

## Psalm 63 Satisfaction Guaranteed

Imagine this situation

You are startled in the middle of the night with the ringing of your phone.

Your heart is pounding as you think “Something must be awfully wrong.”

On the other end of the phone is the familiar voice of a trusted family friend.

His voice is frantic.

He tells you your adult son is coming over with some of his gang members to kill you. You must get out immediately.

The sad thing is you are not totally surprised. You have been estranged from this son.

You really believe he is coming in anger and hatred to murder you.

You jump out of bed and grab your car keys, jump in the car and get out of there as fast as you can.

No wallet, no credit cards, no cash, only the clothes on your back.

You cannot go to another family members house because you do not want to put them in danger.

Your mind is racing, you are frantic—what do you do where do you go?

You are so tired you pull into a rest area to get some rest.

In that moment of quietness—your situation comes crashing down on you!

What a shambles your life is in!

How would you feel?

Devastated?          Suicidal?

Do you think you could find any soul satisfaction in God at that moment?

Well David did.

He found satisfaction in God in the middle of a tough spot.

This is what psalm 63 is about.

We talked about this last week.

King David, in 2 Samuel 15, is chased off his throne by his son Absalom.

Absalom, the son who killed his half brother for raping his sister.

Absalom, who lived in exile for years till David brought him back to Jerusalem.

Absalom who plotted over 4 years to turn the hearts of the people to him and overthrow his father and claim the throne.

Now David is on the run from him, hiding in the desert.

From the outset, David is clear about what he longs for, he says, **"O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you"**(v.1).

What does David desire? He desires God and God alone!

What is sad is that few of us can relate to David here.

C.S. Lewis describes the human condition accurately when he describes us as, "half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us; (we are) 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."

Lewis is right:

The problem here is that the child never really gets the point!

The child is completely content with the mud pies.

He is content to be in a slum rather than at the sea.

Isn't the same with us when we continue to be content with our sin?

We mess around with and cherish things other than God.

We are too easily pleased.

We have settled for a home, a family, a few friends, a career, and a growing bank account.

We have settled for these short-lived pleasures that we can scarcely imagine what is meant by 'a holiday at the sea'—we can scarcely imagine what it means to have satisfaction in God.

The lie is that it will completely satisfy us.

God is the only one who can satisfy us completely.

David is satisfied with, in, and by God.

Now some of you may be thinking, "Pastor, I already know where you are going with this one. This is going to be one of these sermons that tell us we cannot be satisfied unless we have God in our lives. Well, I have been a Christian for 15 years and I still have not received the satisfaction that my heart desires."

If this is you then you need to listen to what I'm saying this morning.

We can all learn from the heart of David on finding satisfaction in God.

Over and over in the Scriptures, God promises to satisfy your heart.

But how many of you when we strip away all the facades truly feel satisfied?

How many of you deep down in the recesses of your heart where nobody is permitted to look would say you are really satisfied with life?

We want satisfaction and God promises satisfaction, but so few Christians are experiencing authentic satisfaction. What went wrong?

I think we need to look at David and see what he does.  
If he can find satisfaction even hiding in the desert...  
So can we in our lives today.  
The steps that David follows in this psalm are simple and clear,  
shown in beautiful imagery.

To be truly satisfied we must:

***Know God; Seek God; Remember God and praise God.***

These are the four points today.

### **Know God**

In order to be satisfied with God we need to know God.

Now, there are two parts to this thought.

The main part is to have a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Apart from having your sins and guilt washed away in His blood, satisfaction is a sheer impossibility.

If you are here this morning without Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, your life will never have any purpose and the reality of your life after death is far from a pleasant thought.

God says we can have peace with him through our Lord Jesus Christ.

That is good news.

Jesus said, "This is eternal life (satisfaction!), that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (Jn. 17:3).

But there is another level.

You can know about God, but do you really know God?

Know him in an intimate, personal way.

It is one thing for me to say I *know about* the Prime Minister. I may be aware of his favorite foods and hobbies and place of residence. It is quite another to say, "I *know* the Prime Minister. He is my friend. We speak to each other frequently."

King David had this kind of personal relationship with the living God.

In verse one he says you are my God.

And David took great confidence in knowing that.

David was confident that God was on his side.

What could bring greater satisfaction?

So, coming to God through faith in Christ is only the introduction to a relationship.

God wants us to get to know him better and more intimately.

The more confidently we know God, the more satisfaction we will find.

In Phil 3:10 Paul writes that his goal was to know Christ better.

### **Seeking God**

The second point follows on logically from the first.

The more we want to know God the more we will seek him...

As we seek him, the better we will know him.

We know that David earnestly sought after God (v1).

Our only hope comes if we like David "thirst" after the living God.

Jesus said, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink (Jn. 7:37).

David's intense desire for God is also brought out in verse 8 when he said, "My soul clings to You."

The Hebrew word translated "cling" is the same word used in Ruth 1:14 when it spoke of Ruth "clinging" to Naomi.

We see it in Genesis 2:24 to speak of a husband and wife "clinging" to one another, becoming one flesh.

We could translate it by saying, David's soul was "glued" to God

Verse 8 also brings out a comforting truth in our pursuit of God.

David said as he clings to God "(God's) right hand [His strength] upholds me."

God helps us to seek Him... And He is there to catch us when we fall.

### **Remembering God**

A third way to be satisfied in God naturally flows from the first two.

The more I know God, the more I will seek Him.

And the more I seek Him, the more I will remember and meditate on His greatness.

I can remember when Anita went from someone I knew about to someone I knew personally.

Then there was the desire to get to know her better.

That required sacrifice and commitment.

It also meant remembering her.

When I traveled overseas for a while...

I would read her letter eagerly, I would send her cards.

She did the same for me, I'm sure.

This is how David pursued his relationship with God.

While he was hiding in the desert comfort and satisfaction came by meditating on God.

The Lord was always in His thoughts even while he lay awake in bed.  
Verse 6, “On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night.”

I find it interesting that David meditates upon God late at night.  
We all know what it is like to have difficulty falling asleep.

Why does this happen? What are we doing when we can't fall asleep?

We're worrying—aren't we?

We're worrying about people we love.

We're worrying about money.

We're thinking about what happened at work today  
or what might happen tomorrow.

What we likely aren't doing, is meditating on the loving presence of God when we go to bed. If we did, our soul would be satisfied in Him, and we would fall asleep.

I used to be embarrassed to say that I sometimes fall asleep while praying.  
'Jim, how could you ever fall asleep while speaking to the Almighty?'

One reason could be the same reason I fall asleep after eating a great dinner—God satisfies my appetite—He satisfies my soul and I fall asleep.

In verse 2 he said, “I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power you're your glory.”

In verse 3 He exclaimed, "Your love is better than life."

David thinks that life is precious...but there is something more precious than that...  
The strong and constant love of God.

Now that is an interesting thing because we think the most important thing is life.

We have a strong self-preservation mode.

We try to hang onto life at whatever cost.

We will give up our money...rather than be shot by the thief who wants our wallet.  
We will submit to painful surgery, even amputation if those things will restore our health or preserve our life.

For nearly everyone, life is the most precious of all possessions.

But David says there is something better than life...and that is the love of God.

The word he uses is *hesed*, which is often translated ‘loving-kindness’ or ‘covenant love’.

It stresses the faithful love of God that continues, is steady and unchangeable.

That is why it is better than even the best thing in life...life itself.

Life can be lost...but the covenant love of God can never be lost.

In Romans 8 the Apostle Paul wrote about this.

Remember, David is running for his life at any moment he may be captured and put to death.

So he is thinking about life rather intensely.

Even in the midst of extreme suffering, David knew that God was powerful enough to deliver, wise enough to know the best way, and loving enough to do it with tenderness and compassion.

No wonder David could sing in this Psalm, "Your love is better than life" (verse 3) and "in the shadow of Your wings I sing for joy" (verse 7).

### **Praising God**

Our final point is the natural overflow of the first three.

Praise is reciting back to God His wonderful character and His wonderful deeds. Praise is logical and natural climax of a heart that loves and knows and cherishes God

Because of David's relationship with the Lord, his life continually overflowed in praise to God.

At the end of verse 3 he said, "My lips will glorify You."

Verse 4, "I will praise you as long as I live."

The end of verse 5, "With singing lips my mouth will praise you."

In verse 7 David said, "I will sing in the shadow of your wings."

And verse 11 reads, "But the king will rejoice in God."

Praise for God is really a barometer revealing the strength of our relationship.

Praise is an important element in our walk with God.

Unfortunately, many Reformed believers are afraid of praise because they associate it with some sort of wild, uncontrolled, highly emotional "praise service," in which individuals faint, scream, jump around, and dance in the aisles.

Praise reveals a heart that is grateful, happy and content in one's relationship with the Lord.

Those who want a closer walk with God make sure they praise and glorify Him: with body and soul, heart and mind, mouth and hand.

Ongoing praise is knowing God and trusting Him in all circumstances.

We are like the poor man who saved money his entire life in order to go on a luxury cruise. The man eventually had enough money to purchase a ticket, but he had no money left over to pay for the elegant food they would be serving. So what the man did was he brought along a week's supply of bread and peanut butter. By the end of the week, the man could not take it any longer. The peanut butter sandwiches seemed stale and tasteless in comparison to what he saw others eating. Finally, he stopped a porter and exclaimed, 'Tell me how I might get one of those meals and I'll do anything you say to earn it!'

'Why sir, don't you have a ticket for the cruise?', the porter asked.

'Certainly,' said the man. 'But I spent everything I had for the ticket. I have nothing left with which to buy food.'

'But sir,' said the porter, 'didn't you realize? The meals are included with your passage. You may eat as much as you like!'

A lot of Christians live like that man. Not realizing the unlimited provisions that are available to us in Christ, we munch on stale scraps—scraps that have no lasting value. What we need to recognize is that *Christ is sufficient*. In Christ we already have everything we could ever need.

That is fine to say, but what are the implications of this truth? If Christ is the all-sufficient One, it follows that we would restructure our priorities in order to make Him our greatest priority and pursuit.

Friends, if you want to be truly happy, if you want to experience lasting joy, and enduring satisfaction, you need to know that it can only be found *in God*.

If you look for enduring satisfaction in anything else you will ultimately be disappointed. Augustine was right: We have been created with a God-shaped void in our hearts, and this void cannot be filled with anything else besides the loving presence of God.

So we need to know God, seek God, remember God and praise God.

Then we will find satisfaction.