

SEARCHING FOR SATISFACTION  
EBC - May 20, 2012 (am)

**A. INTRODUCTION**

1. Songs of My Youth

a. Popular rock song - *"I Can't Get No Satisfaction"* - by Rolling Stones

1) Bemoans finding no satisfaction - riding in car listening to radio, watching tv, riding around the world

2) Refrain - Mick Jager belts out -

*I can't get no satisfaction . . .  
'Cause I try and I try and I try and I try  
I can't get no, I can't get no  
no satisfaction, no satisfaction, no satisfaction.*

b. Hymn - *"I'll Be Satisfied"* - which declares

*When my soul is singing in that promised land above  
I'll be satisfied  
Praising Christ the Savior for redeeming grace and love  
I'll be satisfied*

c. Hymn based on **Psalm 17:15** - **As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness.**

1) One may travel and enjoy the experiences of life BUT even so we declare

*"Be it ever so humble - there is no place like home"*

2) Believers are pilgrims who are to enjoy God and His blessings immensely in our journey

3) Believers are pilgrims who can not be completely satisfied until getting home - *until he beholds the face of the Lord and awakes in His likeness*

2. Ecclesiastes Is About The Search For Meaning - Satisfaction - Happiness In Journey of Life

a. Stuart Olyott's book, A Life Worth Living, notes Ecclesiastes consists of

1) Brief introduction ..... **1:1-11**

2) Four sermons

Sermon 1 - **1:12-3:15**

Sermon 3 - **6:1-8:13**

Sermon 2 - **3:16-5:20**

Sermon 4 - **8:14-12:7**

3) Conclusion.....**12:8-14**

- b. In each sermon - Olyott says the Preacher expounds two themes - *FUTILITY & HOPE*
  - 1) Earth bound life (*under the sun*) - is meaningless - Relentless - Repetitious - Vanity
  - 2) God-focused life - life of Progress - Purpose - Meaning - yes even Happiness
- c. What do you think would bring you happiness? Why?

### 3. Our Focus Today - **Ecclesiastes 2** - *Searching For Satisfaction*

#### **B. COMMENTARY**

##### 1. Contentment is an Elusive Virtue

- a. What Jeremiah Burroughs called - "*rare jewel*"
- b. Paul said - **Philippians 4:11** "... **I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.**"
  - 1) i.e., - needing no assistance, limit his desires & requirements)
  - 2) Was not what came naturally BUT learned
- c. David said - **Psalm 131** - "**I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me.**"
  - 1) Unweaned child cries in mother's arms until he gets something from mother -- her milk.
  - 2) Weaned child is satisfied just with mother herself, with her very presence.
- d. NOTE - there is a big difference b/w contentment & complacency
  - 1) Paul learned to be content with his physical supplies
  - 2) BUT spiritually - he was always pressing on - growing - learning . . .

Tim Keller

##### 2. Book of Ecclesiastes Is About the Preacher's Search For Contentment & Meaning

- a. **Ecclesiastes 1** - Seeks meaning & satisfaction - *THROUGH WISDOM & KNOWLEDGE*
  - 1) **1:15** - Some problems knowledge cannot solve - knowing the future cannot always change it
  - 2) **1:18** - Knowledge rather than bringing satisfaction brings increased sorrow
- b. **Ecclesiastes 2** - Continues search for contentment & meaning - *THROUGH PLEASURE*
  - 1) Since learning & knowledge brings sorrow - determines to seek contentment in amusement
  - 2) **2:1** - Preacher says - "**Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself.**"
- c. Can pleasure and carnal joy give lasting satisfaction - fulfillment?
  - 1) Eve thought so & she jettisoned the joy of God for what appealed to her appetites
  - 2) Seems many today agree with Eve AND their major pursuit is pleasure
  - 3) Often seems church too more concerned with sensual than spiritual

##### 3. **Vs 2-11** - Ways Preacher Sought Satisfaction Through Pleasure

- a. **vs 2-3** - Fun & Frolic
  - 1) Sometimes I read bloopers & laugh until my face hurts
  - 2) Such laughter is good for temporary relief
  - 3) BUT such laughter grows stale AND brings no lasting meaning or satisfaction
  - 4) **SEE vs 2** - brought small satisfaction
  - 5) Way I feel after watching certain movies or reading certain books - waste of time

- b. **vs 4-11**- Turns to more serious pursuits - Creativity & Culture
  - 1) Builds great works
  - 2) Makes gardens & parks
  - 3) Plants orchids & designs irrigation systems
  - 4) Expands his wealth
  - 5) Broadens his cultural experiences
- c. **SEE vs 10** - found pleasure in these matters
- d. **SEE vs 11** - Useful, beautiful as these things were - realized had no lasting meaning

4. Important Point To Note - Such Things - Fun - Frolic - Creativity & Culture - Are Not Wrong or Sinful of Themselves
  - a. Gordon Keddie

*I believe that the Preacher gave himself to investigate. He did not experiment with gross sin. He simply analyzed some of the apparent otherwise harmless, or ostensibly productive, ways in which people amuse themselves (52).*

- b. Austerity is NOT godliness
    - 1) Not sinful to laugh & enjoy pleasure
    - 2) Food & song & wine are NOT wicked
  - c. We are to enjoy God's creation
    - 1) God derived satisfaction in creation - He looked and declared - **"It is good"**
    - 2) We have a sense of enjoyment in building & collecting . . .
    - 3) Art & culture bring joy
  - d. All of these things are gifts from God BUT they are not god
    - 1) Sinful when replace God AND/OR pursued without Thanksgiving
    - 2) Alone NEVER bring lasting satisfaction - temporary yes - lasting - no!
5. **Vs 12-23** - Death Comes to All
  - a. **vs 12-17** - Observes - death comes to all - matters not Who or What they have
  - b. **vs 13-23** - Concludes - If all there is - is this life THEN these things are empty - no lasting value or good
    - 1) If death is where it all ends - then all is vanity
    - 2) Keddie notes - *"Life is little different from the pirate's walk down the plank"*
6. **Vs 24-26** - Beyond Despair to Finding Satisfaction
  - a. Preacher does not leave us to despair - he show us hope & meaning & satisfaction
    - 1) Observes what has become a burden - an endless cycle of life - OUGHT to be a joy
    - 2) True satisfaction comes from knowing - God gives life & we enjoying it - HOW?
      - b. **vs 24a** - **"There is nothing better"** .....Live life as a goal
        - 1) We are not just about getting through life BUT living it - enjoying it
        - 2) Most of us live for tomorrow
        - 3) BUT it is not just the destination we are to enjoy BUT the journey also
      - c. **vs 24b-26** - **"from the hand of God"** .....Live life as a gift of grace
        - 1) Life is a gift - receive every day - every moment & event as gift from God
        - 2) Living a life of faith can bring joy to the simplest moments & rest in the most complex moments

## **CONCLUSION**

### 1. What of You?

- a. Are you like Mick Jager - *I can't get no satisfaction . . .*
  - 1) Even when you get what you dream about?
  - 2) How many of us are just going through the motions?
- b. Are you like those described by Prophet Haggai?

**Haggai 1:9 - You looked for much, and behold, it came to little. And when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why? declares the LORD of hosts. Because of my house that lies in ruins, while each of you busies himself with his own house.**

- c. Or - are you living life as God intended it?
  - 1) God at the center?
  - 2) Are you on a journey in which you are amazed at His grace & goodness?
  - 3) Are you truly thankful - are you a worshiper of God?

### 2. I Believe Many Believers Are Confused, Dazed, BECAUSE Lost Means God Has Appointed For Satisfaction - Joy - Rest. . .

- a. Lord's Day
- b. Worship -public & private
- c. Fellowship of the Saints

### 3. God Invites You To Himself - Fully

**Psalm 34:8 - Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!**

**John 6:35 - Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.**

**John 7:37 - On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.**