

The Miracle of a Generous Heart

Week Two - I Can't Get No Satisfaction

Texts: Exodus 16; Luke 12:22-28; Deuteronomy 31:8

Welcome to session two of our series, The Miracle of a Generous Heart. My name is Clay West, and I'm the Minister of Small Groups here at University Heights Baptist Church. We're so glad you're with us today. In session two, we are going to discover what it is like to live a satisfied life in Christ. And also wrestle with relinquishing control of some of the things we want to hold on to, and really trusting the Father.

So as you remember, last week, we read a parable about a man, a very rich man who wasn't satisfied with what he had. And so he tore down his barns, and he built bigger barns so he could store even more of his wealth. Satisfaction can be described as being content, being confident in the acceptance of something. And remember that God promises to be our Jehovah-Jireh, right, he promises to be our provider. Jesus Himself tells us in Luke chapter 12:22-28, that if the Father takes care of creation the way He does, that we shouldn't worry, because He will certainly take care of us. It says, "And he said to his disciples, for this reason I say to you, do not worry about your life, as to what you will eat, nor your body as to what you will put on. For Life is more than food and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens for they neither sow nor reap, they have no store, room nor barn. And yet God feeds them, how much more valuable you are than the birds. And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to his lifespan? If then you cannot do even a very little thing, why do you worry about other matters? Consider the lilies, how they grow, they, they neither toil nor spin. But I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory, clothed himself like one of these. But if God so clothes, the grass of the field, which is alive today, and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will he clothe you? O ye of little faith." So he makes that promise to us. I want to go back to a story in the Old Testament, back in Exodus 16. So if you want to turn there and follow along with me in a minute, that's great. But I just kind of want to give you some background of this story in Exodus 16. As you know, Moses has gone into Egypt, and he has told Pharaoh to release his people. Pharaoh does submit after a long period of time, and releases the Israelites. They leave Egypt and come to the Red Sea. God parts the Red Sea and Israel goes through on dry land. Pharaoh's army comes from behind and is drowned in the sea. And at that moment, they are so excited! They sing, they dance, and they celebrate this great thing that God had done. He was their protector, their provider. Then they turn and they go out into the wilderness. And three short days later, we find the Israelites grumbling and complaining, because they're thirsty, they don't have any water. And so they come to a place called Marah, where the water is there, but it's bitter. But God does a miracle. He allows Moses to use a simple tree branch to sweeten the water and they drink. Then they travel on just a few days later and they grumble because they're hungry, right? And God provides meat for them. And he then He provides manna, which brings us into Exodus 16. I want us to turn there this morning. and to just highlight a couple of things. The grumbling...remember that the Israelites have seen God do great, powerful, and mighty things. Right? He parted the sea and they walk through dry land. And yet, the trust factor is not there. The trust factor is not there. They're worried about what they're going to drink. They're

worried about what they're going to eat. Even though God has done this great thing. Surely he can do this too. And he does. He provides quail for them that fly into the camp and land on the ground and they literally just pick them off the ground. But then we have this section that talks about manna. And this is really important for us. And we're going to start back in verse 13, Exodus 16:13. "So it came about an evening that the quail came up and covered the camp. But in the morning, there was a layer of dew around the camp. And when the layer of view evaporated, behold, on the surface of the wilderness, there was a fine flake like thing, fine is the frost on the ground. And when the sons of Israel saw it, they said to one another, what is it? For they did not know what it was, and Moses said to them, it is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat.

This is what the Lord has commanded. Gather of it every man as much as he should eat. You shall take an omer apiece according to the number of persons, each one of you has in his tent, the sons of Israel did so and some gathered much, and some gathered little. Why, because some had more in their tent, and some had fewer in their tent. When they measured it with an omer, he who had gathered much, had no excess. And he who had gathered little, had no lack. Every man gathered as much as he should eat. And Moses said to them, let no man leave any of it until morning. But they did not listen to Moses, and some left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and became foul. And Moses was angry with them. They gathered it morning, by morning, day after day, every man as much as he should eat. But when the sun grew hot, it would melt." God is teaching the people of Israel a couple things. He's teaching them that he is the provider, that they can rely on him day after day after day, to take care of them. He is their father and they are his children. He is a good father and is providing for his children. He proves to them that he's the provider. The other thing that he is teaching them is satisfaction. Don't gather more than you need and be satisfied with enough. That's hard. That's hard for us. Because of our culture, right? Our culture says gather, gather, gather. We have this insatiable appetite for the things of the world: for money, for wealth, for possessions, for things. Kind of like we talked about last week. What does it mean to be satisfied? I really think it goes back to the first point. God is the provider; we need to be satisfied in God. We need to be satisfied with what He gives us, which by the way is this great and miraculous gift of salvation, eternal life. Grace He gives to us that we might be indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and then live out this gospel message to the world and to the church. And so because of that great gift that satisfies our inward soul, we are able to be generous to other people, we are able to see that all good things come from God and that our only response to Him is thanksgiving. And then also, to love our fellow brothers and sisters, by sharing when people are in need, and by giving generously to the kingdom work of God. God is the great provider. God is the great satisfier and he calls us to be satisfied in Christ. So the world says I can't get no satisfaction, right? You heard it in the theme song at the beginning. God says I'm the satisfier, so be satisfied in me. I've called you to do a good work in the world, and I give you everything you need.

Discussion Questions

1. Have someone in your group share a story of how God allowed them to be generous this week.

2. The term “customer satisfaction” saturates our culture. Discuss how this leads to self-centeredness.
3. How does God’s use of the omer in Exodus 16 teach the Israelites to trust?
4. Do trust and satisfaction go hand in hand? If so, how?
5. Is satisfaction in God’s provision something that can be displayed? What are some practical life outcomes that reveal you are satisfied?