If this is the case, it stands to reason that we get sustenance from God not only by reading the Bible, but also by our personal interaction with Him through prayer and fellowship. It is during the time we spend time with Him, not just talking but also listening, that life-giving words are spoken into our spirit that strengthen, renew, and fill us to overflowing with the assurance of God's faithfulness and goodness. Not only does He give us assurance of His love for us, but He also gives us the keys to living the life we want to lead.

Now that God has our ear, He promises to provide us with a great filler loaded with nutrition for our soul. He will reveal our purpose and how to operate in it. Jesus said that His nourishment came from doing the will of His Father and finishing the work He had been sent to do. How much more fulfilled do we feel when we lay our heads down at night knowing we have done what we were created to do? We have blessed someone during the day with a word, an action, or simply by just being there.

Man Fact:

Men desire love just as much as we do, but most of them cannot handle complicated women burdened down with lots of baggage.



We made a difference, a lasting impression out of the bounty of our natural gifting, as we extended ourselves to someone who had a need that we could fill.

Our gifts and talents are the things people celebrate about



Personal Confession:

I will allow God to do the work that needs to be done in my heart to make me a whole person before I pursue a love relationship.

us, but we find to be no big deal. Because the ability comes naturally to us, that is why it is called a gift. Everyone cannot do what we do the way we do it. An effectual prayer would be to ask God how to take our natural talents and

abilities and capitalize on them to bless people and prosper ourselves emotionally, spiritually, and perhaps even financially. That overlooked ability we have with children, decorating a room, working with numbers, planning events, or whatever—we need to use it for the benefit of other people and the glory of God. Then we can stand back and survey our handiwork and smile because someone benefited from an encounter with us.

With the Source of our fulfillment securely in place, we are then free to have and experience a myriad of relationships that can only enrich our lives. This sense of fulfillment becomes the foundation for satisfying exchanges with family members, fruitful experiences with friends, and rich platonic relationships with the men in our lives who aren't who we want to marry.

That's right, ladies. Every man you meet does not have to be "The One." Just because he isn't Mr. Right doesn't mean you can't have an incredible friendship. There is a lot to learn about men, and who better to learn from than a friend who will answer you honestly and live with transparency before you? The only way this can be achieved is if you are so full of love and life

already that you can take or leave the appetizers that are presented to you and patiently wait for the main entrée.

Ponder This



- Are you love hungry?

- How does your hunger manifest itself? What have been the consequences?

- What parts of your life have you put on hold while waiting for a man?

- What opportunities have you not taken advantage of?

- What actions can you take right now to lead a more fulfilling life?

