



I've Been Thinking about . . . Satisfaction

by Pastor Chris

“The harder I try to get ahead, the further behind I fall!” That twenty-first century American complaint echoes a sixth century BC Judean reality.

After seven decades in exile, God’s people return from Babylon to Jerusalem with the hilarity of hope laughing in their hearts. How good it is to be home!

They arrive to find God’s temple languishing in ruined sighs of faded glory faintly remembered, having been destroyed by the invading Babylonians nearly fifty years earlier. The Jews have every intention of rebuilding God’s house, and they even lay the foundation and erect the altar. But then they stop rebuilding the temple as they remodel their own houses and tend their own fields. After all, first things first! The temple’s rubble rests for another sixteen years. The people are too busy for God.

The prophet Haggai thunders the indictment from the LORD Almighty: “These people say, ‘The time has not yet come for the LORD’s house to be built’” (Haggai 1:2).

The LORD’s voice keeps raining through Haggai’s lips, “Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin? Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it” (Haggai 1:4-6).

Unproductive work, food and drink that don’t satisfy, purses with holes in them: is this beginning to sound familiar? Life is a wasteland of diminishing returns because the people are neglecting the LORD’s temple—the sanctuary of the dwelling of his presence. By neglecting the temple, they are neglecting God himself.

Life is unsatisfying because they have substituted lesser things for God Supreme. They lack satisfaction because they have turned aside from God Most High to lower things.

“And I inquired what iniquity was and found it to be . . . the perversion of the will, turned aside from you, O God, the Supreme, towards these lower things. . . .”¹ So writes Augustine nine hundred years after Haggai and sixteen hundred years before us. Augustine observes that we turn aside from God to seek satisfaction in things lower than God. When these lower things provide initial pleasure, we seek after them more and more. Soon, these things become our masters, enslaving us in compulsive behaviors. “The enemy had control of my will, and from that had made a chain to bind me. From a perverted act of will, desire had grown, and when desire is given satisfaction, habit is forged; and when habit passes unresisted, a compulsive urge sets in: by these close-knit links I was held.”² Augustine is describing what contemporary psychology calls “addiction.”

Augustine thereby roots addiction in our turning aside from God to seek satisfaction in things lower than God. Addiction becomes a cruel master, demanding more and more while giving less and less satisfaction. As the LORD points out through Haggai, “You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little” (Haggai 1:9).

“Why, Lord, Have You Responded the Way You Have?”

Associate Pastor of Ministry Advancement & Adult Ministries

Howard Lundeen

“I tell you the truth,” he said, “this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.” (Luke 21:3-4 NIV)

Do you at times struggle over decisions you need to make? Are there times that God’s responses to situations make you wonder? Why would He tell Hosea to marry a woman who was adulterous and would eventually cause him many heart-aches? Why would he choose a man who would eventually commit adultery, and even murder, to lead the nation of Israel? Why does He, at times, either honor or show favor to some people who act in ways that are contrary to principles taught in His Word? Why?

About two weeks ago I read from the gospel of Luke the story of the widow woman who gave two small copper coins into the temple treasury – all she had to live on (Luke 21:1-4). Why did this seem to please Jesus so? Wasn’t this an irresponsible act on her part? Also, we know the way the temple was being run was not pleasing to God: The Pharisees and teachers of the law surely weren’t being commended by God for their Godly character and noble leadership of the people. In fact, Jesus speaks of them as “white-washed tombs” and “vipers” (Matt. 23:27, 33). The temple worship was corrupt and misguided. Why then would Jesus commend a woman, a poor widow, for putting everything she had into the temple treasury? What motivated or nudged her to do so?

I have to believe there was one key motivator: She had in her heart a pure, unwavering love for God; and, out of her deep love for Him, she was willing to give sacrificially – extremely so! She gave all that she had to live on. It amazes me that even though the temple leadership at that time was confused and unaware of the truth about Jesus, the temple still represented God’s presence and center for worship of Him. This widow had a deep, vibrant faith in our God Almighty, and her love and faith moved her to give sacrificially of her earthly means. Even though the temple was less than perfect, Jesus saw the perfection of her heart and attitude of worship.

As I read the story from Luke, I had to pause and evaluate the measure of love and devotion I have for God. How deep and sincere is my love and faith? How much am I willing to give of my earthly means in expression of this love and faith? How sacrificially will I give to Him and his church so truth can be taught, and so the good news of Jesus Christ can be proclaimed and made known to needy and lost people?

I began to wonder why I grasp so intensely the treasures of this world, rather than offering sacrificially of my earthly means to Him for the advancement of His kingdom? What greater gift could we bring to God - other than our very selves - than a gift to help bring the gospel of Christ to a community, nation, and world smothering in sin? I was convicted that I needed to give more. I want to intentionally lay up treasures in heaven (redeemed people), rather than store up treasures on earth.

Why did the widow give so generously? Because God had gifted her with a life transforming relationship with Him; and, out of her understanding of Him and his love for her, she was compelled to give all that she had in worship of Him. I believe, she first gave her heart and then her means. May God grant us a fresh vision of Himself and a fresh anointing of his Spirit in our worship and service of Him! As He prompts us, may we give generously of ourselves and our means, even if it seems extravagant. It is my prayer that I will respond obediently to the prompting of God’s Spirit, even when it may stretch my faith and not all “whys” are answered. I know I have been “nudged” in this direction.

Pastor Howard

H.T.C.
Heart Thoughts for Cornerstone

By: Pastor Zach Marino

Psalm 42:1-2

"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?"

How thirsty are you for God? Are you thirsty for His TRUTH? His Presence? His Grace? I have to continually ask myself that question because I find myself thirsty for other things. Yet when it does come to being thirsty for God I usually desire or seek after His Grace and His Presence because those are the things that are most comforting. However, I seem to stray away from seeking after His TRUTH. When it comes to knowing His Truth...well that's scary because I might not like what I'm going to hear or I'll be afraid in what I already know is true. When we thirst after God, when we seek God, seek ALL OF GOD, and not just the "comforting" parts.

Our TRUE thirst is for our soul to connect with God, His whole being. When God allows us to experience His wholeness, we become whole; fulfilled. God has given us many ways to connect with Him; to experience his FULLNESS. God has revealed himself through the very words that fill the pages of the best selling book of all time, The Bible. This isn't just a book. When you seek whole TRUTH you are seeking the life change that your soul cries out for. To those people that "the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are lost," God has revealed himself through his Creation. God doesn't leave his people without excuse (Romans 1:20), he is faithful to provide, offering his fullness to everyone. Psalm 19 unveils the glory of God through creation. Creation keeps on declaring God's glory and truth day in and day out. That means, day in and day out, we have one more opportunity to connect with God and His TRUTH.

How you will satisfy your thirst for God? Will you indulge in the life-giving Words of your Creator? Will you submerge yourself in the breath-taking nature around you? Our souls are thirsty to connect with God. **When your soul finds God, it finds satisfaction.**

Pastor Zach

Reminder!

Please clearly designate on your check if you are giving to the General Fund (tithes), Missions Fund, Capital Campaign or the Family Care Fund.

We also ask that you issue separate checks for your giving to each area of ministry, as the church maintains separate bank accounts for each.

Your cooperation in this area is greatly appreciated! *Thank you!*

**Summer
2011**

**Camp
Scholarships**



Are your kids planning on attending a Church Camp this summer? Information for the different camps is available on the Info Carousel in the church foyer.

A limited number of scholarships are available.

If you would like to receive a scholarship, fill out the request form, also located on the Carousel, and place it in Julie Wobschall's mailbox. There are some discounts for early registration, so register for camp soon.



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PRAYER REQUESTS: prayer@ccecfca.com

A heart for God and you

Sunday Worship Events



First service: 8:00 - 9:15am

Fellowship: 9:15 - 9:30am

Sunday School: 9:30 - 10:30am

Second Service: 10:45am - 12pm

Prayer Meeting: 5:00 - 6:00pm

Staffed Office Hours

	<u>Volunteer</u>	<u>Secretary</u>
Monday:	9:30 am - Noon	Noon - 5:00 pm
Tuesday:	=====	9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Wednesday:	9:30 am - Noon	Noon - 5:00 pm
Thursday:	=====	9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Friday:	=====	9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Christ Community Church Mission Statement

As a local body of believers, we will seek to glorify God in worship, in evangelizing the unsaved and in teaching Christians to obey everything Christ commanded. To that end, prayer will be our foremost task, Scripture will be our authority, God's Holy Spirit will be our source of power and love will be our motivation.





**** Women's Ministry ****

THANKS TO EVERYONE

For making Souper Bowl Sundae a success!!

Saturday, March 26th 10 am – 1 pm

Salad Bar Lunch

Guest Speaker Rachel Schaus

will speak on her time spent in Central Asia as a Missionary, mother and wife.

Free will offering will be taken

Precepts Bible Study

“Understanding the Anger of God”

Micah, Nahum & Habakkuk

7 week study – Registration deadline March 27th

\$15.00

Devoted Hearts presents

Kay Arthur

April 29, 7-10pm & April 30, 8-3pm

Autumn Ridge Church, Rochester, MN

Advance tickets \$37.00, after 3/31/11 \$42.00

Register online @ www.devotedheartsrochester.com

***** Beth Moore *****

In Person

Grace Church – Eden Prairie

May 20th & 21st



All tickets are \$65 general admission & available online @ lproof.org

For more information contact Cindy Austin or Mary Milton.

MAKS

(Moms And Kids)

ALL MOMS WELCOME!!

FRIENDS, FUN & FELLOWSHIP!

Bring a friend!!



***The winter season is here and MAKS is here to rescue you!**
Whether you have come in the past or are new to MAKS, be sure to put us
on your calendar and relax with a little, peaceful "mom time."*

MAKS is a moms & kids group that meets the **first & third Tuesdays** of each month in the Fireside Room from **10am to noon**. There is no cost to attend. Meetings are geared toward mothers with small children at home; but all are welcomed and encouraged to attend. It is a blessed time to relax, unwind & enjoy spending time working and learning together as mothers. Then we have the benefit of a meal together while our children are well cared for & having fun.



March 1st

Fitness for Moms!

Julie Meister from P.M.I. in Waterville will be here to share some at-home exercises that any busy mom can fit into her schedule. Come in your comfy clothes & be ready to learn some good moves.



March 15th

Health & Wellness Day!

Dr. Jessica Feste of Precision Chiropractic & Wellness will be joining us. Come to hear some good information and enjoy the company of other mothers. Come for a fun & educational day!



Our leaders this year are Stacy Dufault, Stephanie Bartelt, Shannon Kuball, Melissa Sexton, Lisa Cage & Jessica Mickelson. Please contact any one of us with any questions.

**Come prepared to relax,
laugh & meet other moms.**

Continued from page 1 *I've Been Thinking about . . . Satisfaction*

In his 1988 book *Addiction and Grace*, psychiatrist Gerald May writes, “After twenty years of listening to the yearnings of people’s hearts, I am convinced that all human beings have an inborn desire for God. . . . This desire is our deepest longing and our most precious treasure. It gives us meaning.”³

May observes that we attach our desire for God to things other than God. That attachment enslaves our desire to something other than God and thereby creates addiction to a God-substitute. We may become addicted to alcohol, drugs, video games, pornography, carbohydrates, work, sports, material possessions, approval from others, or a thousand other things. The addiction wastes our desire for God. As the addictive thing or behavior becomes less satisfying, we pursue it in increasing amounts. Yet it brings not greater satisfaction, but rather more oppressive enslavement. It becomes an obsessive master that is never satisfied—and never satisfies.⁴

A sixth century BC Jewish prophet, a fourth century AD African church father, and a twentieth century American psychiatrist, all observe the same phenomenon of human nature: we seek satisfaction in things other than God, only to become more and more unsatisfied.

How do we find our way back to true satisfaction? Augustine points us to the enabling grace of God. May points us to the liberating grace of God. Haggai points us to God himself. Haggai urges the people to rebuild the temple—the place of God’s presence. We enjoy the satisfying life that God intends for us only by entering the sanctuary of the presence of the LORD. We bask in satisfaction when we redirect our desire for God—a desire that we have splintered into a thousand addictive attachments—back to him.

God the Son is our satisfaction, for he solves every problem that Haggai surfaces: “Crops don’t grow? Christ is the Vine, and we are the branches. Food and drink don’t satisfy? Jesus is the Bread of Life and Living Water. Clothes don’t warm? The Messiah alone can cover our sin. Wages disappear? Store up your treasures in heaven.”⁵

Jesus is our satisfaction.

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1. Augustine, *The Confessions*, Book 7.
 2. Augustine, Book 8.
 3. Gerald G. May, M.D. *Addiction and Grace* (San Francisco, Harper & Row, 1988), 1.
 4. May, 1-14.
 5. Carolyn Arends, “Can’t Get No Satisfaction: Addiction Is the Spiritual Disease of Our Time,” *Christianity Today*, December 2010, 60. I am indebted to Ms. Arends for the concept of my article and for some of its content.

MARCH 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 <u>10:00am</u> MAKS <u>6:30pm</u> Women's Min. <u>7:00pm</u> Congreg. Care <u>7:00pm</u> Property Comm.	2 <u>6:00-7:30pm</u> AWANA <u>7:30-9:00pm</u> Jr. & Sr. High Youth Group	3 <u>12:00-1:15pm</u> Men's Study <u>6:15-8:30pm</u> Worship Team <u>7:00pm</u> Women's Study	4 <u>6:00-7:30am</u> Men's Group	5
6 <u>8:00-9:15am</u> Worship Service <u>9:30-10:30am</u> Sunday School <u>10:45-12:00</u> Worship Service <u>12:15</u> KICKs mtg. <u>5:00pm</u> Prayer	7 <u>10:00am</u> Women's Study <u>6:00pm</u> Grand Prix Help <u>6:30pm</u> Precepts <u>6:30pm</u> Outreach Comm.	8 <u>7:00pm</u> Children's Commission	9 <u>6:00-7:30pm</u> AWANA <u>7:30-9:00pm</u> Jr. & Sr. High Youth Group	10 <u>12:00-1:15pm</u> Men's Study <u>3:30-5:00pm</u> Vocal Class <u>6:15-8:30pm</u> Worship Team <u>7:00pm</u> Women's Study	11 <u>6:00-7:30am</u> Men's Group	12 <u>9:00-11:00</u> Newcomer - Memb. Class <u>10:00-1:00</u> Grand Prix Help Session <u>7:00pm</u> Empty Nester Movie Night
13 <u>8:00-9:15am</u> Worship Service <u>9:30-10:30am</u> Sunday School <u>10:45-12:00</u> Worship Service <u>12:00</u> Youth Mis- sions Fundraiser <u>5:00pm</u> Prayer	14 <u>10:00am</u> Women's Study <u>6:30pm</u> Precepts	15 <u>10:00am</u> MAKS <u>6:30pm</u> Elder Board Meeting	16 <u>6:00-7:30pm</u> AWANA <u>7:30-9:00pm</u> Jr. & Sr. High Youth Group	17 <u>12:00-1:15pm</u> Men's Study <u>6:15-8:30pm</u> Worship Team <u>7:00pm</u> Women's Study	18 <u>6:00-7:30am</u> Men's Group	19 <u>9:00-11:00</u> Newcomer - Memb. Class
20 <u>8:00-9:15am</u> Worship Service <u>9:30-10:30am</u> Sunday School <u>10:45-12:00</u> Worship Service <u>5:00pm</u> Prayer	21 <u>10:00am</u> Women's Study <u>1:00pm</u> Quilt Group <u>6:30pm</u> Precepts	22 <u>7:00pm</u> Adult Disciple- ship Comm.	23 <u>6:00-7:30pm</u> AWANA <u>7:30-9:00pm</u> Jr. & Sr. High Youth Group	24 <u>12:00-1:15pm</u> Men's Study <u>3:30-5:00pm</u> Vocal Class <u>6:15-8:30pm</u> Worship Team <u>7:00pm</u> Women's Study	25 <u>6:00-7:30am</u> Men's Group	26 <u>10:00am</u> Women's Ministry Luncheon
27 <u>8:00-9:15am</u> Worship Service <u>9:30-10:30am</u> Sunday School <u>10:45-12:00</u> Worship Service <u>5:00pm</u> Prayer	28 <u>10:00am</u> Women's Study <u>6:30pm</u> Precepts	29	30 <u>6:00-7:30pm</u> AWANA <u>7:30-9:00pm</u> Jr. & Sr. High Youth Group	31 <u>12:00-1:15pm</u> Men's Study <u>6:15-8:30pm</u> Worship Team		