

Message Discussion Guide THE ALL-SATISFYING CHRIST

The Church at Brook Hills,

Dr. David Platt

October 24, 2010

John 6:25-71

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

Connect . . .

Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.

Option 1

Encourage several learners to describe a time when they have felt a sense of satisfaction in life. Invite them to describe that feeling of satisfaction and how long it lasted. Explain that today you will discuss the only source of true satisfaction in life.

Option 2

Invite a few volunteers to describe a time when they didn't settle for something, knowing that something better was available. Examples could be as simple as food or as serious as a job. After learners have shared, explain that today we will discuss how satisfaction in Christ means not settling for something less- the things of this world.

Option 3

Invite learners to create a list of things that people look to throughout their lives to give them satisfaction and happiness. Discuss why these things and all things of the world cannot give continual and ultimate satisfaction. Explain that today you will discuss the only source of true satisfaction in life.

Review the Message . . .

- Jesus alone can _____ fulfill _____ our desires.
 - God created us to _____ crave _____.
 - Our cravings are designed to be satisfied by our _____ Creator _____.
 - True satisfaction is not found in gifts, but in the _____ Giver _____.
 - Our deepest craving is not for something, but for _____ Someone _____.
 - Sin and satisfaction...
 - The trigger of sin:
 - Looking to the things of this world to satisfy us _____ apart from _____ our Creator.
 - The tragedy of sin:
 - We _____ run _____ from the One our souls long for most.

"Our external delights, our earthly pleasures, our ambition, our reputation, and our human relationships, for all these things, our desires are eager, our appetites strong, our love

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warm and affectionate. When it comes to these things, our hearts are tender and sensitive, deeply impressed, easily moved, much concerned and greatly engaged. We are depressed at our losses and we are excited and joyful about any worldly success or prosperity. But when it comes to spiritual matters, how dull we feel. How heavy and hard our hearts; we can sit in here of the infinite height and length and breadth and love of God in Christ Jesus, of his giving his infinitely dear Son, and yet sit there, cold and unmoved. If we are going to be excited about anything, shouldn't it be our spiritual lives? Is there anything more inspiring, more exciting, more loveable and desirable in Heaven or on Earth than the Gospel of Jesus Christ? We should be utterly humbled that we are not more emotionally affected than we are."

Jonathan Edwards

Discussion

- Enlist a learner to read John 6:25-32. Remind learners that after Jesus miraculously fed the 5000, the large crowd following Him pursued Him further. Jesus began to talk with them about their true desires and how to fulfill them.
- What was the reason Jesus said the crowds were seeking Him?
- What was Jesus' attitude toward the natural desires of humankind?
- Enlist a learner to read Genesis 2:15-17. In the Garden, before sin, Adam and Eve had desires and needs. What do these desires and needs indicate about God's intention for them in creation?
- Read Genesis 3:6. Who was at the center of Eve's desires to eat of the forbidden tree? What does this first sin reveal about the relationship between sin and the search for satisfaction?
- How did the fruit appeal to Eve's natural desires?
- Looking at verses 26-27 and 32, what does Jesus indicate is the true desire of mankind? Who does He say is the only true source of satisfaction?

Application . . .

- What are our greatest desires/cravings in life? Who is at the center of our desires?
- What do these desires reveal about our priorities? Our character? Our relationship with Christ?
- How do the things of this world appeal to our natural desires? Why do we look to things other than God to fulfill our desires?
- What is true satisfaction?
- Where is our true satisfaction found? Where else do people look for it?
- If God created most of our natural desires, how should we approach the fulfillment of these desires?
- Read the quote by Jonathan Edwards. What excites you most in life? Why are our spiritual desires often dull in comparison to those things?
- Why do we often run from the very One who can give us real satisfaction?

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- Jesus alone can _____ transform _____ our tastes.
 - Our options...
 - We can conquer sin by _____ working _____ hard to change our deeds.
 - We can conquer sin by _____ trusting _____ Christ to change our desires.
 - Our faith...
 - How will we overcome the _____ pleasures _____ of sin?
 - By letting Christ overcome us with the _____ power _____ of His satisfaction.
 - Our prayer...
 - God, _____ increase _____ our desire for pleasure.

“If there lurks in most modern minds the notion that to desire our own good and earnestly to hope for the enjoyment of it is a bad thing, I submit that this notion has crept in from Kant and the Stoics and is no part of the Christian faith. Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.”

C.S. Lewis

Discussion

- Enlist a learner to read John 6:28-35.
- Looking at verse 28, what did Jesus’ audience think was needed as the way to please God? In this scenario, who would be responsible for their salvation?
- What did Jesus indicate in verses 28-29 that needed to be done for their salvation and a relationship with the Father? In this case, who would be responsible for their salvation?
- Read Galatians 5:24. What did Paul indicate about worldly desires in the life of a believer?
- How do crucified desires give way to Christ’s transformation, as Jesus spoke of in verses 29 and 35?
- How does daily “abiding in Him” affect our desires?

Application . . .

- What kinds of things do we do in attempts to earn God’s grace or pleasure? How does our “work” seem to put control in our hands instead of God’s Hands?
- Why is “working” for salvation a man-centered faith?
- What aspects of our lives are we content to settle for less than God’s best, and less than His desires for us? Why are we willing to settle for less than God’s desires instead of giving Him control?
- Read the quote by C. S. Lewis. What are we missing out on for the sake of our pursuit of fake pleasures in this world?

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- Jesus alone can _____ guarantee _____ our satisfaction.
 - The basis...
 - The initiative of the _____ Father _____.
 - The obedience of the _____ Son _____.
 - The promise of the _____ resurrection _____.
 - The bottom line...
 - Jesus has _____ provided _____ for our salvation in His death.
 - Jesus has _____ prevailed _____ over our sin in His resurrection.
 - We no longer live for _____ fleeting _____ pleasures in this world...
 - We have found total satisfaction in the _____ person _____ of Christ!
 - We now live for _____ everlasting _____ pleasure in the world to come...
 - We will find eternal enjoyment in the _____ praise _____ of Christ!

“All enjoyment spontaneously overflows into praise. The world rings with praise – lovers praising their mistresses, readers their favorite poet, walkers praising the countryside, players praising their favorite game. I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation.”

C.S. Lewis

Discussion

- Enlist several learners to read John 6:35-71.
- Looking at verses 37 and 44, who initiates the relationship with mankind?
- What do verses 38-40 indicate about the role the Son plays in bringing satisfaction?
- Explain that verses 52-59 were disturbing to most of Jesus’ audience that day, but Jesus was referring to the necessity of His crucifixion that was to come.
- How did Jesus explain that His death and resurrection would bring complete fulfillment to the lives of His followers—in the present world and in eternity?
- How is Christ’s resurrection assurance of eternal satisfaction? How did His promise of resurrection make Christianity different from all other religions?
- Jesus said that many who heard the truth would not believe. Did their disbelief make His words any less true?

Application . . .

- How does knowing that God initiated the relationship with each one of us affect the way we view our relationship with Him?
- How does the promise of the resurrection and our eternal satisfaction with Christ help us to navigate through the struggles of life?

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- How does the perspective of eternal satisfaction with Christ affect the way that we pursue the pleasures in this world?
- What would our lives look like every day if we lived as if this world were not our home? How would that look in our families, our jobs, our relationship to material possessions, where we spend our time, how we spend our money, how we spend our energy?
- Read the quote from C. S. Lewis. What do our praises in this life reveal about the things we enjoy?