

MID-MORNING FEATURING DR. MITCHELL KRUSE

JANUARY 17, 2012

SATISFACTION THROUGH SURRENDER (PART ONE) (MATTHEW 5:3-6)

NEXT SHOW: FEBRUARY 21

Where do you go to satisfy your desires? Jesus gave the secret to satisfaction in the greatest speech ever given when he addressed an estimated 20,000 followers along the mountainside outside Capernaum. We call it the *Sermon on the Mount* recorded in the Gospel of Matthew (Chapters 5-7) where Jesus laid down the gauntlet for full surrender of one's heart to God. Outlining the *be-do-go of full surrender*, in essence, Jesus communicated, "Who you are designed to *be* determines what you are designed to *do* which determines where you are designed to *go*" because God designed life to flow from the heart (Proverbs 4:23)

Jesus began with a Hebrew literary device called an *inclusio* featuring the Beatitudes (from *beati*, Latin for "Blessed," meaning "satisfied"). The dominant theme of the *inclusio* is evidenced in the first and last Beatitude where the following phrase is repeated, "*For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*" The kingdom of heaven is God's divine reign, rule, and order in the hearts and lives of people on this earth now and in the future. Thus, we find *satisfaction through surrender* to Christ who brings us into the kingdom of heaven, His will for our lives.

(1) SATISFIED ARE THE HUMBLE (MATTHEW 5:3)

Who are satisfied? Jesus' first secret to satisfaction through surrender was: "*Blessed are the poor in spirit*" (Matthew 5:3). Restated, Jesus said, "Satisfied are the humble." *Humble* means "to be lower than, or to bend the knees of one's heart." *Humility* and *humanity* come from the same Latin root, *humus*, meaning "from the ground." We call it "down to earth."

The condition of one's heart is determined by the object of its desires. A humble heart desires Christ, above all else. "*Poor in spirit*" is declaring my moral bankruptcy before a holy God, trusting in Christ's free gift of grace as payment for my sin. Humility says to Christ, "I can't. You can." "I can't pay for my sin. You can. I can't be Lord of my life. You can." *I can't* is *repentance*. *You can* is *faith*. Contrast this heart condition with a proud one, which says to God, "I can. You can't." *Pride* means "to be higher than, or to exalt." A proud heart desires self and remains dissatisfied.

Why are they satisfied? "*For theirs is the kingdom of heaven*" (Matthew 5:3). Jesus, our ultimate example of a humble heart (Matthew 11:29) said that humility is the entrance requirement to the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 18:1-4). This is where we experience God's divine reign, rule, and order, which is why we were created.

How are they satisfied? In order to humble our hearts, we must surrender our pride. In a great story tucked in the Gospel of Luke, Jesus contrasted the temple prayer of a proud Pharisee with that of a humble tax collector. The respected Pharisee exalted himself while the disrespected tax collector stood at a distance, refused to look up to heaven, and beat his breast—three acts of humility. The tax collector finally made an attempt to put into words the condition of his heart, "*God, have mercy on me, a sinner*" (Luke 18:13). Jesus said that the tax collector, not the Pharisee, went home justified before God. He summed it up this way, "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted" (Luke 18:14).

STREET SMARTS FOR THE RESTORATION ROAD...

Take a *poor in spirit* inventory of any pride in your life where you are ruling your own kingdom. It will be manifested in a relationship, a task, or a conflict that is leaving you dissatisfied. Surrender your pride to Christ, saying, "I can't. You can." Live out this humility toward Christ in your relationships where you will experience satisfaction through the surrender of your desires to Him, as you live in the kingdom of heaven where those around you are drawn to Christ in you.

(2) SATISFIED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN (MATTHEW 5:4)

Do find yourself guarding your emotions in order to numb your pain? Jesus offered a healing alternative in His second of eight secrets to satisfaction through surrender: *“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted”* (Matthew 5:4).

Who are satisfied? *“Those who mourn”* are satisfied (Matthew 5:4). The Bible records three reasons to mourn: (1) *the loss of life*, (2) *sin*—desiring life apart from God, and (3) *the lost*—those who are not surrendered to Christ. God’s people mourned for the *loss of life*: 70 days for the loss of Jacob (Gen. 50:3) and 30 days for the loss of Aaron (Numbers 20:29) and Moses (Deuteronomy 34:8) among many others. God’s people mourned for their *sin* (1 Samuel 7:2-4). Both Samuel and God mourned for Saul’s unrepentant, *lost* heart (1 Samuel 15:35). David mourned for Absalom’s return (2 Samuel 13:37).

Mourning was modeled in the heart and life of Christ. He mourned for the *loss of life* when Lazarus died. John recorded it succinctly, “Jesus wept” (John 11:35). Jesus mourned for the *sin* of Jerusalem (Matt. 23:37). While on the cross, He mourned for bearing the sin of the world (Matthew 27:46). Jesus mourned for the *lost*. When pagan, Roman guards pounded the nails in His hands, Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34).

Why are they satisfied? *“They will be comforted”* (Matthew 5:4). The literal name for the Holy Spirit is the *Comforter*. It means to call along side. When we mourn, we release the Holy Spirit both in and out of our hearts. Paul said that this comfort comes only from God who comforts our hearts so that we will comfort others (2 Corinthians 1:3-7). The Old Testament prophet Jeremiah wrote that God turns our mourning into dancing (Jeremiah 31:13). Isaiah communicated that the Spirit of God works through us to comfort all who mourn (Isaiah 61:2). We either release the Holy Spirit and experience satisfaction, or we hold on to our guardedness and experience dissatisfaction.

How are they satisfied? They surrender their guardedness. When we desire to find satisfaction in and of ourselves, we guard our hearts from mourning and thwart the comfort of the Holy Spirit in and out of our lives. However, when we surrender our guardedness, we will release the Holy Spirit in three ways: one for each reason to mourn.

First, we will comfort others when they experience the *loss* a loved one. Jesus did so when He encountered Martha at the death of her brother Lazarus (John 11:31-33). Second, we will repent from our *sin* and return to God. Jesus told the young woman caught in adultery, “Go now and leave your life of sin” (John 8:11). Third, we will pray for the *lost*. Before He went to the cross, Jesus prayed for the lost, that they would surrender to Him as Lord and Savior (John 17:20-21).

STREET SMARTS FOR THE RESTORATION ROAD...

Take time to read Luke 23 where you will see that while bearing His cross, Jesus mourned for: *the loss of life* (vv. 29-31), *sin* (v. 34), and *the lost* (v. 43). Surrender your guardedness and mourn for: *the loss of life*, *sin*, and the *lost*. You will be satisfied with the comfort of the Holy Spirit Who will comfort others through you, draw you to repent from sin and return to God, and prompt you to pray for the lost.

(3) SATISFIED ARE THE GENTLE (MATTHEW 5:5)

Have you ever been harsh? Something flawed inside each of us says that we can satisfy our desires by being harsh. Whether at the airlines counter or the fast food line, in the check out isle or the exit lane, on the basketball sidelines or the telephone line, we believe that harshness will satisfy our desires. Jesus gave us a different way in the third of eight secrets to satisfaction through surrender: *“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth”* (Matthew 5:5).

Who are satisfied? The gentle are satisfied. The NASB says, *“Blessed are the gentle”* (Matthew 5:5). Gentleness is power under the Spirit’s control. Like a bit in a horse’s mouth, the Spirit’s residence in our hearts guides us when we are gentle. The Greek word for “gentle” is *praus* from *prautes*. Aristotle defined it as the middle course of being angry, between being angry for no reason and not getting angry at all. Gentleness is getting angry at the right time with the right measure for the right reason.

Jesus described Himself as gentle in heart (Matthew 11:29). The God of the universe is gentle, not harsh. Paul told us that the result of the Holy Spirit’s dwelling in us is *gentleness* (Galatians 5:23). If the Spirit of God is alive in us, then we will be gentle, not harsh, in heart.

Why are they satisfied? *“They will inherit the earth”* (Matthew 5:5). This is Jewish phraseology for the blessings of God’s kingdom, His divine reign, rule, and order on this earth now and in the future. We see this in the Old Testament. Remember the Israelites and their quest to inherit the Promised Land? Canaan, as it was known, was referenced by the Israelites as a type of heaven. Contrasting God’s curses for those who are harsh with the blessings for those who are gentle, or meek, David said, *“But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy great peace”* (Psalm 37:11). We were designed to be satisfied by the kingdom of heaven, the invisible movement of God’s will in our lives. We find satisfaction, not through our harshness, but through our gentleness because gentleness restores relationships.

How are they satisfied? They surrender their harshness. We are gentle in heart when we surrender our harshness to God, who satisfies our desires. Gentleness restores three dimensionally. Gentleness restores: (1) our relationship with God, (2) our relationships with others, and (3) others’ relationships with God.

First, gentleness restores our relationship with God. Jesus said that His *gentleness restores our souls* (Matthew 11:29). James, the half-brother of Jesus and the pastor of the New Testament church in Jerusalem said that we should humbly, or *gently*, receive the word of God planted in our hearts that saves, or restores, us with God (James 1:21).

STREET SMARTS FOR THE RESTORATION ROAD...

Are you harsh with God in any area of your life? Maybe He didn’t heal someone in the way or with the timing that you saw fit. Perhaps He has allowed suffering in your life that you deem unreasonable. Possibly, you don’t have the career, spouse, or children that you thought He should give you. Whatever that harshness against God might be, surrender it to Him today. Say, “I can’t. You can. I can’t satisfy my desires through harshness toward You, but You can satisfy my desires when I surrender my harshness to you.”

Second, gentleness restores our relationships with others. Jesus said that our words flow from our hearts (Luke 6:45). When we are harsh in heart, so are our words. When we are gentle in heart, our words are gentle—powerful under the Spirit’s control. Solomon taught, *“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger”* (Proverbs 15:1). Are you harsh with your words in any relationships?

STREET SMARTS FOR THE RESTORATION ROAD...

Do you find yourself being harshest with those closest to you? Try surrendering your harshness for gentleness with your heart and subsequently your words. You will find restoration in your relationships with others.

Third, gentleness restores others’ relationships with God. This applies to both the surrendered and the un-surrendered. Paul said that when the surrendered is caught in sin, we should restore him *gently*, realizing that we could be tempted as well (Galatians 6:1). Peter said that when we answer the un-surrendered with the reason for the hope that we have in Christ, we should do so *gently* (1 Peter 3:15).

STREET SMARTS FOR THE RESTORATION ROAD...

With whom are you harsh because of their un-restored relationship with God? It might be gays, Muslims, the self-righteous, conservatives, liberals, or addicts. Are you willing to surrender that harshness to God and them, experiencing gentleness in heart and the inheritance of God’s blessings?

(4) Satisfied are those who Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness (Matthew 5:6)

Do you desire any life apart from God? That’s sin, which leaves a gap between God and us, accompanied by a desire to have it filled (Isaiah 59:2). It’s a vicious cycle. We attempt to satisfy our sinful desires apart from God through *unrighteousness* and then try to fill the resulting gap with our *self-righteousness*. Consequently, we are left dissatisfied.

Righteousness is important to God Who wants us to do what's right more than He wants us to give a tithe or an offering (Proverbs 21:3). However, our best at doing right is like filthy rags in God's sight (Isaiah 64:6). Either we think that our desire to fill the gap will be satisfied by our own self-righteousness, or we just give up and continue to sin in our unrighteousness. It's as if we are damned if we do and damned if we don't. Jesus gave us an alternative in the fourth secret to satisfaction through surrender saying, "*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled*" (Matthew 5:6).

Who are satisfied? Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness are satisfied. Jesus proclaimed, "*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness*" (Matthew 5:6). Righteousness is what is right in God's sight. We find a hunger and thirst for righteousness in the heart of Christ who did not sin, but became the payment for our sin, so that in Him we might be the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21). Just like us, Jesus was tempted in every way and did not sin (Hebrews 4:15). He is the only truly righteous one. Jesus' close friend said it this way, "My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the father in our defense—Jesus Christ the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:1). Consequently, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness desire Christ, the righteousness of God.

Why are they satisfied? "*They will be filled*" (Matthew 5:6). The desire and the resulting gap can only be filled by Christ, who fills everything in every way (Ephesians 1:22-23). The psalmist said that the Lord satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things (Psalm 107:9). Sin never satisfies, and its resulting gap in our hearts will never be satisfied outside of Christ.

How are they satisfied? They surrender their sin, which comes in two forms: *unrighteousness* and *self-righteousness*.

First, we must surrender our unrighteousness. Paul compelled the self-indulgent Romans to surrender their unrighteousness to Christ, clothing themselves in His righteousness, not even thinking about how to gratify the desires of their sinful nature (Romans 13:14). We must exchange our unrighteous filthy rags for the righteousness of Christ.

Second, we must surrender our self-righteousness—our self-atonement program to fill the gap left by sin. Jesus said that our righteousness must surpass that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law to even enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:20). He challenged the Pharisees to acknowledge their pretense of self-righteousness on the outside while they were unrighteous on the *inside* (Matthew 23:27-28). Once again, we discover that satisfaction through surrender is a heart issue. Jesus pleaded with the self-righteous to surrender to Him, but they were not willing (Matthew 23:37). Neither will we unless we surrender our self-righteousness filthy rags, exchanging them for the righteousness of Christ. Surrender says to Christ, "I can't. You can. I can't satisfy my desires. God, in Christ, You can. I can't fill the gap of my sin. God, in Christ, You can."

STREET SMARTS FOR THE RESTORATION ROAD...

Surrender your sin and its gap to Christ by letting go of your unrighteousness and your self-righteous attempts to compensate for your desire apart from Him and its resulting chasm. You will be satisfied when you hunger and thirst for Christ.

CONCLUSION

Left to our sinful nature, we seek satisfaction of our desires in our pride, attempting to be designer and restorer of our own lives. However, in God's kingdom, the pathway up is down, through the door of humility. We find *satisfaction through surrender* to Christ who brings us into the kingdom of heaven when we say to Him, "I can't. You can."