

My Soul Thirsteth For Thee

Psalm 63:1-8

I. INTRODUCTION: I

- I. **2** There are people all around us these days, searching for something in their lives.
 - A. Many of them will readily and ambivalently admit that they feel empty inside.
 - B. Something, they know not what, is missing; they are lonely and desperate, agitated and unhappy.
2. Many of them have financial success; many have all the “things” that money can buy.
 - A. But it does not give them lasting pleasure; they cannot find true satisfaction.
 - B. Their very existence is characterized by a deep sense of emptiness that haunts them day after day.
 - C. They enjoy most of the earthly delights for which multiplied thousands seek, yet, despite their best efforts, they cannot find any enduring gratification in any of the carnal diversions the world offers.
3. What is wrong? A man cannot live his life apart from a relationship with his Maker and be truly happy.
 - A. God made us in such a way that we cannot find true happiness: 1) in life solely in the “here and now” (**Eccl. 3:11**: “...*He has put eternity in their hearts...*”); 2) without fellowship with Him; He did that on purpose (Gen. 1:26-27; **Matt. 4:4**: “*It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’*”).
 - B. **3** As Augustine wrote in his *Confessions* (VII 5), “Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless, until it repose in Thee.”
 - C. Or, as David said before him, “O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is” (Psa. 63:1).
4. Much this world offers to mankind leaves us feeling vacant and hollow (e.g., new car, new house), but there is lasting spiritual satisfaction in our relationship with our heavenly Father.
 - A. As David went on to say in his psalm: “*Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice. My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me*” (63:3-8).
 - B. **4** We need to remember the following important points which relate to these devotions from David’s heart under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

II. DISCUSSION:

I.5 We Need God In Our Life:

- A. As the psalm puts it, one’s relationship with God is as indispensable as water “*in a dry and thirsty land.*” (Psa. 63:1)
 - (1) Water is a requirement, essential to existence, not a luxury.
 - (2) Likewise, worshiping, praising, and loving God is not one of life’s distractions.
 - (3) It is not a sideline to what we do, nor is it a peripheral issue to who we are; rather, it is the essence of who we are and what we do (relate my life before becoming a Christian).
 - (i) In Acts 11:26 Luke tells us: “*And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.*”

- (ii) The idea expressed by “were...called...Christians” “to transact business” as (Vine); for example people originally named “Baker” were named that because that’s what they did for a living (i.e., baker), or people originally named “Smith” were named that because they were blacksmiths.
- (iii) Thus, a true “disciple” is called a “Christian” because that is his/her business, it describes their purpose in life.

B. Jesus said, “*I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*”

- (1) To live that life a man does not just want God in his life, like to have him as his friend and Father, prefer to devote some time and energy to reverencing him, or desire an affiliation and association with Him.
- (2) He needs God, he must have him at the center of his heart and his life, or else he will continue always to be thirsty for the water of life which God gives:

- (i) Jesus described Himself as “living water”:

Jn. 4:10: “Jesus answered and said to her, ‘If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.’”

- (ii) This is life eternal, a foretaste of the heavenly glory, as Jesus said:

Jn. 4:13-14: “Jesus answered and said to her, ‘Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, I 4 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.’”

Jn. 17:3: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

- (iii) Without God at the very center of our life, we will never be satisfied (smile on John Lee’s corpse!):

Jn. 6:26-27: “Jesus answered them and said, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. 27 Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.’”

2. **6** Having God In Our Life Brings Satisfaction:

A. David writes: “My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness,” (Psa. 63:5).

- (1) Just as food (“marrow and fatness”) leaves the stomach feeling full, so one who knows the Lord’s mercy and walks with him in his life experiences fulfillment.

Jn. 6:27: “Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.”

Jn. 6:55-56: “For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. 56 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.”

- (2) Those who do not know what is missing in their lives often wind up living lives of dissipation, alcohol and/or drug abuse or even suicide. The last thing they will admit is that God is really what is lacking, the deficiency that plagues every aspect of their being (my mother).

- (i) According to the CDC there were:

- ☛ 41,149 suicides (2013) in the U.S. (one every 12.8 minutes),
- ☛ For every successful suicide there are at least 12 other suicide attempts; therefore, about every minute of the day someone in the U.S. attempts suicide!).

- (ii) According to the *National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism* there are:

- ☛ 16.6 million adults (>18 years old) that have an AUD (*Alcohol Use Disorder*),
- ☛ 88,000 people die annually of alcohol-related causes,
- ☛ Alcohol misuse problems costs the U.S. \$223.5 billion per year (2006),
- ☛ More than 10% of U.S. children live with a parent with alcohol problems,
- ☛ Approximately 20% of college students meet the criteria for AUD.

(iii) According to the *National Institute on Drug Abuse* (2013):

- ☛ An estimated 24.6 million Americans (age 12 or older) have used an illicit drug in the past month,
- ☛ That's 9.4% of the population!

- B. Why? They cannot be happy because the one Person who can deliver lasting contentment—God—is consciously and permanently shut out of their lives.
- C. This world is a dark, lonely, unsatisfying place when we leave God out of our lives! **Psa. 63:1:** *"...in a dry and thirsty land, where there is no water."*
- D. Only God can fill the void the world leaves in our lives (**Matt. 5:6:** *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled."*).

3. **7** *This Satisfaction Inspires Worship of One's Maker:*

- A. Says the Psalmist, *"My mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips."* (Psa. 63:5)
- B. The practice of one's religion through worship is not viewed by this author, as with some of us, as a chore or an onerous duty, but as the joyful outpouring of a thankful heart.
 - (1) Notice how David expresses this in another Psalm: **Psa. 122:1:** *"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go into the house of the LORD.'"*
 - (2) **Neh. 8:1-3:** *"Now all the people gathered together as one man in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded Israel. 2 So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly of men and women and all who could hear with understanding on the first day of the seventh month. 3 Then he read from it in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate from morning until midday, before the men and women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law."*
- C. How sad that some Christians view worship as a "chore": **Mal. 1:13:** *"You also say, 'Oh, what a weariness!' And you sneer at it,"*
 - (1) Some will latch on to even the flimsiest of excuses to miss worship (Heb. 10:25).
 - (2) Do we really understand who God is? Ex. 3:14; Rom. 1:20; Jn. 1:1-3; Gen. 1:16; Heb. 11:3
 - (3) When we do come to the proper understanding of who God is we will view worship as David viewed worship (Psa. 122:1); we will extend homage and service to God, we will offer it out of a well-spring of inner motivation (**Psa. 84:2:** *"My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God."*; Matt. 5:6; 6:33; 16:26).

4. **8** *Private Devotion Is a Sure By-product of Spiritual Satisfaction:*

- A. David did much more than just worship God at the tabernacle: *"When I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches,"* (Psa. 63:6); this shows that David was not merely practicing his religion publicly!

- (1) The passage describes private devotion, which according to the Savior is critical to true religion: *“But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly”* (Matt. 6:6).
- (2) If the only prayer or praise which we give to God is that which we offer in the assemblies with other Christians, then our religion is woefully lacking.

B. Recall Acts 11:26 and what it means when *“disciples...were called...Christians”*?

- (1) We need to be “Christians” wherever we go! Work, school, shopping, driving down the road, etc.
- (2) I’ve said it many times, but it is true! We are the only Bible some will ever read: 2 Cor. 3:2: *“You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men;”*
- (3) Annie Johnson Flint wrote a hymn titled *The World’s Bible*:

Christ has no hands but our hands
 To do His work today.
 He has no feet but our feet
 To lead men in His way;
 He has no tongue but our tongue
 To tell men how He died;
 He has no help but our help
 To bring them to His side.
 We are the only Bible
 The careless world will read;
 We are the sinner’s gospel,
 We are the scoffer’s creed;

We are the Lord’s last message,
 Given in deed and word;
 What if the type is crooked?
 What if the print is blurred?
 What if our hands are busy
 With other work than His?
 What if our feet are walking
 Where sin’s allurements is?
 What if our tongues are speaking
 Of things His lips would spurn?
 How can we hope to help Him
 And hasten His return?

5. **9** *Diligence Will Not Permit This Satisfaction To Be Denied Us:*

- A. The Authorized Version rendering of v. 8 is this: *“My soul followeth hard after thee....”*; other versions interpret the Hebrew phrase variously as:
 - (1) NKJV: *“My soul follows close behind You....”*
 - (2) NASV: *“My soul clings to You....”*
 - (3) NLT: *“I follow close behind You....”*
- B. Such unrelenting pursuit of God and his truth has ever been a quality of genuine religion (**Deut. 10:20**: *“You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast,”*; **Matt. 22:37-38**: *“‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and great commandment.”*).
 - (1) God is described in Scripture as a Father who ever waits longingly for us, watchful for our return to him (**Lk. 15:20**: *“And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.”*).
 - (2) But God did not leave home, we did. So we must make our way back to him, not he to us.
- C. God is close to each of us; no matter how far we’ve sunk into the mire of sin: **Acts 17:26-27**: *“And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, 27 so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;”*
 - (1) He is close by, but we must “grope for Him”; i.e., really, truly, diligently search for Him!
 - (2) But our heart must be in the right place for our search to be successful: **Isa. 66:2**: *“But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word.”*

(3) **Matt. 7:7-8:** “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.”

III. CONCLUSION: 10

- I. Do you feel like something is missing in your life?
 - A. Does your life leave you feeling empty?
 - B. Do you feel as if you live in “a dry and thirst land, where there is no water”?
2. If so, your lack of satisfaction with life may be because, whether you realize it or not, your soul “thirsteth” for God!
3. You can find God and find true satisfaction if you will seek Him! However God has set the terms to have a relationship with Him.
 - A. Some view His terms as difficult, but they are not! I Jn. 5:3
 - B. Some view having a relationship with God as of no value, but they are wrong (Matt. 13:46).
4. If your heart is right and if you will diligently seek Him; you can experience a relationship with God that brings satisfaction and fulfillment beyond your wildest dreams.
5. The emptiness and desperate groping of so many of this generation is proof positive that you can’t find lasting contentment in the things of this world.
6. God alone has this within his power; and he will satisfy you if you seek his company. As the psalm says, “My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee... My soul shall be satisfied....”

Adapted from an article by Daniel H. King, Sr.
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