

“The Food Which Satisfies”—Isaiah 55:1-2

The text for this sermon, the theme of which is, “The Food Which Satisfies”, is Isaiah 55:1-2 → *Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to Me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.* This is the text.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus:

Frank pulled up in the driveway of his house after a long, hectic day at work. As he walked through the front door an aroma hit him, filling him with anticipation of enjoying his favorite meal. However, as he walked up the stairs into the living room he spotted the dining room table adorned with the “good china” and candles lit as for a special occasion.

With the lights dimmed and a romantic music playing in the background he nervously checked his calendar. “Oh no!” thinking to himself. “Is it our anniversary?” Relieved to discover that he had not overlooked such an important event, his anticipation of partaking of his favorite meal was immediately side-tracked, wondering what’s going on. Why the special meal and mood.

After his wife greeted him with a kiss and hug, she smiled and invited him to sit down while she prepared to serve him his favorite food. Still wondering, “What’s up?” Frank was searching for a reason for such special treatment. “It’s not her birthday,” he thinks to himself. “Hmmm. I wonder what she wants?”

Finally he asked, “What’s the occasion?”

“No special occasion. I just wanted to make your favorite meal for you tonight,” she responded. “How was your day?”

“Fine,” he reluctantly replied. Skeptical, he still wondered why such special treatment tonight. More thoughts flooded his mind: “Did she spend a chunk of money today and is ‘buttering me up’ before breaking the news? Uh . . . the car! Maybe I’d better go look at the car!” . . .

Interesting, is it not, how difficult for us to receive graciously without wondering or feeling like every gift has a “catch” to it or has to be justified in some way. When someone does you a favor you may hear yourself say, “Oh, you didn’t have to do that!” or feel like now you owe them. Since all of life is based upon reward or consequences of performance everyone knows that you don’t get something for nothing! There’s always “a catch.” Thus, **grace** just doesn’t make any sense.

Many people approach God the same way while, at the same time, experiencing His gracious activity in their lives everyday. In our text Yahweh commands us to bask in His complete grace, picturing it as

purchasing food which satisfies us completely! He says in verse 1 →  
*Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.*

The LORD invites you to spiritual fulfillment by using the picture of buying and eating food and drink. However, true to the nature of His grace, His invitation really makes no logical sense. The first thing that seems strange about this picture is that you can *buy* His food and drink *without money and without price*. It is a picture of God's salvation not being dependent upon what you do but upon what He does for you!

Earlier Isaiah had even pictured this salvation in the resurrection of the Last Day as a heavenly banquet with the promise that *the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined*. (cf. Isaiah 25:6)  
Your participation at this banquet table is a **free gift of God's grace!**  
Having the privilege of eating and drinking in eternal communion with Yahweh will be His doing in your life, not your doing.

But . . . we have to come and *buy*. Isn't that placing some responsibility upon us to partake of this spiritual food and drink? Notice that you are told to do the impossible—*buy . . . without money and without price*. How can you buy something if you have no money and cannot pay the price? Jesus answered this question in response to His

disciples' question, "Who then can be saved?" in Matthew 19:26 → *With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.*

The reason you can "buy" *without money and without price* is because the price has been paid for you. This price is what you owe God because of your sins—disobeying His commands; living in self-righteousness, thinking you deserve His benefits; refusing to forgive others while basking in His forgiveness for you; following your own selfish desires in idolatry, slander, greed and immorality. Every infraction of God's Word demands a punishment, a price which needs to be paid to redeem you.

This sin is what produces the thirst in you. There is a thirst and hunger in your life which needs to be satisfied. Unfortunately, so many strive to fill themselves and quench this thirst through their own efforts which leave them never meeting up to what is demanded to relieve their guilt and shame. This is what Yahweh means in verse 2 of our text when He says: *Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? All your labors will not provide the "food" which satisfies the hunger and thirst of your sinful heart.*

God's *bread . . . satisfies* the spiritually "dried up" and "starving" life. Thus, while it doesn't cost you anything it still costs. God's Word tells you that it cost the life of His Son, Jesus. 1 Peter 1:18-19 says: *Know that you were ransomed from your futile ways . . . not with perishable*

*things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.* God took on human form in the person of Jesus and **perfectly** worked out your salvation for you! To *come and buy . . . without money and without price* is simply coming to the LORD in humble repentance and faith in what Jesus has already done for you! Because the price has already been paid and *you were bought with that price* (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20) you can come and receive the eternal benefits of God's grace!

This is also why it's so important to continue listening to God's Word in faith as He instructs us to do in verse 2 of our text: *Listen diligently to Me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.* There are so many ways in which satan strives to deceive you into thinking that delighting yourself in this rich food of God's grace in Christ is dependent upon you in some way and not **completely** upon God's work for you as the Holy Spirit works faith in Christ alone in you. Jesus says to you in John 6:35 → *I am the bread of life; whoever comes to Me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in Me shall never thirst.* His work is the only food which satisfies God's wrath upon your sin as well as your guilt and shame because of your sin!

As you listen diligently to the LORD in His Word you continue to grow in this salvation which is yours as a free gift of His grace. Through that Word the Holy Spirit guides and directs your life to live for Christ.

Through that Word the Holy Spirit convicts you of sin so that you will hunger and thirst in repentance for the forgiveness which only Christ can give. Through that Word the Holy Spirit brings you to the forgiveness of sins distributed and received in the Lord's Supper in communion with Him and one another.

Even the words of one of the Post-Communion Collects which we pray after receiving body and blood of Christ uses these feasting pictures from Isaiah. It says: "Gracious God, our heavenly Father, **You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come** in the Holy Supper of Your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all Your saints, celebrate **the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end.**" And we pray this prayer through faith in Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord. Amen.

The promise of Jesus from Matthew 5:6 still stands for you today:

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for **they shall be satisfied!***

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