

A Chronicle of Redemption

Chapter 40: The All-Satisfying Christ

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CHAPTER 40: THE ALL-SATISFYING CHRIST John 6:25-71

If you have a Bible, and I hope you do, let me invite you to open with me to John 6. John 6. In just a second, we're going to be in verse 25. "Hallelujah, let the nations sing. Jesus Christ is King." I want to remind you this morning that there are many nations who still do not know that Jesus Christ is King. I was in one country this last week surrounded by a people group of 12 million people. So, 12 million people in this people group, and around 100 of them are believers in Christ. So, that's 11,999,900 people who are on a road that leads to eternal damnation, and most of them have never heard how to avoid that. If this gospel is true, if we really believe what we have just sung, then, we will give our lives and the resources of this church to make the gospel known among them...to at least make it known.

You are doing it. You are doing it. A week ago, I was preaching on what is the largest unevangelized island on the earth. So, on this island, there are 52 different unreached people groups. Out of those 52 people groups, 48 of them have no churches...entire groups of people, some of them millions of people, no churches. Many of them have either no believers or maybe a handful of believers. So, we were spending time with personnel who lived there...some of our brothers and sisters who live there and work there...and two of them were talking about how two different people groups, who were totally unreached over the last year, they've seen people come to faith in Christ in these two people groups, the first believers among the people groups.

What was so incredibly encouraging was to hear these two workers say that these people, these new believers...first believers in these people groups...came to Christ as a result of short-term teams from Brook Hills who were serving there. So, yes. This is it. We do church here for the spread of the gospel there, and we give our lives here and the resources of this church here, so that people who have never heard of Jesus for the first time hear about Him and say, "Yes!" That's worth it. We've got to realize it's worth it, because it's not easy to reach people groups like this.

The 12 million, 100 believers...it's illegal to share the gospel with them, and if someone in that people group is caught converting to faith in Christ, they will almost inevitably be killed, and not by their government, but by their dad or brother. Out of those 52 people groups on that island, not only do they not believe the gospel, but they have not heard the gospel. They don't want the gospel. To go to them is not to receive this warm and welcome reception.

So, why go? Why give our lives in this room, our families in this room? Why give the resources of this church to make the gospel known among them? Why not just coast this thing out in comfortable, safe Birmingham? The answer to that question is in the text we're going to look at this morning. John 6. The very beginning of this chapter, Jesus takes five loaves and two fish and feeds over 5,000 people. Naturally, He is drawing crowds...free food. Follow Him.

So, He gets away from the crowds. He sends His disciples, puts them in a boat, says, "Go out in the middle of the sea," and He goes off on a mountainside by Himself to pray, and it comes evening time. His disciples are in the middle of the boat. He's on the shore, and He wants to get to His disciples, and so He decides He's going to take a stroll, and He walks on the waves. He gets to the disciples. They're a bit freaked out by that, but He gets into the boat with them, and they go to the other side.

When they get to the other side, the crowds catch up to them, and this conversation ensues. It's kind of a long conversation, and in a sense, a bit of a difficult conversation, but I want us to read the whole thing, and then think about what this text means. So, start with me in John 6:25:

When they found him on the other side of the sea, [the crowds found Jesus on the other side of the sea] they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly I say to you, you are seeking me not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal." Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." So they said to him, "Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."

So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." They said, "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" Jesus answered them, "Do not grumble among yourselves. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me - not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever." Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, "Do you take offense to this? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But there are some of you who do not believe." (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray him.) And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."

After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. So Jesus said to the Twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God." Jesus answered him, "Did I not choose you, the Twelve? And yet one of you is a devil?" He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the Twelve, was going to betray him.

Let's pray. Lord, these words are hard to understand, and these words are hard to apply. I see that when you said them most everyone turned away. The only people who were left were a few men who were willing to lose everything to follow you. So, we say this morning that we want to be counted among those men, and we want to lose everything to follow you. So, we pray that you would teach us what that means, and help us to understand what it means to know you as the bread of life. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Kind of a weird passage. Let's be honest. It's all cannibalistic at one point, like, eating flesh and drinking blood, and you're thinking, "What does this mean?" I want to show you, in this text, three truths. They are bold claims, but they are claims...truths, that when you believe them, your life in this world will look radically different.

Jesus alone can fulfill our desires.

Truth number one: Jesus alone can fulfill our desires. Jesus alone can fulfill our desires. Obviously, this whole conversation has a lot to do with food. Look at the first question that the crowds ask. They say, "When did you come here?" in verse 25, and in verse 26, Jesus just cuts to the chase. He says, "Truly, I say to you, you're seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves." In other words, the only reason you're here is because you had food. You filled your stomach, and you're wanting more. You want to find out what this is all about.

Now, this is where, we begin to see...now, Jesus doesn't say that their craving for food is bad. In fact, in verse 27, He says, "Don't labor for food that perishes, but work for food that endures to eternal life." So, He's not saying it's bad that they want food, that they're craving food. What He is addressing is how they are seeking to fulfill that craving.

This is where I want us to pause here in John 6. Hold our place here, and turn back to the very beginning of the biblical story in Genesis 2. So, hold your place here in John 6. Turn back with me to Genesis 2 for just a minute. I know you're thinking, like, "Dave, we left the Old Testament behind. Remember, it's good to be in the New Testament." Well, yes it is, and I want to make sure to connect the dots between what we've read in the Old Testament this year, and what we're seeing here in the New Testament.

God created us to crave.

So, go to Genesis 2, and I want us to look at verse 15 in just a minute. I want to show you how, in the very beginning of the biblical story, God created us to crave. He created us with desires, and needs, and cravings in our lives. That plays out in a number of different ways in the Garden of Eden in Genesis 2. I want to show you it, particularly, as it relates to food. Genesis 2:15 says, "*The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you will surely die.'*"

So, here you see man in the garden with a need...with a need for food. God had created him that way. Sometimes we almost think to ourselves, "In the Garden of Eden when everything was perfect, man had no needs." That's not true. Man definitely had needs. Man had a need for air, for food. We find out later in Genesis 2, a need for companionship. It was not good for man to be alone, and so God created...wired...man with cravings, with needs, with an empty stomach to fulfill. Here's the key though: In the Garden, it wasn't that man didn't have needs. The picture in the Garden of Eden was that man had needs that were intended to be met only by God, in a way that was designed by God.

Our cravings are designed to be satisfied by our Creator.

So, God created us to crave and then, second, our cravings are designed to be satisfied by our Creator. Our cravings are designed to drive us to God as the one who fulfills our cravings, meets our needs, satisfies our desires, which leads us to the problem in Genesis 3.

Sin and satisfaction ...

Now, in your notes, you see a little farther down after a couple little sub-points, you see it says, "Sin and satisfaction..." I want to skip down to that real quick. I should have put that up here. I want to stay here in Genesis 2 and 3 for just a second. Go to Genesis 3:6. When the serpent comes and tempts Adam and Eve to eat from the tree that God had said, "Don't eat from," I want you to listen to the description of this. Look at Genesis 3:6, "*[So] when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make ones wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.*" Do you see, hear, the language of desires all over that verse? She saw the tree was good for food. It was a delight for the eyes. It was desirous, and she eats it, and he eats it, and for the first time, we see the cravings of man driving him to meet his needs outside of the Creator.

Don't miss the trigger of sin here: The trigger of sin, looking to things of this world to satisfy us apart from our Creator; thinking that something is good outside, apart from the Creator. The reality is nothing is good if it does not come from God. Nothing is good if it

doesn't come from God. It may seem good. It may seem delightful. It may seem desirable, but it is bad.

Think about it. Every sin that you or I commit, we commit sin because we think it will be good. We think it will be desirable. We think it will be delightful, whether it's a sin of lust, or greed, materialism, adultery, gossip, whatever it is, we sin because we convince ourselves...that we're convinced that it's a good route to take, that it will be desirable to do this. It'll be delightful to do this. It will be good to think this, to buy this, to get this, and then we get it, and we realize in the end that it is bad and it destroys.

The trigger of sin: We look to the things in this world to satisfy us apart from our Creator, and the tragedy of sin is this: We end up running from the one our souls long for and need most. This is what happens in Genesis 3. They think they can find satisfaction apart from the Creator. They end up doing that, and they end up turning away from the one their souls need most.

Now, come back to John 6, and that's exactly the context for what's happening here. In John 6, you've got this crowd of people that are following Jesus, and they're comparing Him to Moses, because in the wilderness, Moses gave the people bread from heaven. So, they're looking for, "Okay, is Jesus another prophet like Moses? Is He one who's going to come, who's going to give us bread from heaven?" You look at what they're saying in verse 32. Jesus says to them, "It's not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven. My Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. You're looking for bread. You're looking for somebody like Moses. The reality is it wasn't Moses who was giving you the bread. It was the Creator, your God, who was giving you the bread," which is why, in verse 33, He makes an astounding statement.

He says, "*The bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.*" He begins to make this whole picture very personal. They said, "Give us this bread," and Jesus makes this astounding statement. I would encourage you to underline it in verse 35. Jesus said to them, "*I am the bread of life...*" Literally, "I am the provision of God. I am the one who satisfies your needs. I am the one who fulfills your cravings."

This is a startling truth here. You've got it in your notes. True satisfaction is not found in gifts but in the Giver. God has wired us and created us to be satisfied in Him. Not in stuff, but in Him. This is huge. This is why I hate the so-called "Prosperity Gospel", which is no gospel at all. "Come to God to get stuff. Trust in God and you will get things." No. You come to God to get God, and you trust in God, so you can have God. He's better than all the things in this world put together. He's not a means to an end. He's the end, which our souls desire and long for. True satisfaction is found in God more than in His gifts.

Now, think about how that radically changes the way we live, because now we realize that even the best things in this world put together do not compare with the satisfaction that's found in God. This is where we realize, "Wow, this prosperity gospel is not something outside of us. It's something inside of us." Let's be honest. Look at our lives. Look at our churches, and our culture, and all the stuff we fill our lives with, like, clearly God is not enough for us. We need more, and bigger, and better things. No we don't. We don't. We have God. Take it all away, and we have everything in God. When people live like that, we look different from the world around us, and the tragedy is when we live like everybody else around us, we show the world around us that God is not enough. True satisfaction is not found in gifts, in the Giver.

Ladies and gentlemen, our deepest craving is not for something but for someone. Yet, we seek our delight in so many other things. I've put in here some different quotes. They're not new quotes. They're quotes that I've used before, but I thought this is an opportunity to just give them to you, because these are quotes that express some of the truths here. I want to make sure, obviously, to distinguish that these quotes are not authoritative Scripture, but they do help highlight some of the truths that we are seeing in authoritative Scripture.

So, this first one is from Jonathan Edwards, a penetrating quote about how our desires are so caught up in so many other things and how dull our desires can be for God. Listen to this quote. Edwards said,

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 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 and hear 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 lovable 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.

We can get so excited about who wins a game, and we can get so depressed over who loses a game, and our emotions can swing so much on things that do not matter. There is one who matters, and He deserves, not just our intellectual belief, but our emotional affection. Our desire, and our joy, and our satisfaction is found in Him. The danger is, if we're not careful, we will fill our stomachs...we will gorge ourselves on stuff, and entertainment, and things in this world that don't matter. When it comes to Christ, our stomachs will be so full, that there is little taste left, and what I want to call us to, as the people of God in this room surrounded by all kinds of pleasures, and entertainment, and stuff, and things in this world, let's fill our stomachs with the satisfaction of Christ, so that when it comes to the things of this world, we have little taste left for them. Jesus alone can fulfill our desires.

Jesus alone can transform our tastes.

Now, the problem is we're sinful, and we are prone to desire the world more than we desire God. So how do we change that? Second truth...Jesus alone can fulfill our desires...second, Jesus alone can transform our tastes. This is where it gets really good. In verse 28...go back to verse 28. They said to Jesus, "*What must we do to be doing the works of God?*" Literally, they're asking, "What works can we work to get to God? Tell us what works God requires, and we will do them." That was the Jewish way. The path to eternal life involved finding the right formula for performing the works that are pleasing to God. The result was a superficial, external, seemingly endless effort to change behavior and conduct.

Jesus says in verse 29...in response, He answered them, *"This is the work of God..."* So, this one thing is needful, He's saying. *"This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent."* What a statement.

Our options ...

See, here's the deal. We've got two options here when it comes to our sinful desires and inclinations. Number one, we can try to conquer sin by working hard to change our deeds. We can work to change ourselves and discipline ourselves.

This is what all the religions of the world are built on. Being in a part of the world these last couple of weeks dominated by Islam, I remember, standing in one mosque, talking with one person who is saying over and over, "This is what you need to do. This is what our duty is to do in order to honor Allah. In order to honor God, we need to do these things." There was a list of things.

The part of the world that I was in was engrossed in Buddhism. Buddhism is an eight-fold path to overcome this world, and some 200-300 rules of discipline in Buddhism. It goes on, and on, and on. This is what you need to do to appease the gods, to appease a god, to do this to earn favor before God. If we're not careful, Christianity can just be thrown in the mix just with different things. "I go to church, and pray a prayer, and be a good person, give a tithe, be decent, and this is it. God will be pleased." However, that would miss the whole point of Christ, because...okay, we've got this one option.

We can try to conquer sin by working hard to change our deeds. Follow this, and follow that, and be good. Or, second, we can conquer sin by trusting Christ to change our desires...trusting Christ. "One thing is needful, one work: Believe in me. Come to me," He says in verse 35. The rest of the chapter, "Feast on me. Just as you receive food, receive from me. Just as you receive water, drink from me. Trust in me. Believe me. Let me fill you. Let me satisfy you. Trust in me to change you from the inside out."

Our faith ...

When Christ is your satisfaction, when you believe He is all-satisfying, He will transform the way you live. Think about it. Think about it. Our faith: How will we overcome the pleasures of sin? That's a huge question. We all battle with sin in this room. You battle with sin. I battle with sin. We all do. We battle with looking to the things of this world to satisfy us instead of God. So, how do we change that?

What I want to propose to you based on what Jesus is saying here in John 6 is that we overcome the pleasures of sin by letting Christ overcome us with the power of His satisfaction. We come to Him. We believe in Him. We trust in Him. We feast on Him. That's how to overcome sin. Jesus said it, "When you come to me you won't hunger. When you believe in me you won't thirst." It's Galatians 5:24. We don't have time to turn there, but let me encourage you to write that down. It's Paul expressing this truth very clearly. Galatians 5:24, he says, *"Those who belong to Christ have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires."*

So, you belong to Christ. You come to Christ, then, the passion and desires of the flesh, of the sinful nature, are crucified when you come to Christ. How does that work? Well, when you come to Christ, and you experience the satisfaction of Christ, then you don't desire the stuff of this world anymore. You don't hunger and thirst after sin and stuff in the world, because you have satisfaction in Christ, and you know there's something better.

So yesterday, guys day out, me and the two boys. So, I come to them, and I say to them, "Anywhere you want to go to lunch, we'll go to lunch today." Their eyes lit up, and out of all the potential places to find good food in Birmingham, Alabama, they immediately said one place. I'm guessing you know what it is. I'll give you a hint. It starts with an M, and ends in acDonald's. They said, "We want hamburgers from McDonald's."

I said, "Do you know there's other places?" I had to list them. Not to be persuaded otherwise, they persevered, and we went to McDonald's. So, I get them hamburgers, and I got a hamburger. So, we sit down, and I get their burgers out, and set them in front of them, and I get mine out. They start to eat, and their faces are beaming with smiles. Let me tell you what my face is not doing when I bite into my so-called burger. I don't eat at McDonald's a lot, and so I bite into the burger and I think, "What is this? This is processed meat. This is not real meat."

I look at them, and they think it is great. Why? Why do they think this is great? Here's why: Because they have never tasted a nice, juicy filet. They have no idea what they are missing, because if they had tasted this, they would not be smiling with that. This is the reality. When you taste of something better, then you don't go back to the imitation. You don't settle for anything but the real thing, and this is how to overcome and conquer the pleasures of sin in this life. Believe that Christ is better. Taste of Christ. Come to Christ, and you will see that He is good in a way that nothing else is. You think pornography is good? You think adultery is good? You think greed, money, more possessions, and better stuff, power and acclaim of men is good? You're settling for processed meat, and there's real taste to be had.

This is the picture when you realize this, when you feast on Christ as your satisfaction. This week, you are tempted with sin and stuff in this world, and maybe you start to taste of it a little bit, when you know Christ as your satisfaction, when you're with Him in His Word, and walk with Him in prayer, and enjoy Him in continual worship, and you begin to taste something else, you begin to realize, "This is gross. This is disgusting. It doesn't compare to Him." You go running. You repent, and you run back to Him. The whole Christian life becomes a process of learning to feast on Christ, and the more you do, the more you run from the things of this world. You're conquered by a superior satisfaction.

Our prayer ...

So, this is our prayer: God, increase our desire for pleasure. Increase our desire for pleasure. You say, "What do you mean?" This is probably my favorite quote from C.S. Lewis, highlighting exactly what John 6 is talking about here. C.S. Lewis said:

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.

What does that mean? More importantly, what does John 6 mean here? If you are living in adultery, if you are indulging in pornography, if your life is full of greed for the next and bigger thing, next and bigger advancement, if you find delight in those things, then your

desires are weak. It takes so little to please you. All it takes is a little mud pie in a slum to please you when you have been offered paradise, infinite joy.

So, I want to call you, based on God's Word this morning, to paradise and infinite joy, to trust in Christ, to find your satisfaction in Him and, in the process, be free from the chains of sinful desires to stuff in this world. He is better. God give us new tastes, new desires, find our ultimate and infinite pleasure in you. Jesus alone can do this work. Believe Him. Trust Him.

Jesus alone can guarantee our satisfaction.

How do you know that though? That's a bold claim. Throw aside all the best stuff in this world because Christ is better. How do you know that for sure? Third truth...Jesus alone can fulfill our desires, He alone can transform our tastes, and Jesus alone, third, can guarantee our satisfaction. Verse 35, He said, *"I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."* The word there, "never", is emphatic in the original language. It's like Jesus is saying, "You come to me, you will never, never, never thirst."

There's an infinite fountain of satisfaction to be found in Christ. To use His words from verse 27, He doesn't give food that perishes and spoils. He gives food that endures, and He talks about it over, and over, and over again. He says, "I come to give eternal life. It'll never be taken away. I'll raise Him up in the last day. You eat of this food...Moses...they ate of the food, the bread that Moses gave, and they died. You eat, feast on me, and you won't die."

The basis ...

Think about the basis of this guarantee. One, the initiative of the Father. In verse 37, He says, *"All the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out."* This is the first of six different times in this passage where Jesus references how the Father is drawing people to Him. You look down at verse 44, *"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him."* This is an amazing picture. Jesus says, "The Father is wooing people to me." Think about it.

The Creator, God on High...who else knows how better to satisfy you? You? Who else knows how better to satisfy me? Do I know better? No. The One who created and crafted me alone knows how to satisfy me, and He draws me. He allures me. This is astounding grace. Though I have run after all kinds of stuff and things in this world and given my love and affection to them, the Father on high in His grace and sovereign initiative has sought me and you.

The initiative of the Father, the obedience of the Son. Jesus says, *"This is why I've come from heaven,"* verse 38, *"not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him that sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up in the last day."* In other words, "The Father's drawing you, and I'm going to make sure it happens." This is Jesus saying, "The purpose of my coming is to do my Father's will. My Father's will is to draw men to Himself."

The initiative of the Father, the obedience of the Son, and ultimately, the promise of the resurrection. He says, *"...I will raise it up on the last day. [For] this is the will of my Father,"* verse 40, *"that everyone that looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."* How do you know this guarantee is true? When life

ends and satisfaction continues, that's a good thing. When you take your last breath, and you still are experiencing satisfaction...when everything in this life, even your breath is taken from you, and you still have satisfaction, that's a good guarantee.

The bottom line ...

How can he say that? Well, think about it. The bottom line: Jesus has provided for our salvation in His death. The rest of this passage, Jesus does start to talk about how He will give His body and His blood. Many people have said, "Is this cannibalism?" First century Christians were accused of being cannibalistic because of passages like these. "*Unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood you have no life in you.*" Well, Jesus is not talking about cannibalism. He's not encouraging His disciples to eat Him.

He's also not talking about Catholicism here. There are many who have said in the history of the church that this is Jesus saying, "When we have the Lord's Supper, we are literally eating the body and drinking the blood of Christ," and that's not the picture here. Jesus is not talking about cannibalism or Catholicism. He's talking about crucifixion here. He's talking about the gruesome reality that, the only way for you and I to experience satisfaction from God, is to be reconciled to God. It makes sense.

We, in our sin, have run from God. He, in His holiness, is the only one who can satisfy us. So, how can we be brought back to Him, especially when the payment for sin...Genesis 3:6, based on Genesis 2...is death? This is how Jesus is going to satisfy. In John 6, He says, "I'm going to come, and I'm going to give my body, and I'm going to shed my blood. I'm going to die the death that you deserve to die. I'm going to take the payment of your sin upon myself, and in dying for your sin, I'm going to provide for your salvation."

Jesus alone can make this bold claim on the stage of human history because He alone was fit to die for our sins, and He alone has paid the price for our sins, the penalty for our sins, and not just paid the price in His death, but He has provided for our salvation in His death, and He has prevailed over our sin in His resurrection. He died, and then He rose. That's why He says four different times, "*I will raise him up on the last day.*" That's why He says three different times, "Come to me you will have eternal life. You will live forever."

It's an interesting thing when somebody is talking about how they're going to die and live forever at the same time. The only way that is possible is because of His resurrection, and the reality that because Jesus has conquered sin and death on the cross, He has risen from the grave so that He could say to all men everywhere, "Come to me. Believe in me. Trust in me, and your satisfaction will not end in this life with a meal. Your satisfaction will last forever."

This is where it all comes full circle. We no longer live for fleeting pleasures in this world; and they're all fleeting. Every pleasure that this world offers us, every sin this world tempts us with...and the thing is, what's dangerous...that world fleeting is so key, because there are things in this world that will lure us, and they will promise, and even in some senses, bring about satisfaction for a moment, for a fleeting moment. However, they won't last, and it is huge when we come to the realization they won't last.

Oh, for every teenager in this world lured by the pleasures of the world know this: They're all fleeting. They won't last. Every college student in this room lured by the pleasures of the world, they're fleeting. To every man and woman in this room, they're fleeting. They're fleeting. They don't last. They are temporary. Only one pleasure and satisfaction lasts and He is Christ. So, we no longer live for fleeting pleasures in this world. Why not? Because we have found total satisfaction in the person of Christ.

When we realize that...when we realize this right here...when you believe this, then, you can give your life to making the gospel known in Birmingham and around the world no matter what it costs you, because you know...you know your life was created for so much more than the confines of upper-class Christianity in our culture. Your life was created for a much greater purpose. Your life was created to find satisfaction in Him and to make His glory known among all peoples.

We are now living for everlasting pleasure in the world to come. We're not living for this world anymore. We're not living for Birmingham, Alabama or anywhere else in this world. This world is not our home. We're not building, and acquiring, and seeking more, and more, and more here. We don't live for here. We live for there. We live for the place where we will find eternal enjoyment in the praise of Christ, and when you believe that, you'll give it all to make His glory known here, because you know, "Take my house, take my land, take my life it doesn't matter. I have Christ, and He's all I need, and I'm only here for a mist anyway."

I have eternal enjoyment coming in Him. So, C.S. Lewis said, "All enjoyment spontaneously overflows into praise." Let me pause here for just a second. Sometimes we think, "Okay, if heaven is going to be perfect, doesn't that mean it'll just be perfectly boring." We wouldn't say that out loud like I just did, but we think, "Really, is it worth it?" Now, listen...listen to C.S. Lewis, "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."

So what does that mean? What is C.S. Lewis saying there? I think it's the picture of eternal life that Jesus is giving here in John 6. So, think about it on this level. You've got a football team you like, and you like the team, and so you find yourself standing, and cheering, and shouting, and applauding. It's not just because you want to express how much you like the team. The reality is there is enjoyment in the actual expression. You don't see people in our culture fill stands and stand out in the rain because they're miserable. You see it because they're enjoying the expression of praise. It completes the enjoyment.

I think about my marriage to Heather. For me to say, "You are beautiful, and I love you," yes, is an expression of that, but it's also enjoyable to say that. So, the picture of praise of God is far better than a team and far better than a wife or a husband. God, in His infinite beauty, and wondrous glory, when it comes to praise, it's not just an expression of who He is. This is enjoyment. This is delight that we have in giving Him glory, and honor, and praise. This is the overflow of our affections towards Him, and the picture of heaven is eternal enjoyment in the praise of Christ.

Forever, and ever, and ever, and ever our affections incited with one who is infinitely beautiful, and infinitely wonderful. Who, by His grace, has taken the initiative to woo us to Himself through the obedience of Christ, has made it possible for us to know Him as the only one who can fulfill our desires, transform our tastes, and the only one who can guarantee our satisfaction. Indeed, He is the all-satisfying Christ.

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