

Series: The Crucial Commandment

Title: The Satisfied Soul

Text: Psalm 42

Time: 2/12/2012 (a.m.)

Introduction

1. Our soul's most basic craving is to be known and embraced by the God who made us for Himself. The Bible captures this longing with the image of our souls as parched lands that thirst for the refreshing water that only the Lord Himself can supply. To love God with all our soul is to acknowledge that He is the only ultimate satisfaction for our soul.

2. The word soul is used to describe us as persons, or to mean essentially, "our lives." We are soulful beings who have an identity and personhood.

3. It is in our soul that we come to grips with our identity and that identity will create either rest or restlessness. The identity we choose will determine what or who we pursue and therefore satisfies the cravings of that identity.

4. Jeremiah addressed our tendency to exchange the truly fulfilling for what can never satisfy. **Jeremiah 2:13** "For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, to hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

5. When we look for satisfaction in anything other than Christ we are choosing the dysfunction of a cracked pot.

6. God designed us with a craving that can only be satisfied by Him. In his book *Desiring God*, John Piper sets forth the premise that God has placed in our hearts the gift of desire centered on our pursuit of happiness as the end-all and be-all. The line that Piper lives by is, "*God is most glorified in me, when I am most satisfied in Him.*"

7. To love God with all my soul is to pursue my strongest desire instead of trying to appease the desire of my flesh. The problem that humans face is not that our desires are too strong but they are too weak. C.S. Lewis says it best, "*We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered to us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in the slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by an offer of a holiday at sea. We are far too easily pleased.*"

8. When we forsake God for our own cisterns we are chasing after a god of our own choosing. G.K. Chesterton was quoted as saying that the man who knocks at the door of the brothel is looking for God.

9. The command to love God with all your heart, with your soul, with all your mind, and all your strength is an appeal to the nature and heart of Christ that dwells

within us because that is what Christ manifested in His life on earth and what He longs for through His Spirit in us.

10. I believe there are so many grumpy, moody, and restless believers because they are walking around hungry; they continue to feed the wrong desire in an attempt to find satisfaction only to intensify their need to satisfy the hunger of their regenerate nature.

11. In this Psalm we are given some instruction as to the care and nurture of our soul. The writer is dealing with the issue of a depressed and despairing soul and he writes of the remedy that will also equip us.

1. The Presence of God

1. We do not know from the title of this psalm who the particular person was who composed it. He is presumably just one of the Sons of Korah. But whoever he was, we know the chief thing that was bothering him. He was far from Jerusalem and its temple worship on Mount Zion, and he therefore felt himself to be cut off from God.

2. Jesus is constantly inviting us to make God the object of our desire. One gets the sense that hunger and thirst grow; the more we pursue God the more we long to know.

3. **Matthew 5:6** "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Though God is the satisfaction for our souls, there is so much of Him that our appetites expand as our knowledge of God increases.

4. Hunger and thirst for God do not lead to a place of satisfaction where you never hunger and thirst again. It is, rather, a state of continuous pursuit that only expands our appetite, because there will always be more of God to feast upon.

5. In Luke 11:5-13 Jesus invites us to be insistent in our seeking Him and also to trust Him in the fact that He will deliver what we need; He invites us into this relationship to engage us in fellowship with Him.

6. The health of my identity and security are tied to the well-being of my soul and the satisfaction it finds in Christ.

2. Positive Relationships

1. "They" have always been around. We see them in verse 3 "they say to me all day long, 'Where is your God?'"

2. I doubt many of you have friends that would intentionally question the existence of God verbally but visually, by their actions, they deny Him and much of their counsel comes from emotions and secular thought.

3. If you have someone who speaks biblical wisdom into your life on a constant basis then you have a treasured friend or family member.
4. The problem is that most don't have relationships but resources; they use companions as crisis managers or network assets.
5. We need people who confirm the Word and work of God in our lives, people who challenge us to seek God when circumstances make us doubt God. This is so crucial because when we are discouraged and in despair our flesh craves isolation.
6. Companions of compassion who will not enable my pity but remind me of God's love for me and speak His eternal promises into my life are like a breath of fresh air.

3. Current Corporate Worship

1. Verse 4 is a continuation of 3 from the standpoint that isolation from the body of believers only intensifies depression and loneliness.
2. The writer is remembering a time in his life when he was full of joy and exuberance as he led people in worship. C.S. Lewis says that we praise what we enjoy. Praise is simply the spontaneous expression of joy toward what has captured our fancy.
3. When we invest in God and in others our soul is secure in its adoration of God and is free to celebrate our relationship with Him in the company of other believers.
4. Both the disposition of your absence and your presence have a profound impact on you individually and the body corporately.
5. Peter Lord tells the story of Jamaica making the transition from a British colony to an independent country. Jamaica wanted to change its currency from the British monetary system to the American monetary system. The new government was faced with a dilemma because a good percentage of the population was illiterate.

Officials wondered, "How are the people going to learn to change from the pound to the dollar? Must we hold classes to teach them?"

A wise man answered astutely, "It won't be necessary to have formal classes. Money is vital to the people. They will learn the new system quickly and learn it correctly." And they did.

6. People learn quickly what they consider vital to their lives.
7. Jesus designed us so that individual and corporate worship of Him would be vital and the reason many of us are worried and bothered about so many things is because we have neglected the necessary thing.

Luke 10:41–42 But the Lord answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, *you are worried and bothered about so many things; ⁴² but only one thing is necessary,* for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”

Conclusion

1. The psalmist helps us tremendously in how to overcome the power of our lower nature.

2. The soul is never not pursuing satisfaction but, satisfaction can be only found in one person. Most are not satisfied or content; they simply learn to deal with their discontent either by denial or the delusional thought that consistent happiness is unattainable on this earth.

3. The psalmist tells us that our soul’s health is dependent upon our hope and adoration of God and God alone.

Why do we suffer from internal disturbance and discontent?

- Misplaced hope
- Misplaced joy
- We praise what we enjoy. Praise is simply the spontaneous expression of joy toward what has captured our fancy. It is not that we don’t have answers; it is that we don’t like the answers we have.

Psalm 43:3–4 O send out Your light and Your truth, let them lead me; Let them bring me to Your holy hill And to Your dwelling places. ⁴ Then I will go to the altar of God, To God my exceeding joy; And upon the lyre I shall praise You, O God, my God.