

## What Sort of Man is This? His Substitutionary Death

**John 19:28 ESV** After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), “***I thirst.***” **29** A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. **30** When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

- I. I want you to take a journey in time with me. Let’s go back to the very beginning of mankind in the garden of Eden and consider what life was like there.
  - A. It’s almost impossible for us to imagine a place and a time when sin, and guilt and shame had absolutely no power over creation; a time when it’s corrupting effects didn’t tarnish beauty or diminish love, but that was exactly what the first man and woman experienced.
    1. It was a place of perfect peace and harmony; a place where sorrow and grief were never felt, and laughter and expressions of tender love abounded; not only from man to woman, and woman to man, but from God to mankind, and mankind to God.
    2. It was a time when human beings ***literally*** walked side by side with God as they ruled over the creation he had gifted to them.
  - B. In that place God had given them everything! Because of this, it was a time when human desire, hunger and thirst never resulted in disappointment, but rather, every human appetite was always gloriously satisfied.
    1. Man’s deep desires for significance were satisfied when God gave his most favored creation dominion over the whole earth, with a command to multiply, in order to rule and subdue it entirely.
      - a) When no suitable companion was found for the man, God removed the rib from his side and created the perfect complimentary being, the woman, so that he (and she for that matter) wouldn’t be lonely, satisfying any craving for human intimacy.
      - b) On top of all that, every tree in the garden (with one notable exception) was given to the man and woman to satisfy every appetite and longing the couple could ever experience.
    2. But in your mind don’t diminish the treasure that had been laid before the man and his wife; it wasn’t just that they were given everything they would ever need, but they were given ***everything they could ever want.***
  - C. Can you imagine what it must have been like to go to bed in a world where you didn’t have to selfishly “look out for number one” because everything you needed to be ***fully satisfied*** was freely given to you? A world where you didn’t have to strive and compete because there were no winners and losers, but instead ***everyone*** was equally loved and cared for by the same gracious Father?
- II. But as you probably know, this state of things didn’t last as both the man and his wife were deceived.

- A. They were told there was **something better** that had been kept from them, so they were tempted to desire something that they neither needed nor truly wanted, because of a lie. And for the first time, their souls thirsted, they hungered, they craved, they desired...and yet remained unfulfilled. For the first time in their whole existence, they felt unsatisfied.
- B. This is seen in the curse that sin brought upon them after the fall.
1. To the woman God said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. **Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.**" (Genesis 3:16)
    - a) Before the fall, the woman was free - the perfect equal counterpart of the man. But now, because of sin, she would be subject to him.
    - b) Her desire (her hunger and thirst, her longings and cravings) would be directed toward him and yet, because of his sin, those desires would many times go unsatisfied.
  2. To the man God says, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; **in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;** and you shall eat the plants of the field. **By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread,** till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:17-19)
    - a) Before the fall, a garden full of fruit was freely provided. But now, the ground is cursed. The table once set in laughter, is now set in tears.
      - (1) The man would spend the remainder of his days looking back to the time when he could reach out his hand and take what he wanted with regret, because now he was a slave to the uncertainty of the earth he plowed, and to the rains he desperately needed to fall upon it.
      - (2) From now on, there would be many times when he would want to satisfy his hunger and desire, only to go to bed empty and in tears because of hailstones and weeds that used to be unknown to him.
    - b) On the day he was created from the dust he was told, "**You are a king!**" But now, he is reminded, "**You are dust,** and to dust you will return."
- C. Now even their children would desire what they could not gain for themselves. Cain desired approval and recognition. When he didn't get it, he murdered his brother in a jealous rage.
- D. And on and on it goes! The people at Babel desired to rule the earth once again, so they built a tower to heaven to arrogantly reclaim their significance, but this time without God. But a single word from heaven and their plans are toppled and their desires remained unfulfilled.
- E. Several hundred years later, when God rescued his people from slavery, they complained of hunger and thirst as they wandered through the desert. God wonderfully and miraculously supplied food from heaven and water from a rock, but his picky kids cried out, "This isn't what we wanted! Where's the quail? The leeks and onions! The garlic! The melons!" The curse of unfulfilled desires and gnawing dissatisfaction was following them every step of the way.

- III. The curse of unsatisfied hunger and unquenched thirst is so real, that we see it all throughout the troublesome history of the Jews.
- A. King Solomon wrote the entire book of Ecclesiastes with this truth in view, that we live out our days in all kinds of pursuits that will ultimately fail to satisfy the deep hunger and thirst that dwells in all of our souls.
    1. **Ecclesiastes 6:7 ESV** All the toil of man is for his mouth, yet his appetite is not satisfied.
    2. Throughout the book he tells of how he tried to fulfill the deepest longings of his heart through wisdom, wealth, fame, success and pleasure but nothing satisfied him.
    3. **Ecclesiastes 1:2b ESV** "...vanity of vanities! All is vanity." "vanity" -futile, meaningless, useless, empty, mere smoke.
  - B. We see this same conclusion (that all of life is vain and empty) is echoed throughout the Old Testament. Over and over we read of how our proud attempts to slake the thirst that we acquired at Eden are destined to fail.
    1. The Psalmist says: **Psalm 112:10b ESV** ...*the desire of the wicked will perish!*
    2. Ezekiel declares, **Ezekiel 7:19 ESVb** Their silver and gold are not able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord. *They cannot satisfy their hunger or fill their stomachs with it.*
  - C. This principle of unfulfilled desires because of sin is carried even into the New Testament. **James 4:1 ESV** What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? **2 You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel.** You do not have, because you do not ask. **3** You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, *to spend it on your passions.*
  - D. Sin forces us to try and quench the thirst of our souls. Every sin you and I have ever committed was for this purpose. We are seeking to satisfy a persistent hunger for love and significance and power and meaning and intimacy and hope.
- IV. But take a closer look at the Old Testament! Do you see it? Hidden among the many pages exposing our vain pursuit to gain for ourselves satisfaction, there is a promise...and another...and another! It is a promise of coming satisfaction, as a day is predicted when God will fulfill the desires of those who call upon his Name!
- A. Jeremiah was known as the "weeping prophet" because his task was to prophesy to the nation of Israel that God was going to send them into 70 years of Babylonian exile because of their sin of idolatry.
  - B. But all throughout the book that bears his name, we hear about how God promises to "restore their fortunes", blessing them far more than he would punish them. Here is one such verse:
    1. **Jeremiah 50:19 ESV** I will restore Israel to his pasture, and he shall feed on Carmel and in Bashan, and *his desire shall be satisfied* on the hills of Ephraim and in Gilead.

2. You may not understand the references to Carmel and Bashan, Ephraim or Gilead, but the important clause here tells us that Israel's ***"desire shall be satisfied"***.
- C. But how and when was this to take place? Who would be the benefactor?
- V. Fast forward some 650 years to the land of Samaria, on the wrong side of the tracks from Israel. You could cut the racial tension with a knife! Here we find another prophet. A Jew named Jesus. He is tired. He is thirsty. He finds himself at a well at the hottest part of the day, alone with a Samaritan woman of ill-repute.
- A. "Give me a drink" he says. The woman is scandalized! "Seriously! You want **me** (a low-down despised half-breed) to give **you** (an snooty member of the "chosen race") a drink?" She could never have anticipated his response...
1. **John 4:10 ESV** Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and **he would have given you living water.**"
  2. She must have looked at him as though he had offered to sell her some "magic beans" and answers him with just a hint of sarcasm. "Well you have no bucket, and this well is pretty deep...just where are you going to get this "living water"? I suppose you think you're more important than Jacob? After all it was him who gave us this well hundreds of years ago in the first place." Jesus is unimpressed.
  3. **John 4:13 ESV** Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, **14** but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him **will never be thirsty again.** The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."
  4. "I'm tired of being thirsty" she says, "Give me this living water." But before Jesus can do so, he must show her the poison wells that she had been looking to in order to quench her thirsty soul. In her case, it was men and religion.
- B. Finally she says, "I know that when the messiah comes, he'll make everything clear." Jesus said to her, "Today's your day. I'm the one you're looking for."
- C. Jesus goes on to make similar offers later in the book of John...
1. **John 6:35 ESV** 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.**"
  2. This is a promise made freely to all who would come to him and believe in him.
    - a) Do you believe that Jesus is all-satisfying? I don't always! I want to believe it!
    - b) But theres a funny thing about me. I still think that the mud puddles of this world are going to quench my thirst on a regular basis. If you look long enough, you find me on my hands and knees slurping up what the world promises will satisfy me, only to walk away filthy and unsatisfied.
- D. **Jeremiah 2:12 ESV** Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the Lord,**13** for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

1. I am so tired of living like this! I am weary of this relentless thirst and the endless pangs of hunger. I don't want to believe one more lie that says satisfaction is available for me away from God!
  2. **John 7:37 ESV** On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, ***"If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. 38*** Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ***'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'***"
- VI. So how does Christ quench my thirst? How does he satisfy my hunger? My desire? My longing?
- A. Just like everything else he did for me, Jesus took all of my hunger, desire, thirst and longing on himself at the cross.
  - B. Jesus, in less than 24 hours, is betrayed by Judas, arrested, tried by both Jewish and Roman authorities, denied by Peter, mocked, beaten, spit upon, scourged with a "cat of nine tails", crowned with thorns, stripped naked, forced to carry his cross uphill, and nailed through his hands and feet and bound to a cross to hang there and suffocate to death.
    1. Most of us who have been in church for awhile have at least an intellectual understanding that Christ endured all of this for us.
    2. He was not tortured, mocked and crucified for any wrong doing on his part; he was innocent. No; he was executed as our substitute, dying the death we deserved, for the sins we committed. They were our nails that pierced him. It was our crown he wore, and our cross he carried.
  - C. But John shows us a little more. He tells us that right before he expired, Jesus uttered two simple words that are almost easy to miss if you're not paying attention: "I thirst."
    1. These were not just words indicating that he was dehydrated in his weakened state; on the contrary, they displayed the condition of his soul as he bore our sin.
      - a) The one who had all the wealth of heaven and every warring angel at his disposal, was now unsatisfied because of our sin. "I thirst". The cry from the mouth of humanity since that dark day in the garden became his own. "I thirst"
      - b) But His cry was met, not with cool refreshing water, but with sour wine, and he died with the thirst unquenched, his tongue parched, bearing bitter taste of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
      - c) For millennia, the human race had tasted the bitter, unsatisfying taste of sinful unfulfilled desire. Now Christ had loving wrestled the cup from our hand, and hung there, drinking from it in our place.
    2. **John 19:30 ESV** When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.
      - a) It was only when Christ had fully received the bitter cup of human sin and God's wrath that he could say, "It is finished."
      - b) And because he has, you and I never have to drink it anymore. ***"If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink...whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst..."***

whoever drinks of the water that I will give him ***will never be thirsty again***”

- VII. By this point, I would suspect that some of you are at least mentally objecting to my premise. You can't really make yourself believe that Jesus died to restore us to the Eden state; a place where we can be fully satisfied and never hungry or thirsty.
- A. May I ask you a question? What desire could you possibly have that Christ is not enough for?
  - B. The late Rich Mullins, a famous Christian singer-songwriter, was a single man. Once while touring Europe, he travelled through Amsterdam.
    - 1. Knowing that city has one of the most notorious red-light districts in the world, Rich found himself entertaining a lustful thought. That lustful thought turned into a full scale spiritual war.
    - 2. “I'm single. I'm alone in a foreign country. No one would ever know or find out. What would be the harm” he reasoned in his mind. Still he battled relentlessly. And just when he thought he couldn't stand it any longer, these lyrics began to put forth (like living water) from his soul...
  - C. (Play “Hold me Jesus Video”)
  - D. Did you notice the lyrics in the bridge? “Surrender don't come natural to me. I'd rather fight you for something I don't really want than to take what you give that I need.” Do you know what it's like to be there?
  - E. Like Rich, you can discover that Jesus is enough to quench your thirst this morning. “...whoever drinks of the water that I will give him ***will never be thirsty again***”
  - F. Let me tell you, if God can quench your thirst as a single man in a red-light district, I think you're safe to trust him!
    - 1. Can you have faith to believe that he is enough to satisfy you?
    - 2. Remember, any thirst that can't be satisfied by him, can't be satisfied. And any attempt to satisfy that thirst apart from him will only be injurious to your soul.
  - G. **Isaiah 55:1 ESV** “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. **2** 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.
  - H. Let's come to his table and feast.