

# SEARCHING — for — SATISFACTION

John 6:22-40

In 1965 the Rolling Stones released a song written by Mick Jagger and Keith Richards that immediately shot to the top of the charts. The song was titled, “*I Can’t Get No Satisfaction*.” This song became the Rolling Stones first #1 hit in the USA, and 4th #1 hit in the UK.

Many critics consider “*I can’t get no satisfaction*” to be the #1 Rock song of all time. In 2004, Rolling Stone magazine placed "Satisfaction" in the second spot on its list of "The 500 Greatest Songs of All Time", while in 2006 it was added to the Library of Congress National Recording Registry.<sup>1</sup>

The song opens with these words and repeats these lines throughout the song:

*I can't get no satisfaction*

*'Cause I try and I try and I try and I try...*

The message of the song laments the emptiness of the sexual revolution taking place in the 1960's and the emptiness of commercialism.

What Jagger and Richards discovered, and what a generation in the UK and the US affirmed is that in this world you can try and try to find satisfaction, but you will always come up empty!

There is no difference today... and there was no difference in Jesus' day.

Regardless of what you chase after in this life, no matter what you work to attain, no matter what success you achieve, you will quickly discover that none of it brings satisfaction.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/\(I\\_Can't\\_Get\\_No\)\\_Satisfaction](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/(I_Can't_Get_No)_Satisfaction)  
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The dictionary defines satisfaction as the fulfillment of wishes, expectations or needs, or the pleasure derived from that fulfillment.

In our text the people were searching for Jesus because they wanted more free bread! The dialogue that ensues is very instructive and incredibly applicable to our own day and time and lives.

There are three important warnings we learn from this discussion between Jesus and the people culminating in the secret of finding lasting satisfaction.

### **THESE PEOPLE WERE SEARCHING FOR SATISFACTION BUT IGNORING THE SIGNS THAT POINTED THEM TO WHERE THEY COULD FIND IT (22-26)**

*They searched for Jesus because they wanted their physical desires satisfied.*

They searched for Him and eventually found him (22-25). Jesus knew what motivated them to look for him. They were not following the signs, they were following their stomachs (26).

The people wanted a political solution (15). They reasoned that if they made Jesus king, they would have a political solution for Israel, they would get rid of the hated Romans and get free food all at the same time!

*They ignored all the signs that pointed to Jesus as the One that satisfies (26a)*

Jesus had tried to withdraw to a deserted place to rest with his disciples but the multitudes followed him (6:1-5). When Jesus saw them coming he was “moved with compassion” because they were lost, like sheep with no shepherd.

Drive through any major world city where you have never been before, if you miss the signs you are lost! Earlier this year I was visiting my mother in Oklahoma, USA. We were driving to a restaurant for a surprise birthday party and we were talking. I missed seeing the sign for the exit and ended up traveling miles to the next exit in order to turn around!

These people were in a similar situation. They were not searching for Jesus because they read the “signs” and came to the conclusion that Jesus really is the Son of God. They had seen Jesus heal the sick and create bread to feed 10,000-20,000 people, but they missed completely the implications of what they had just seen!

They could figure out travel logistics and come to correct conclusions concerning Jesus getting to Capernaum, but miss completely the reality that Jesus must be God to have created food for 5000 people!

People today are the same - they can be so clever to figure out how to “succeed” in business, make a buck, win at the “game of life,” or get the girl, but are so blind and ignorant when it comes to spiritual realities staring them in the face!

*They were very concerned about today but totally unconcerned about eternity (26b)*

Splashed on large billboards in our city is an advertisement for Pepsi Cola that reads: “Live For Now!”

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“Live for now” expresses clearly the philosophy of the world in which we live. Every generation is sold the same line in a slightly different way, when I was a kid the popular saying was, “If it feels good, do it!” Maybe you have heard someone say, “As long as I’m not hurting anybody its ok.” Whatever the lingo the driving philosophy is the same!



That is exactly what these people believed!

They were living for now! They were serving the god of materialism - “Give us more bread and we will be satisfied!”

Jesus told a parable in Luke 15:11-24 about a prodigal son who took his inheritance and wasted it all on girls and booze and parties. Finally at the end of his rope he decided to return to his father and plead to be a hired servant. Then these beautiful words,

*22 “But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. 23 And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; 24 for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to be merry.*

What these people did not understand Jesus is pointing out to them: when you come to the Father, you have it all!

### **THEY WERE WILLING TO EXPEND GREAT EFFORT TO FIND SATISFACTION BUT THEIR WORK TURNED UP EMPTY (27-29)**

When you head on a journey and you take the wrong road, your sincerity will do nothing to get you to the right destination. These people continue in the wrong direction...

***They were spending their energies and using their abilities relentlessly pursuing satisfaction in things that cannot provide it (27)***

When you eat from what this world has to offer you are going to hunger again! (27a)

Let me share three examples:

God created work and we should work hard. We use our God-given gifts to do the best we can - but to what end? Are we working hard in order to glorify God and advance His purposes or to find personal satisfaction?

Some people look for satisfaction in dating, parties, booze or other drugs... but at the end this too is empty. Listen to what the Rolling Stones are really saying: After all the "Drugs, sex and Rock & Roll" they wanted, a generation affirmed: "I can't get no satisfaction, though I try and try and try!"

Others search for satisfaction in the accumulation of things, new clothes, new cars, houses, toys...

There was a man named Solomon who achieved all of this and more. Here is what he said,

*4 I made my works great, I built myself houses, and planted myself vineyards. 5 I made myself gardens and orchards, and I planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. 6 I made myself water pools from which to water the growing trees of the grove. 7 I acquired male and female servants, and had servants born in my house. Yes, I had greater possessions of herds and flocks than all who were in Jerusalem before me.*

*8 I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the special treasures of kings and of the provinces. I acquired male and female singers, the delights of the sons of men, and musical instruments of all kinds.*

*9 So I became great and excelled more than all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me.*

*10 Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them.*

*I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure,*

*For my heart rejoiced in all my labor;*

*And this was my reward from all my labor.*

*11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done*

*And on the labor in which I had toiled;*

*And indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind.*

*There was no profit under the sun. (Ecc. 2:4-11)*

Jesus has some clear and sound advice: Work for the food that endures for eternal life! (27)

Source of this enduring, satisfying food is Jesus Christ! God the Father has set his authoritative seal on Jesus proving that He is the One who delivers what truly satisfies. (27b)

***Their question revealed the selfishness of their own heart: What work must we do to get what we want from God?***

The people were willing to work, expend energies to get God to give them what they wanted. They were willing to “work the works of God” - be religious or do religious things if that would mean they could get what they wanted from Him.

Jesus made it very plain: Here is the work: “Believe in Him who the Father sent!” (29) Do you believe? That is the question that demands your answer!

## **THEY WERE SEEKING FOR SATISFACTION BUT THEY WERE LOOKING FOR IT IN THE WRONG PLACES (30-33)**

***The demand for a sign proved that they had unbelieving hearts (30-31)***

The people ignored the sign of healing and the sign of the creation of food from the day before. In response to Jesus’ claim to be from God (29) they ask for another sign. Jesus warned that it is a rebellious generation seeks after a sign. (Mt. 12:39)

The people are relentless in their pursuit of physical bread. They ask for a sign from Jesus and demand that it be the provision of bread! They tell Jesus that in the wilderness Moses provided bread for the people. In essence they were saying, now that will be a real sign! Provide bread for all of us for the next forty years!

Jesus fires back and sets straight four misunderstandings that they had about the manna that God had provided for the nation of Israel: (32-33)

- Manna in the wilderness was not given by Moses but by God the Father (32a, Ex 16:4)
- Manna was not the true bread from Heaven (32b), Jesus was the real bread from heaven.
- Manna gave physical life but the bread of God gives spiritual life. (33a)
- Manna in the wilderness was given only to Israel but the Bread of God was given for the world (33b)

The point here is that unbelief is never satisfied no matter how many signs are given!

***The ultimate reality is spiritual, not physical - True Bread! (32b-33)***

Absolute reality is reality which does not rely on us in any way. From a Divine perspective reality is that which will last forever! All else is temporary therefore not reality!

You may view the world around you as real! You can touch it, taste it, and smell it, but this world is not absolute reality:

*1John 2:17 And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he that does the will of God abides for ever.*

You may view your life here as ultimate reality, but James says, “Whereas you know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away.” (James 4:14)

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Things are often now what they seem to be! The offerings of the world are covered in bright paper but underneath they always disappoint!

*2Cor. 4:18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

What are you living for?

Imagine getting to the end of life and looking back at your life only to realize that it is little more than a series of disappointments and emptiness! How tragic!



A couple years ago I took visiting friends to Livingstone and we went on the Chobe Day Safari. The first half of the day was spent on the river viewing elephants, hippo, buffalo, crocs, antelope and a variety of bird life. After a wonderful lunch at the lodge we headed out in the Land Cruiser for the afternoon game drive. Of course we were all looking for big cats. As we drove through the bush the guide suddenly slammed on the breaks and exclaimed, “Look at that!”

I was looking for cats but couldn't see anything. The guide pointed to the road in front of the vehicle, there was a large insect about half the size of my fist with his front legs in the sand and his back legs up on a ball of elephant dung. The guide explained that this was a dung beetle. This beetle spends each day in search of the perfect piece of dung. Once he finds it he shapes it into a ball and rolls it back home... and this is his life, pushing around pieces of dung!

As we moved on I sat back and breathed a prayer, “God don't let me waste my life pushing around balls of dung!” What a tragedy to get to the end of life and look back from the perspective of eternity only to realize that we wasted our life pushing around balls of dung!

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God has a purpose for your life, He created you Go after the True Bread - not the empty kind!

And where will you find the real Bread?

## **FIND YOUR TRUE SATISFACTION IN JESUS AND YOU WILL NEVER BE DISAPPOINTED (34-40)**

*You will not be disappointed because Jesus is the eternal Bread of Life (34-35)*

With Jesus is the guarantee of complete satisfaction! He is the satisfying bread of **Life** that meets our real and deepest need!

“I am the bread of life” is the first of seven “I Am” Statements made by Jesus that unequivocally, undeniably affirm Who he is. Jesus goes on to claim:

- I am the Light of the world (8:12)
- I am the door of the sheep (10:7,9)
- I am the good Shepherd (10:11,14)
- I am the Resurrection and Life (11:25)
- I am the way, truth, life (14:6)
- I am the true vine (15:1,5)

Jesus is the guarantee of absolute satisfaction - Partake of Jesus and you will **never** hunger and thirst again!

So what must you do to partake of the Bread of Life?

- You must come to Him
- You must believe in Him.

*Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord will be saved! (Ro.10:13)*

*“God is now declaring to all men that all people everywhere should repent.” (Acts 17:30).*

The charge that will be brought against them on the day of judgement is not a list of their sinful actions it will simply be this: “You have seen, but you did not believe!” (36)

***You will not be disappointed because the Omnipotence and Sovereignty of God guarantees it! (36-37)***

The Giver is the Father who gives us to the Son. The success of Christ’s mission to redeem mankind depends on God the Father! (37a)

The Guarantee is that all who the Father gives to the Son will come to Him (37b, 44, 65).

The Promise is that all who come to Him will never be cast out. (37c)

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***You will not be disappointed because the Will of God cannot be frustrated (38-40)***

Jesus was completely focused and committed to fulfill the will of God! (38). All of His focus, passion, energy and desires were summed up in the will of the Father!

Every person who is given by the Father to the Son are secure for eternity (39). Those who believe in Jesus will persevere to the end! The Father will protect and keep His saints!

God's will is that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him will have everlasting life and will participate in the coming resurrection! (40)

What about you? Are you empty on the inside?

The Rolling Stones told us what we all already know: *"I can't get no satisfaction. Though I try and I try and I try..."*

Jesus invites you to come and find your satisfaction in Him!

Why? Because God loves you! Stop seeking satisfaction in junk food and receive Him the real food for your soul. God offers you eternal satisfaction and that satisfaction is found only in Jesus Christ.

What must I do to be saved?

- You are a sinner
- Your sins separate you from God
- God loves you
- Jesus came and died to pay the penalty for your sins
- Repent - turn away from your sin and receive Jesus by faith

Come to Him today! Accept Him today! Those who come to Him he will never cast out but raise them up on the last day and give them eternal life - real life - for now and for ever.