

SATISFACTION....Can't Get No Satisfaction?

1. Maybe you have seen the cover of this week's Time magazine? "Is God in our Genes?"
 - a. Last week I mentioned that we all have been created with a God-Sized Hole in our hearts that only God Himself can fill.
 - b. This article examines the prevalence of religion in the world and the hunger that seems to be innate to man's heart to search for God.
 - c. The article is so bold as to ask the question, "Which came first, God or the need for God?"
 - i. In other words, was man created to search for God based upon cues that he had from creation, or is the need for God just some evolutionary drive that exists to preserve the species?
 - ii. One scientist has written a book about a gene that he isolated that he believes gives us the "awareness" or "need" for God.
 - iii. One question that the article asks is, "If human beings were indeed divinely assembled, why wouldn't our list of parts include a gene that would enable us to contemplate our maker?"
 - d. Transition....
2. During my relatively short ministry, I've had the privilege to see a number of people come into the church and into the Christian faith, and some of these people have done so after searching a long time to find spiritual peace and satisfaction.
 - a. When God sends someone to us who is honestly searching for the truth. I think that's an amazing event.
 - b. It shows the severe spiritual hunger pangs that so many people have, hunger that only one person and only one message can ever satisfy.
 - c. Maybe you can remember your journey...or perhaps you are on that journey now, searching for a way to meet that spiritual hunger pang, or that spiritual thirst within you.
 - d. I can remember my journey...of my college years and trying to find meaning in life through philosophy, through trying to find a perfect "relationship," trying to find meaning through a career, through a hobby, and finally I found that meaning in a person...the person of Jesus Christ.
 - e. **One element common denominator for most seekers for God is that they experience "DIS-SATISFACTION" in the status quo of their lives.**
 - i. We drink deeply of an experience, hoping it will meet our needs, that it will produce that wonderful nirvana feeling and find that it fades and leaves us thirsting for something more.
 - ii. I don't know where all of you are on your journeys today, but my sermon, I hope, will address some of those things that you have or are facing.
3. I would like you to join me in John chapter 4 this morning. (John 4:7 – 30)
 - a. Jesus had been on a trip with his disciples, it's about noon, and Jesus was tired and thirsty. He and his disciples are passing through the Samaria region of Israel, which is a region of Israel where intermarriage took place during the Assyrian conquest of Israel.
 - b. Jesus sits down at the town well and he sends his disciples into town to get food.
 - i. As he was sitting there a woman came up to draw water and Jesus asked her for a drink.

7. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?"

8. (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

9. The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

10. Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have

asked him and he would have given you living water."

11. "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?" The water had met the needs of their village for centuries and it had been dug by Jacob. It was more than 100 feet deep, hand dug through solid limestone. It was as if she were saying, "You mean...you think you got something better than this age-old, tradition, historical well that is older than you?"

13. Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." In fact, his water won't just feed one household, or one village and all of their cattle, the water that Jesus was offering was water that would quench the thirst of the whole world.

15. The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

16. He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

17. "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

19. "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

21. Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

25. The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

26. Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he"

27. Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

28. Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" 30 *They came out of the town and made their way toward him.*

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4. In this passage, Jesus talks to a woman about two kinds of water
 - a. The woman doesn't get the word picture. She is preoccupied with the physical needs she has.
 - b. So Jesus has to say something that will past her preoccupation with the things that are physical:
 - i. He brings up the fact that the woman has had multiple relationships (5 husbands and a current live-in, 6 total).
 - ii. Obviously, she was finding no permanent satisfaction in these relationships so she had to keep going back to find a new love, each time hoping that this time would be the last.
 - iii. In bringing up her "unquenchable thirst" for different relationships, Jesus revealed to her that she would never be truly satisfied until she began "drinking" from the water He would give her.
 - iv. It was this comment that made her pay attention...but it wasn't just that he spoke to a painful part of her life, but that he spoke the truth to her.
 - v. She acknowledges that he is a prophet, which steers the conversation to the direction of who Jesus actually is...the promised Messiah.
5. Jesus uses a very common subject to identify himself with...Water.
 - a. Your body is 80% fluids, which means a man who is 200# is actually lugging around 160 pounds of water. Apart from our brains, brawn and bones, we are walking water balloons.

- b. Stop drinking and see what happens. You cant think straight, your skin grows clammy, and your vital organs will shut down.
 - i. Your body needs fluids to cry, your mouth needs moisture to swallow, your skin needs water to sweat and keep your body cool, your cells need blood to carry oxygen to them, and your joints need fluids to keep them lubricated.
 - ii. In short, your body needs water in the same way that a tire needs air.
 - iii. Your body is wired with a “low fluid indicator” – let it run low on fluids and the warning signs will go off.
 - iv. Your soul is wired with a low fluid indicator as well. Dehydrated hearts give us desperate warnings:
 - 1. When our souls are dry we will find that temper, worry, guilt, and fear will be sounding the alarms by ruling our actions.
 - 2. Those alarms might appear in more subtle ways such as hopelessness, sleeplessness, loneliness, Irritability or Insecurity.
 - 3. Maybe you have experienced them and thought that they are a normal part of life like cholesterol, baldness and stiff joints.
 - 4. But they are not normal.
 - 5. They are warning signs, alarm bells that tell us that our souls are dry and empty!
2. Jesus spoke of two ways in which we try to quench that inner thirst in our lives and he illustrated them with the concept of water. Those two kinds of water are:
- a. **Water which does not satisfy and cannot not quench thirst.**
 - i. The water is not physical water, but representative of needs in our lives that we try to meet.
 - ii. This woman was going back to the well of relationships over and over again in an attempt to find meaning and satisfaction in life.
 - iii. But what she does not realize is that she will never find satisfaction through this way.
 - iv. The thirst she is trying to quench is really a thirst for the One who has made us.
 - 1. But it is a thirst that we all try to fill on a physical level and fail.
 - 2. Like one who is dying of thirst and who drinks ocean water because that is the only thing he can see for miles.
 - 3. And while it momentarily feels good, it only speeds our dehydration and increases our thirst.
 - v. Think about the many things in your life that promise satisfaction but leave you empty.
 - 1. You might be saying...”If only I can find
 - a. that right person,
 - b. that perfect house,
 - c. that cool car,
 - d. the better job,
 - e. the right career,
 - f. finish school
 - g. or if I can get a raise
 - h. if I could win this contest or the lottery
 - i. if I could make my spouse a little different...
 - j. Then things will be okay and I will be content and life will make sense.
 - 2. NOT!
 - a. This woman was talking to God in the flesh and he saw right through her.
 - b. He saw her desperate attempts to meet that need deep inside.
 - c. She had gone from husband to husband, trying to find that “perfect” relationship that would make her feel satisfied.

- d. But any attempt to meet that hunger in your soul on your own terms is going to fail.
 - e. This is the nature of sin (settling for less than God's best for you).
 - f. It takes us further and further and though it promises to satisfy, it never does satisfy eternally. This is why we keep coming back to it over and over again.
3. I read a shocking statistic this week: Americans spend more than \$14 billion a year on pornography, more than the annual revenue of Major League Baseball.
 - a. In fact according to the Sunday Times, people spend more money for pornography in America than they do for cinema tickets —more than they do on all the legitimate performing arts together.
 - b. It is an industry that makes its money through customer “dissatisfaction”...that is, by giving its customers “salt water” which makes them only thirst for more. Those who consume it are never satisfied, looking for that perfect image that will someone satisfy that craving inside of them.
 4. But water that does not satisfy doesn't have to be as obvious as pornography or alcoholism, drug addiction or serial relationships.
 - a. It can be anything that leads us to try to find fulfillment in life apart from God.
- b. **The second kind of water is that Living water which quenches thirst forever.**
- i. Living water was understood to be water that flowed from a spring rather than the rather stagnant water of wells and cisterns.
 - ii. Jesus tells us that it becomes in those who drink it, springs of water, welling up to eternal life.
 - iii. A few days and a few chapters later, Jesus identifies Himself with Living Water again in John 7:37-38.
 1. Jesus goes to the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem, a feast where the Jews relive the wilderness experience and live in tents for a week. It is a feast filled with very strong images.
 2. Each day of the seven day feast, the priest would gather a golden pitcher of water from Gihon spring and parade it through the streets that were lined with people, re-enacting the miracle where water poured from the Rock in the desert when Moses struck it so that the thirst of the Jews could be quenched.
 3. Then the priest would pour it out around the altar. He did this every day for 7 days, with the last day doing it Seven Times.
 4. It was at this point that *Jesus stood up (in the middle of the crowd) and said in a LOUD voice, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” By this he meant the Spirit whom those who believed in him were later to received.*
 - v. The hearers would have understood this very clearly. It was a quotation from Isaiah 55:1.
 1. *"Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. 2 Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. 3 Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David*
 5. What Jesus is doing is telling the crowd that He is the promised Messiah.
 - a. He is telling them that He himself is the Rock that provided for them in

the desert, and that they can have the same living waters flow out of their own souls as well.

6. You might imagine the attention that Jesus got at this action. He had stood and shouted. This was a message that the people needed to hear.
 7. It is a message that you and I need to hear.
 - a. Jesus is the rock that provides water in the desert.
 - b. He is the one who can meet the deepest thirst of our lives.
 - c. Jesus does for our soul what water does for our bodies.
 - d. He is the way we must come so that our soul may live. Without water we will die. Without the spiritual drink that Jesus gives, our soul cannot live forever with God.
 - iv. Jesus isn't speaking here to all of the broken people, he is speaking to the religious folks of the city. He is pointing to Himself as the one to whom all of the religious symbols point. He in a very real sense is reminding them that religion will not satisfy, it will only pacify. Church activities will hide your thirst for awhile, but only Christ quenches that thirst.
3. How do we receive this "living water" so that we no longer have to pursue things that don't satisfy?
- a. **Like water, Jesus won't come in unless swallowed.**
 - i. That means, you have to willingly ask Him to enter your life.
 - ii. You can stand waste deep in the Grand River and still die of thirst.
 - iii. Until you drink and swallow that water, it can do your system no good.
 - iv. Until you ask Jesus to enter your life and fill your life and control your life, He is of no resource to you.
 - b. **How do you come to Christ?**
 - i. **By heeding your spiritual thirst.** Acknowledge the fact that you need Him.
 - ii. Don't ignore the thirst. Don't deny your loneliness or the host of spiritual warning lights that signal your soul is drying up.
6. **Your thirst for God must be more than casual.**
- c. In Mt. 5:6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled"
 - i. When you get up in the morning, are you really hungry? Yes you might say. But if you were to use the language of this passage, you would discover that what you feel when you get up in the morning is not hunger, but rather hunger pangs.
 - ii. Hunger is an intense, continuous craving that comes from not being satisfied.
 - iii. Hunger pangs are momentary and dissipate for awhile when met, but return in a few hours.
 - iv. Jesus is talking about the intense hunger and thirst for God and His righteousness rather than the occasional curiosity about God that most people have from time to time.
 - d. Later in John chapter 6, Jesus tells his hearers that he IS the bread of life right after he feeds a crowd of people with just a few loaves and fishes by multiplying the food. Here he identifies Himself as the "true bread" from heaven.
 - i. John 6:48-51 - He says, *"I am the bread of life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever."*
 - ii.
4. Some of you are Christians but you have been drinking from the wrong well.
- a. You are drying up and you wonder why.
 - b. I neglected to mention that when Jesus stood up at the Feast of Tabernacles and said, *"If anyone*

is thirsty, let Him to come and drink' that the verb for drink isn't about a single drink, but the action of repeated swallowing.

- c. You cannot drink once at the spring of life and expect to go back to the well of the world.
 - i. You will thirst. The spring of life that Jesus wells up inside of you must be the one you come to for your needs.
 - ii. It amazes me sometimes how often Christians drink from cisterns and sewers instead of the spring of life that is inside of them.
 - d. *"My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water"* (Jeremiah. 2:13).
 - i. We haven't left our jug at the old well. We are still carrying it around and scooping up the stale water of the world.
 - 1. Will you leave that jug behind today?
 - 2. Find your satisfaction in Christ alone?
5. Won't you switch water sources?
- a. God describes Himself as the "Spring of living water."
 - i. He alone is the Source of life, refreshment, joy and nourishment for us.
 - ii. He is ever fresh and new, like a spring, and to "drink" of God is to receive life and be satisfied!
 - iii. Turning to anything else is like trying to get water from a jar with holes in it.
 - b. A writer once said we are like children out in the yard eating mud pies not realizing there is something far better in our mother's kitchen, a real pie with real apples, real cherries. We are satisfied because that's all we know.
 - i. Do we know our need?
 - ii. Do we know what we could have if we just knew who it was who was talking to us?
 - 1. If we knew the gift of God and the true identity of Jesus Christ.
 - 2. Have you become sufficiently DISSATISFIED with trying to meet your own hunger and thirst...that you are ready to change water sources?
 - 3. Won't you let Jesus meet the hunger in your heart for Himself?
 - 4. You only need to ask Him to come in, to forgive you for your sins and your rejection of Him, and to receive His love and forgiveness.
 - 5. He promises to become a spring of life inside of you.
 - c. Do it today!

- d. And how do we overcome?
 - i. Trying to overcome in our own strength is like the picture that Max Lucado paints of a town where people are pushing their cars around: They rely upon the engine to start them, but then use their own energy to get around. Pushing a burden. Saying, we are strong folks, we can do this! (enter some of the story verbatim)
 - ii. Or like the fly that flies (and wears itself out physically and emotionally) inside the plane because it believes that somehow it is “helping” the plane fly.
 - iii. We have to leave our jug behind at the old well. If we carry it around, then we are looking outside ourselves for satisfaction rather from within

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- 6. Why does Jesus satisfy?
 - a. Because we were made for Him.
 - b. Because we have a future hope
 - c. Because we have a present help.
 - d.

Arthur Pink

"She left her water pot because she had now found a well of 'living water.' She had come to the well for literal water and that was what her mind was set on. But now that she had obtained salvation, she did not think any more about her water pot. It is always this way. Once our souls truly perceive Christ, once we know Him and receive Him as our personal Savior, we turn away from what we used to think about. Her mind was now fixed on Christ, and she had no thought of well, water, or water pot." Granted, even after we come to Christ and learn to drink of His living water, there are often times when we must learn how to leave the other "water behind." As we drink of Christ's living water we are both willing and able to leave behind the sinful water.

"...being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:6)

"I am the bread of life" - Then he preaches and says, "I am the bread of life. Your forefathers are the manna in the desert, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If a man eats of this bread, he will live for ever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn. 6:48-51).

Remember on the last night of his life before Golgotha how he took some bread and said, "This is my body which is for you" (I Cor. 11:24).

How do we know that he is the bread of life? How do we know that if we eat of him - really take him inside us - we shall live for ever? How do we know that his body was broken on the cross for us? How do we know that these are not mere words? Twice he confirms their absolute veracity in these mighty miracles. A miracle is an event in the external world, wrought by the immediate power of God, and intended as a sign or attestation

The people came to Christ famished. They were so hungry that Jesus feared they might collapse on the way home. But when their power to eat was exhausted, Christ's power to feed them was not! Whatever the Lord has given us, there is still far more for him to give us. Our souls, so to speak, are elastic. The more we eat, the more

they expand. The more they expand, the more we are able to eat. None of us has ever eaten as much as he wants to give us. We are meant to hunger, and to eat and eat and eat. 'Listen, disciples,' he says by this grand miracle, 'I am sufficient for the whole world and all its needs. Learn it well.'" (R. Kent Hughes, "Mark, Jesus, Servant and Saviour" Volume One, Crossway Books, 1989, p.188