

Incredible Thirst

Text: Psalm 63:1

Readings: Psalm 63; John 4: 1-15

We live in a restless and dissatisfied culture.

All of us feel a restlessness in our soul.

It is that longing for something that will satisfy.

Something that is so real, so authentic that when we find it...our soul will be at rest.

It what makes advertisers rich...they feed into that thirst, that restlessness.

They make us dissatisfied with the car we drive, with the way we look or smell.

If we buy this or that product...somehow life will be better.

Dissatisfaction is seen in the huge credit card debits people have...

People spending money they don't have,

on things they don't need to satisfy a thirst they can't.

I worked for years with guys who religiously put money into Lotto every week.

They thought that if they could just win the lottery...they would be happy.

That it would give them everything that they were looking for.

But it simply isn't true.

There is story after story of lottery winners whose lives are more miserable than when they were hoping to win.

It just doesn't satisfy.

Dissatisfaction is seen in the pace our culture.

We live very, very busy lives.

We think...if we are busy, if we are accomplishing things...

we will find meaning and satisfaction.

It just isn't true.

We keep a fast pace in life so we don't have to stop and think about life,

we don't have to look on the inside.

Dissatisfaction is seen in the decaying morals of our society.

People are involved in all kinds of sexual relationships,

trying to find that thing that will satisfy...some sort of meaning or purpose.

The explosion of internet pornography points to a desire to find something that satisfies...but to no end.

Dissatisfaction is seen in the increase of drug and alcohol abuse.

People think if they can just get enough alcohol or drugs in their system...

then some how the dissatisfaction in life will disappear.

Wayne Carey, celebrated AFL footballer, is making the news for all the wrong reasons...

His behaviour points to a desperate yearning, a search for meaning and purpose...

All he finds is despair.

All these problems are not something new...it's been around for thousands of years. Go back to King Solomon.

He literally had everything the world had to offer at his disposal.

He had power and unlimited wealth.

He had all the pleasures the world had to offer.

In Ecclesiastes he writes about the emptiness of it all.

He learned through trial and error...that satisfaction was found only in God.

He learned the hard way.

His father knew what it takes to be satisfied...

And he wrote about it in Psalm 63.

In this psalm he talks about what ultimately satisfies.

David is writing this psalm literally in the Judean wilderness.

David is in a barren wilderness trying to stay alive.

There were two times when David was hiding out in the desert.

The first when he was relatively young, escaping for the tyrant King Saul who was trying to kill him.

The second time, which most scholars think is the setting for this Psalm,

is when he was an older man and had been king for a number of years.

Now David is fleeing from his son Absalom, who had staged a coup and basically chased David off the throne.

David, the king, hiding in the wilderness, sleeping in caves.

He had all the world had to offer...now he had nothing.

It is at this time that David writes what really satisfies him.

In verse 1 he says 'O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you.'

The words show an intimacy with God a personal relationship with a covenant God.

Notice he says **MY** god.

When he says that he earnestly seeks God...it has to do with passion and priority.

The first thing he thinks about.

The question is why?

Why has David made his relationship with God the passion or focus of his life?

That is answered in the rest of the Psalm.

David uses 6 images to try and communicate why God has become the passion of his life.

Today I am just looking at the first one which is found in the second half of verse 1.

He says, 'my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water.'

Here is the image of 'thirst'.

The word for "thirst" in verse 1 is used 10X in the OT
But only twice is it used figuratively in the sense of thirsting after God
(here and in Ps 42)

We desperately need water...no wonder when so much of our bodies are water
(Up to 60%)

We can go about 40 days without food,
but we can only go without water for a few days.

In other words, we need water. We cannot go without water for long.

What David is doing here is using a physical reality as an illustration for a spiritual condition in his heart.

Now, hiding in a desert, David was undoubtedly experiencing physical thirst.

Water would have been scarce, he was probably in a constant state of thirst.
And while this is going on he is probably thinking about his own spiritual thirst.
A longing to be satisfied by God.

My soul thirsts for you...my soul faints for you.

This is basically David saying his whole being was longing for God.
Even his flesh longed for God.

Is it just me or does this sound extremely foreign to you?

Do you long for God as David did?

Do you long for God so much you can feel it in your flesh?

David's picture of being thirsty in a dry and weary land seems like a good image of our world today.

We live in a land where people are spiritually thirsty...
having trouble finding the thing that satisfies.

Things in the world look good, we think they will satisfy...

But soon we are thirsty again, looking for the next thing.

Someone came up with this fantastic picture of our culture.

Imagine you are dying of thirst and you come across this enormous body of water, and you think to yourself 'Finally, I have found more water than I could possibly drink in a lifetime.'

Your thirst will be quenched for good.
The problem is that the body of water is the ocean,
 which contains 7 times more salt than your body can digest.
So when you drink you actually begin to dehydrate,
 because your kidneys are trying to flush that excess salt out of your system.
And while it looks like it will satisfy, the more you drink, the more dehydrated you
become until finally you die of thirst.

People look at the world around them and think these things are going to satisfy...
 They start drinking...but their thirst just becomes greater and greater...
 Leading to death.

David has found what satisfies...which is seen in verse 2.
'I have seen you in the sanctuary, and beheld your power and your glory.'

He was thirsty for God and that thirst was satisfied when he met God, when he came
into the presence of God.

The woman at the well had her thirst satisfied when she came into the presence of
Jesus, the Son of God.

Charles Colson writes:
"In every human being is a deep, ongoing search for meaning and transcendence- part
of the image of God in our very nature. Even if we flee God the religious imprint
remains...Everyone believes in some kind of deity- even if that deity is an impersonal
substance such as matter, energy or nature."

The emptiness of life and the shattered dreams that the woman at the well
experienced was real.

 She was longing for something to satisfy her.
 She was trying to buy temporary satisfaction from things around her.

All around us people are trying to get temporary satisfaction from the things of the
world.

Holidays...Food...Shopping for clothes or other stuff...Sex...Drugs/drink.
 But they are only temporary.

Riches and rank, place and power, learning and amusements are utterly unable to fill
the deep yearning of the soul.

The woman in John 4 humbly reached out to Jesus and found fulfilment when she
drank from the living water he offered...

 The living water that cleanses from sin.

That changed her.
She no longer thirsted for the thrills of sin anymore.

For anyone, there is no heart satisfaction, not lasting peace and assurance until they believe in Jesus Christ.

Jesus alone can fill up the empty places of our souls.

The peace that he gives flows into all our lives and down into eternity.

In His daily living water, we receive forgiveness from sin, and His promise to be with us forever.

In the daily living water that He provides, we endeavour to shape our actions, words, and even our thoughts and attitudes to be pleasing to God, because we have been given a new beginning in Him.

How do we find this same contentment David found?

After David realizes how glorious and powerful God is and after he realizes how faithful God has been in his own life, David becomes satisfied.

Do you see the glorious riches of God's grace in your life?

Do you know the wonder of forgiveness?

Do you know the joy of being called a child of God?

Do you experience the peace of God in the midst of struggles in life?

Do you look to the things of God for satisfaction?

Or are you still trying to be satisfied by the things of the world?

Maybe our thirst for God is not as strong as David's because we are drinking from the well of the world and so look for satisfaction in more than one way.

Jesus is the only way...primarily drink from him.

Think back to 2007...the year we have just lived.

Ask yourself: what did you really live for?

Not what you should have lived for...but what you really lived for.

What was really your passion, where did you find satisfaction?

If I were to ask your wife, husband, your children, your parents what they thought you lived, what the passion of your heart was, what would they say?

Passion is the thing that drives us, that keeps us going.

Passion is defined as a powerful emotion that leads you to act.

Passion is the emotion that causes you to yell at the TV during a footy game.

So what are you passionate about?

What if you could take that passion and turn it toward your relationship with God?

What if your passion was that continual pursuing of God and the things of God...
Like the justice, mercy, walk with God.

You know, you can't look back and relive 2007...

But what are you going to live for in 2008?

Am I pursuing those things that are ultimately going to satisfy?

What you live for in 2008 will strongly reflect what you believe will make you happy, that which you think will ultimately satisfy.

What difference would it make to our lives and the world if we made the pursuit of God our passion?

What kinds of change such a pursuit would make in our lives?

- In our prayer life?
- In our priorities?
- In our use of time?
- In our spending habits?
- In our social life?
- In our church attendance?
- In our burden for the lost?
- In our missions commitment?

I can't help but believe it would literally turn our lives, our homes our church, our community upside down.

How do we find passion, kindle that thirst?

Here are some suggestions:

1) We connect with God.

You can do that through reading His Word for a few minutes each day

Pray to God regularly.

Then you will discover God place and purpose for your life.

2) We connect with community.

One way to develop a passion for God is to be connected with people who are passionate about God. It is no fun to watch a football game by yourself. It is much better to watch it with other people who share your passion. The same is true with our life with God. It is much better when it is joined with others.

Avoid people and places that will lead you after earthly passions.

Our physical thirst may never be fully satisfied, it is a constant cycle.

But there is a satisfaction to spiritual thirst that can be forever satisfied...

Found in the person of Jesus Christ.

Look to him!