

SATISFY US IN THE MORNING

Considering Why We Must Pray for and Pursue Satisfaction

The gospel offered to thirsty souls is not just for the forgiveness of their sins, it is also for the satisfaction of their soul. This satisfaction is life-transforming as St. Augustine discovered. After fifteen years of bondage to sexual immorality, he traded fruitless joys for true, sovereign joy. He describes the experience in a prayer to God: “How sweet all at once it was for me to be rid of those fruitless joys which I had once feared to lose! You drove them from me, you who are the true, the sovereign joy. You drove them from me and took their place, you who are sweeter than all pleasure...O Lord my God, my Light, my Wealth, and my Salvation” (St. Augustine, *Confessions*, p. 181).

Christianity begins by finding Christ more satisfying than any-thing this world has to offer, and it continues by looking to Him for satisfaction. Every morning as we meet with our Lord and Savior, we should pray, “Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days” (Ps. 90:14). Not only should we pray for this satisfaction, we should also passionately pursue it.

George Mueller states in his autobiography this turning point that took place in his life: “I saw more clearly than ever, that the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was, to have my soul happy in the Lord. The first thing to be concerned about was not, how much I might serve the Lord, how I might glorify the Lord; but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man might be nourished. For I might seek to set the truth before the unconverted, I might seek to benefit believers, I might seek to relieve the distressed, I might in other ways seek to behave myself as it becomes a child of God in this world; and yet, not being happy in the Lord, and not being nourished and strengthened in my inner man day by day, all this might not be attended to in a right spirit.”

I would describe the essence of Christianity as a soul-satisfying relationship with God through Christ. And, we need to stress that ministry flows out of this relationship, therefore it is right to follow the example of Mueller and the Psalmist, and make it our first and fore-most duty every morning to seek after satisfaction in our Savior. The picture I have in mind is that of a fountain. This fountain represents our satisfaction in Christ. And the more satisfied and happy we are in Christ, the more the fountain will bubble up. And the overflow of this fountain is evangelism, service, obedience, self-denial, etc., and it all runs like a river into the ocean of God’s glory.

Consider how we serve Christ with the hope of bearing much fruit to the glory of God. Jesus said, “I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing...By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples” (Jn. 15:5, 8). Fruitful ministry is the direct result of an abiding relationship (i.e., soul-satisfying relationship) with Christ. So, staying with our metaphor, we happily abide in Christ and the fountain overflows to effective ministry, and that in turn leads to God’s glory.

Our obedience and overcoming of temptation also flows from our satisfaction in Christ. Note Jesus’ connection between love and obedience: “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word...Whoever does not love me does not keep my word” (Jn. 14:23-24). Sheer will-power may prove to be effective in the short-term for overcoming temptation and walking in obedience, but it will not last. Christ states as a matter of fact that if we love Him (i.e., are satisfied in Him) we will keep His word, while if we don’t love Him we will not keep His word.

The key is to deeply and sincerely love Christ; to find our joy in Him. As the Puritan pastor Matthew Henry said, “The joy of the Lord will arm us against the assaults of our spiritual enemies, and put our mouths out of taste for those pleasures with which the tempter baits his hooks.”

John Piper responding to Henry says, “This is the great business of life—to ‘put out mouths out of taste for those pleasures with which the tempter baits his hooks.’ I know of no other way to triumph over sin long-term than to gain a distaste for it, because of a superior satisfaction in God...The human heart remains a ceaseless factory of desires. Sin remains powerfully and suicidally appealing. The battle remains: where will we drink? Where will we feast?” (John Piper, *Desiring God*, p. 11). If we do not find our satisfaction in Christ, we will inevitably look for it in people, pleasures or possessions. Therefore, as we said above, we must make it our first and foremost duty every morning to seek after satisfaction in our Savior.

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