



Satisfied

"I can't get no satisfaction.
'Cause I try and I try and I try and I try and I try . . ."
--Mick Jagger

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be satisfied.*
--Jesus Christ

Americans are satisfaction junkies

We like choices, don't we? Yesterday it used to be Coke or Diet Coke. Today, it's Vanilla Coke, Cherry Coke, Caffeine Free Coke, Caffeine Free Diet Coke, Coke with a twist of lime; Coke Zero—and those are just the choices in the US! Also, if you want jeans, don't ask for regular or the store clerk may not know what you mean. Today's jeans come in slim fit, easy fit, relaxed fit, stonewashed, acid-washed, distressed, button-fly, zipper fly. Today's shirts come in traditional fit, tailored fit, no-iron, long sleeve, short sleeve, no sleeve And then there are cell phones! (I'm getting dizzy.)

By creating all these options, [stores] have done a favor for customers with varied tastes and body types. However, by vastly expanding the range of choices, they have also created new problem that needed to be solved. Now it was a complex decision in which I was forced to invest time, energy, and no small amount of self-doubt, anxiety, and dread Studies corroborate that endlessly expanded choice does not bring the perfect life, but merely teases and disappoints, leading to anxiety and depression. (Howell 2006, 55-56)

More choices lead to less satisfaction! By being experts at consuming we've become incompetent at gratitude. If I am making the all the decisions while sitting in the control booth of consumption, how can I ever become a humble and appreciative receiver? The economy encourages me "to create an identity; God encourages me to accept a given identity." (Howell, IBID)

What does it look like to hunger and thirst for righteousness?

Jesus simplifies our lives. He states that one of the defining marks of His followers is that they hunger and thirst for what only God can give.

1 O God, you are my God,
earnestly I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you,
my body longs for you,
in a dry and weary land
where there is no water.
2 I have seen you in the sanctuary
and beheld your power and your glory.
3 Because your love is better than life,
my lips will glorify you.
(Psalm 63:1-3 NIV)

Jesus did not say, “Blessed are those who are righteous.” He spoke of *hunger* and *thirst*. Have you ever fasted for a day or gone for an afternoon without food? You rise more slowly; you feel weaker; you experience low blood sugar. You may even get sick. When the prodigal son (Luke 15) hungered, he ate the pods for pigs; but when he starved, he went home to his father. Jesus’ followers starve for righteousness. *Righteousness* in Matthew 5:6 mainly means to live my life in a manner that conforms to the will of God. That’s how Matthew uses “righteousness” elsewhere in his gospel (5:10, 5:20, 6:1, 6:33). “I’m not drifting aimlessly in a sea of empty religiosity; not puttering about distracted by inconsequential trivia; my whole being echoes the prayer of a Scottish saint: ‘O God, make me just as holy as a pardoned sinner can be!’” (Carson 1978, 22)

John Baker calls this the “transformation choice”—VOLUNTARILY SUBMIT TO EVERY CHANGE GOD WANTS TO MAKE IN MY LIFE AND HUMBL Y ASK HIM TO REMOVE MY CHARACTER DEFECTS. (Baker 2007, 128) Practically, this means:

- Focus on victory one day at a time.
- Focus on Christ’s power, not your willpower.
- Focus on doing the right thing, whether it feels good or not.
- Focus on progress, not perfection.

Why will “they” be satisfied?

Ultimately, Jesus satisfies our hunger with Himself! **Jesus wants me to keep wanting Him!** You see, **He** is the Righteous One. Through Him, righteousness is not only something we do but something He gives! The righteousness of Christ is God’s gift to His hungry followers. They hunger. He gives. He satisfies. And they hunger for more! “The secret of the gospel is that we actually do more when we *hear less* about all we need to do for God and *hear more* about all that God has already done for us.” (Kevin DeYoung)