

CCC THE SECRET OF SATISFACTION

Today, we're going to look briefly at The Secret of Satisfaction. *"Happy are those who are hungry and thirsty for true goodness, for they will be fully satisfied."* I would encourage you to Circle the words "hungry" and "thirsty". In America, most of us don't know much about hunger and thirst. Being hungry in America is having a Big Mac attack. Being thirsty in America it's Miller Time. Mother Teresa once said, "In India they're starving physically, but in America, they're starving too, but emotionally. We all have a spiritual hunger inside of ourselves but we just don't call it that... We use phrases like "My life is empty", "I'm bored", "I'm restless", "Something seems to be missing in my life." or "There must be more to life than this". Even when things are going good, when there seems to be success in our lives, there is this gnawing feeling on the

inside saying -- something's missing! The Rolling Stones back in the 60's hit the nail on the head when they sang, "I Can't Get No Satisfaction". God's word, the Bible could of helped answer Mick Jager question in the 60's it tells us it's because they're looking for satisfaction in the wrong place. First God would have told the rolling stones,

1. You don't find lasting satisfaction in pleasure.

If I could just take a cruise... retire in luxury ... travel the world, then I'd be happy. No you wouldn't... The Bible says *"No matter how much we see, we are never satisfied; no matter how much we hear, we are never content."*

Most ads on television appeal to this hunger for happiness. We hear ads that say, "The taste that satisfies." If that were true you'd only have to have one cup of it and you'd never need smoke another cigarette. How many of you have had a late night refrigerator raid? You get up, you go to the

refrigerator. You don't know what you want but you're hungry. You open the frig door, you nibble on this, you nibble on that, nothing satisfies, nothing tastes good. You close the door, go back, get in bed and you're still hungry. Many people are that way in life. I just described their life... nothing satisfies them, they'll try anything. They'll break the rules. They will put themselves and others in danger. They'll try one night stands, drugs, whatever to try and get some satisfaction. But here is what they only find. God's word tells us, *"The pleasures of sin last a short time."* They just don't last.

Second God would have told the Rolling Stones...

2. You don't find lasting satisfaction in performance.

"What does a man get for all his hard work? Days full of sorrow and grief, and restless nights." ... "You work for

something with all your skill, and then you have to leave it all to someone who hasn't had to work for it."

Workaholics eventually learn this. There is a myth that says "Success produces satisfaction." But that's just not true. Many successful people are very unsatisfied on the inside. If success was the key to happiness then Hollywood would be full of happy faces. Even after the thrill of winning, there comes that emptiness that something's not there. The Bible says, *"Man is always working, never satisfied."*

The Third thing God would have told the Rolling Stones...

3. You don't find lasting satisfaction in possessions.

Today there are more products available than ever before and they all say "Satisfaction Guaranteed". Twice as many products as there were ten years ago. Let me ask you a question are people today twice as happy? No. A lady told

me one time, "Even when I get what I want, Pastor, it's not what I want. I'm dissatisfied again." God's word says, "*He who loves money will never have enough. The foolishness of thinking wealth brings happiness.*" Eccl. 5:10. Poor people say, "When I get enough money, then all of my problems will be solved." Rich people know that's not true. The rich know that is a myth. The rich people know that the happiness is not there. Now they would never admit to that around other people. What is then the secret of satisfaction? Listen to God's word here for a minute and consider could this really be true. "*Seek your happiness in the Lord, and He will give you your heart's desire.*" Psalm 37:4 Don't seek happiness, seek after God. Happiness is a by product of seeking God. If you make happiness your goal in life, you're going to miss it. You're going to be one unhappy person, one never satisfied person your entire life.

You don't find it just looking for it. You really don't know what it is... you can't see it... That's because it is at the last place a human being would ever look. But listen: to find happiness, to experience real satisfaction in life? You have to first hunger for it and realize you're hungry for it and that bring us to; **The Secret of Satisfaction**

1. Recognize my real hunger

Recognizing what is it that's missing in my life? What is it that's not there? A lot of people really don't know what they want in life. God's word, the Bible says we are spiritual beings and God made us to love Him and to know Him and be loved by Him, and nothing will take the place of that. There are no substitutes and you need to recognize what your real hunger is. Your hunger is you're a spiritual being and you hunger for God. Now I want to make sure you get something here I am not talking about religion

here. I'm not talking about legalism here; I'm not talking about doing some kind of rituals here. I'm talking about having a relationship with your creator and the sooner you recognize that, the better your life will be.

How does God give us a hunger for Himself? Deut. 8:3

"God humbled you by letting you go hungry and then feeding you with manna... He did this to help you realize that real life comes by obeying every command of God."

The children of Israel . . . over into the desert, they're wandering around for forty years. They got hungry and God provided manna. Notice it says, *"God let them get hungry."* He let them get hungry so they would recognize their need for Him, and depend on Him. God lets you get hungry. God allows problems in your life to get your attention for you to see that you really need Him. He uses a variety of circumstances we see in the bible. The Bible

says, *"Happy are the hungry, those are the people God is trying to get their attention."* God uses problems and situations in your life to get your attention to say to you, "Look! What you want is not pleasure, it's not possessions, it's not performance. God says, It's Me." It's a relationship with me, I made you with a God shaped vacuum and I want to meet that need." **The Secret of Satisfaction**

2. Stop eating junk food.

Stop eating spiritual junk food. Quit looking for things in life that don't satisfy, don't meet the need. Isaiah 55:2 *"Why spend your money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy?"* He's saying, Quit wasting your time and your money on things of the world that really don't satisfy. What you are really looking for is God. Stop eating junk food!

There is a lot of spiritual junk food. Do you know the difference between being filled and being satisfied?

It's interesting that our appetites are influenced by our associations. You get around hungry people, talking about food what happens to you, you get hungry. Whoever you hang out with is what you're going to be hungry for. If you hang out with people who like the world, which is junk food, that's what you're going to be into, junk food. If you want to have an appetite for godly things get around people who have a godly appetite. It's contagious. Spiritual hunger is contagious. But junk food we all know does not satisfy. We all know it's not healthy. It's just stuffing. **It fills but it does not satisfy.** Spiritual hunger is contagious, so let me encourage you get around people who have a hunger for the Lord and you'll find spiritual hunger. That's why we have so many small groups meeting at Calvary and have

more starting; Talk some about the new home groups starting: **The Secret of Satisfaction**

3. You start looking to Christ for satisfaction.

"Jesus said, "I am the Bread of Life. Whoever comes to Me will never go hungry and whoever believes in Me will never be thirsty ... If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever!" John 8:35 Wonder Bread! Bread is the basic essential of life. You can live on bread and water. This is the basic essential food of life. In a famine they fly stuff in. The first thing they unload is flour to make bread. Jesus is saying "I'm the bread of life! Jesus is saying, I'm IT. What you really need to live is ME! I can meet your needs. You're looking for everything else, but I'm the bread of life, I'm the essential. I'm what you need. You need Me and you can't have true satisfaction without Me."

There is a New Age movement these days. One of the things they say is "Find satisfaction in you." "Find happiness within." Friends you don't have what it takes to satisfy you, to make yourself happy. Saying what we just said, is like saying to your stomach when your hungry, "Feed yourself!" Does that work? When there is a spiritual vacuum in your life you don't say to yourself, "Be your own god!" That leaves you just as empty as before. You have to go to an outside source, to God, who made you and created you with that vacuum so you would know Him and love Him and be loved by Him. He is the Bread of Life. Jesus said, *"Whoever drinks water will get thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I give will never be thirsty again. It will become in him a spring of living water."* John 4:13-14. Water is even more essential than food. You can go several weeks without food, but you can't go more than

about three days without water. About 70% of your body is water. Every cell in your body needs water to survive. You can't survive without water. Jesus is saying "It's more than you want Me -- you need Me. You need Me to survive. I am the Living Water. I am your bread I am your water. I made you and you can't make it without Me."

When you are really thirsty, cost is immaterial isn't it? It doesn't matter what it costs, you've got to have it!

This is what it means to hunger and thirst for God. There are really three stages in your life:

I want God in my life;

I need God in my life;

I've got to have God in my life because I can't make it without Him.

He made me and there is an emptiness in my life. I want to know the answers of the basic questions of life: Who am I? Why am I here? What's the purpose of life? Who's God? What's going to happen? Those are gut level things that are not satisfied by going places, obtaining things, having sex, and/or getting stoned. Those are basic inner questions of life. That is a hunger to know God. That's what it means to hunger and thirst for God. I've got to have Him in my life. I want to know Him. I want to know why in the world I was put on this planet. Where am I going when it's all over? I want to end by saying this to you

What we just read I want to look at again in John 8:35, 51 Circle the word "come" where Jesus says, *"Whoever comes to Me will never go hungry..."* And then circle the word "believes" -- *"... whoever believes in Me will never be thirsty."* And then in the next verse John 4:13-14 circle the

word "drinks" -- *"Whoever drinks the water I give will never be thirsty again..."*

Three words "come...believe... drink". The point is that appetites are not filled until you do something about it. You can be hungry, your stomach growling... but you'll stay hungry until you take action. Get up, get some food, put it in your mouth and swallow it. Jesus is saying here, You've got to take action. Just like physical hunger, when you're hungry, you go eat food, when you're spiritually hungry you need to do three things -- come, believe, drink. That's how you find satisfaction in life.

First you "come to Me" -- You come to Christ.

Second, you believe in Christ.

Third, you drink of Christ. I receive Him into my life.

Some of you have never done this -- never taken these steps. You've never come to Christ and believed in Him.

You've believed about Him, but there's a difference in believing about God and believing in God. I believe in Hitler but I'm not a Nazi. But I believe in Christ and I'm a Christian – Why? Because I've committed my life to Him. It's more than just a head knowledge. I believe.

Some of you have never done that. Let me ask you, have you realized yet that something's missing in your life? Something is dramatically missing in your life. In spite of maybe all the success, all the apparent outward satisfaction, but inside there is this undercurrent you know is there saying "I'm missing it! I'm not really satisfied. At the deepest level of my soul, in my gut, I know that there's got to be more to life than just get up, go to work, come home, watch TV and go to bed and on and on There's got to be more." And there is.

Maybe you'd say, "In spite of the fact that life seems relatively good in light of the rest of the world, there's this gnawing dissatisfaction that even when I'm the winner, even when I'm number one, I'm dissatisfied on the inside. There is not a real peace and contentment in there."

If you say that, I want to say to you, "Congratulations! Because He's creating a hunger in your life to know Him."

The fact is when you were born, God gave you a physical appetite to keep you alive. If you didn't have an appetite you'd just shrivel up and die. It's good to be hungry; hunger is a good part of life. It keeps you alive. He gave you a physical appetite to fulfill physical needs. He gave you a spiritual appetite to know Him. Only Jesus can satisfy that hunger. Only Jesus can produce ultimate satisfaction in your life. Sex can't. Money can't. Music and humans beings

can't, only Jesus can. *People* magazine can't. Having a nice home can't. Having your kids get straight A's and you be very proud of them can't. Being famous, being powerful, having all the pleasure in the world, taking Club Med vacations, none of those things produce ultimate satisfaction in your life. Why? Because it's a spiritual need. There's a God-shaped vacuum in you and only God can fill it.

What do you do? Take these three steps: I come, I believe, I drink. Notice the promise. He says, "*Happy are those who are hungry and thirsty for true goodness, for they will be truly satisfied.*" God is saying "Satisfaction guaranteed!" Your hunger for happiness is met in knowing God and being known by Him and in loving God and being loved by Him and developing a relationship with Him and finding out the purpose for which you were put on this earth. As

you seek Him, you find that happiness and that satisfaction. He will not turn you down!

Others of you have already taken that initial step I just talked about -- you've come to Christ, you've believed in Christ, and you've drunk of Christ. You're a Christian. My question to you today is, How's your spiritual appetite? Do you hunger for the things of God? Do you really want to know Him or is God just a convenience for you now in your life, like a little sip every Sunday morning? "That's all I need. I want five cents worth of God." Or do you hunger: "I've got to have God in all of my life. I want all that He has to offer." The fact is, you are as close to God as you want to be. Don't blame it on anybody else. If you're not close to God, it's not God's fault, or your parent's fault, or your wife's fault, or your husband's fault, your children's

fault. You are as close to God as you want to be, because God always works in our lives according to our desires. If you don't know God in His fullest it's because you choose not to. He works in our lives according to our desires.

"Blessed are those who are hungry and thirsty to know Him. They will be fully satisfied."

It is amazing to me how so many Christians have a "take it or leave it" attitude toward spiritual food. They want God when it's convenient. Most Christians have enough faith to bug them but not to bless them. It's enough faith to make them miserable, so they can't just go out and sin. But they don't have enough to really enjoy life either. They are enough of a Christian to not want to go to the party where everybody is getting drunk and going home with somebody else's wife. They past that stage, they don't want that... But

on the other hand, they don't have enough faith to really enjoy life in it's fullest. God is just a little appetizer.

Some of you say, "I used to have a hunger for God. I remember when I first became a Christian. I devoured the Bible. I read it and loved it. You couldn't keep me away from Christians. I wanted to be at church all the time. I had a hunger. But I don't have it anymore." (PAUSE)

A loss of appetite indicates illness. In a hospital, when somebody won't eat, they are seriously ill. A sign that they're getting better is they want to start eating again.

Some of you say, "I'm a Christian, but, if I were honest, I just don't have that appetite for God like you're talking about. I don't have this deep desire to know God or read the Bible or get to know Him. I don't have that hunger any more." I'll tell you why. You're stuffing yourself on junk

food that we talked about. You have bought into the culture, the world. You're doing the same thing everybody else is doing. And you're stuffing yourself with things, with attitudes, and events that don't last or satisfy.

I think some of you need to go on a media fast to get your spiritual hunger back. When was the last time you sat in your car and turned the radio off just to talk to God while you're driving on the freeway? When was the last time you walked into your house and didn't automatically turn on the television? If you're filling yourself with all the world has to offer -- the books, the tapes, the records, the videos and all that -- it's no wonder that you're filled and you have no appetite for the things that really count in life. You are pigging out on junk food.

The word here, where Jesus says "*Happy are those who are hungry and thirsty for true goodness*". For the word

"hungry" there are two words in the Greek. One of them means, "I want a bite of something -- give me a piece of bread." The other meaning in the Greek is "I want the whole loaf." Guess which one Jesus uses here. This says, "I want all of God there is!" Jesus says "Happiness comes for people who say, 'I want all of God there is. I want to know Him in His fullness. I'm not satisfied with having a little blessing here or there. I want Him as the center of my life.'" That is the person who will be fully satisfied.

Prayer:

Happy are the hungry, the Bible says, because it means God is getting ready to do something in your life. Have you come to the realization that something is missing? Maybe it's just an uneasiness? a sense of restlessness? America has the highest boredom rate in the world because we move

from thing to thing to thing trying to fit it into our lives, trying to fit it into that vacuum that only God can fill.

Would you just pray this in your heart this morning, "Jesus Christ, I don't understand it all but I want to come to You, I want to believe in You and I want to drink of You. Christ, I don't understand it all but I come back to You! I've tried so many other things and those pleasures and those things last only a short time, but they are not satisfying. I want to believe in You and believe Your purpose for my life and believe You love me and You died for me. I want to know and understand that better. God, I want to drink of You. I want to know You in fullness." Whether this is your first time to open your life to Christ or you've been a Christian for thirty years, would you take these steps with me? Say, "God, help me to recognize my real hunger." If you're dissatisfied with your life, congratulations! If you've got

problems, wonderful! God's creating a hunger so He can teach you what real life is all about. Say, "God, would You help me to stop eating spiritual junk food? Help me to not be automatically accepting what the culture says. Father, would You help me to start looking to Christ for satisfaction. Jesus, I realize that only You can meet that inner gnawing in my heart. It's not going to be filled with money or sex or fame or nice houses or beautiful kids or promotion or any of those other things. The spiritual hunger can only be met by You. I want all of You that You have to offer. God, I haven't had a hunger for You but I want You to reawaken that appetite in my life that I might not miss out on the best in life and that I might realize that it's found in You and not in all these other things." Thank you, Father, for Your word. Thank You that You promote

and teach us the ways of real happiness in life. That it is not in pleasure or performance or possessions or power or position or prestige but it's in a personal relationship to

You. Thank You. In Jesus' name.

Amen.