

THE SECRET OF SATISFACTION
Don't Worry - Be Happy!
Part 4 of 8
Rick Warren

Matthew 5:6 (Ph) "Happy are those who are hungry and thirsty for true goodness, for they will be fully satisfied."

1. Why are so many so unsatisfied?

* You don't find lasting satisfaction in _____.

"No matter how much we see, we are never satisfied; no matter how much we hear, we are never content." Eccl. 1:8 (LB)

"... the pleasures of sin last a short time." Heb 11:25

* You don't find lasting satisfaction in _____.

"What does a man get for all his hard work? Days full of sorrow and grief, and restless nights." Eccl. 2:23 (LB)

"You work for something with all your skill, and then you have to leave it all to someone who hasn't had to work for it." Eccl. 2:21 (GN)

"(Man) is always working, never satisfied." Eccl. 4:8 (GN)

* You don't find lasting satisfaction in _____.

"He who loves money will never have enough. The foolishness of thinking wealth brings happiness." Eccl. 5:10 (LB)

The Secret of Satisfaction

"Seek your happiness in the Lord, and He will give you your heart's desire."
Psalm 37:4 (GN)

2. How to experience satisfaction in life

* Recognize my _____

"God humbled you by letting you go hungry and then feeding you with manna ... He did this to help you realize that real life comes by obeying every command of God."
Deut 8:3 (LB)

* Stop _____

"Why spend your money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy?
Isaiah 55:2

* Start _____

Jesus said, "I am the Bread of Life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty ... If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever!" John 8:35, 51

Jesus said, "Whoever drinks water will get thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I give will never be thirsty again ... It will become in him a spring of living water ... " John 4:13-14 (GN)

Matt. 6:33

THE SECRET OF SATISFACTION

Don't Worry - Be Happy!

Part 4 of 8

Rick Warren

Matthew 5:6. We're in a series of Jesus' Eight Secrets of Happy Living. Today, we're going to look briefly at The Secret of Satisfaction. *"Happy are those who are hungry and thirsty for true goodness, for they will be fully satisfied."* Circle the words "hungry" and "thirsty".

In America, most of us don't know much about hunger and thirst. Being hungry is a Big Mac attack. Being thirsty is Miller Time. Mother Teresa says that in India they're starving physically, but in America, they're starving emotionally. We all have a spiritual hunger inside of us but we just don't call it that. We use phrases like "My life is empty", "I'm bored", "I'm restless", "Something seems to be missing in my life", "There must be more to life than this". Even when things are going good, when there seems to be success in life, there is this gnawing feeling on the inside -- something's missing!

The Rolling Stones gave us the theme song for the Baby Boomer generation, "I Can't Get No Satisfaction". Why is it that so many people are so unsatisfied? The Bible says it's because they're looking in the wrong place.

1. You don't find lasting satisfaction in pleasure.

If I could just take a cruise... retire in luxury ... travel the world, then I'd be happy. The Bible says *"No matter how much we see, we are never satisfied; no matter how much we hear, we are never content."*

Most ads on television appeal to this hunger for happiness. "The taste that satisfies." If that were true you'd only have to have one cup, you'd never need another cigarette. How many of you have had a late night refrigerator raid? You get up, you go to the refrigerator. You don't know what you want but you're hungry. You open the door, you nibble on this, you nibble on that, nothing satisfies, nothing tastes good. You close the door, go back, get in bed and you're still hungry.

Many people are that way in life. To the point that they'll try anything. They'll break the rules. They'll go get drunk. They'll try one night stands. The Bible says, *"The pleasures of sin last a short time."* They just don't last.

2. You don't find lasting satisfaction in performance.

Workaholics eventually learn this. *"What does a man get for all his hard work? Days full of sorrow and grief, and restless nights." ... "You work for something with all your skill, and then you have to leave it all to someone who hasn't had to work for it."*

There is a myth that says "Success produces satisfaction." But that's just not true. Many successful people are very unsatisfied on the inside. After the thrill of winning, winning a whole lot, there comes that emptiness that... something's not there. The Bible says, *"Man is always working, never satisfied."*

THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS

Don't worry - Be Happy! Part 4 of 8

3. You don't find lasting satisfaction in possessions.

Today there are more products available than ever before and they all say "Satisfaction Guaranteed". Twice as many products as there were ten years ago. Are people twice as happy? No. A lady told me one time, "Even when I get what I want, it's not what I want. I'm dissatisfied."

Eccl. 5:10 *"He who loves money will never have enough. The foolishness of thinking wealth brings happiness."* The poor people say, "When I get enough money, then all of my problems will be solved." The rich know that's not true. At least the poor have hope. The rich people know that the happiness is not there.

What is then the secret of satisfaction?

Psalm 37:4 *"Seek your happiness in the Lord, and He will give you your heart's desire."* Don't seek happiness, seek God. Happiness is a by product of seeking God. If you make happiness your goal in life, you're going to miss it. You don't find it just looking for it. Usually this is the last place we look. We look to everything else and then finally say, "Well, I'll try God. Maybe I'll find happiness there."

How do you experience real satisfaction in life:

1. Recognize my real hunger

What is it that's missing in my life? What is it that's not there? A lot of people really don't know what they want in life. The Bible says we are spiritual beings and God made us to love Him and to know Him and be loved by Him. Nothing will take the place of that. There is no substitute. You need to recognize what your real hunger is. Your hunger is your spiritual being and you hunger for God. The sooner you recognize that, the better.

How does God give us a hunger for Himself. Deut. 8:3 *"God humbled you by letting you go hungry and then feeding you with manna... He did this to help you realize that real life comes by obeying every command of God."* The children of Israel . . . Charlton Heston led them across the Red Sea (!), over into the desert, they're wandering around for forty years. There are no Taco Bells in Sinai. They got hungry and God provided manna. Notice it says, *"God let them get hungry."* He let them get hungry so they would recognize their need for Him, and depend on Him. God lets you get hungry. God allows problems in your life to get your attention, to see that you really need Him. He uses a variety of circumstances. The Bible says, *"Happy are the hungry, those are the people God is trying to get their attention."* God uses problems to get your attention to say, "Look! What you want is not pleasure, not possessions, not performance. It's Me. I made you with a God shaped vacuum and I want to meet that need." Happy are the hungry! God's getting ready to do something in your life.

Notice it says, *"God humbled you."* Hungry people and humble people. A hungry man on the street doesn't care for linens and napkins. He just says, "Give me food!" Hunger is painful but it

THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS

Don't worry - Be Happy! Part 4 of 8

motivates. If you've got a problem, congratulations! God wants you to recognize your real hunger is to know Him.

2. Stop eating junk food.

Stop eating spiritual junk food. Quit looking for things in life that don't satisfy, don't meet the need. Isaiah 55:2 *"Why spend your money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy?"* He's saying, Quit wasting your time and your money on things of the world that really don't satisfy. What you are really looking for is God. Stop eating junk food!

Speaking of junk food: In a gold fish eating contest in Oakland, California, Leonard McMann swallowed 501 gold fishes in about four hours to smash the Guinness Word Record of about 300 of John Parker in 1984. For this feat he won a 240 gallon aquarium.

There is a plant that grows in Australia. The spores of this clover fern can be made into bread and portage. It contains no protein, carbohydrates or vitamins, the essentials for sustaining life. Those who depend upon it for food will have their stomachs filled but they eventually die.

There is a lot of spiritual junk food. Do you know the difference between being filled and being satisfied? LA is the artificial amusement capital of the world. There are more things to fill up your time and your money and we move from pleasure to pleasure, thrill to thrill thinking "This is going to be the answer in my life! This is what is going to make me satisfied!" And it doesn't last! It's a temporary high.

It's interesting that our appetites are influenced by our associations. You get around hungry people, you get hungry. Whoever you hang out with is what you're hungry for. If you hang out with people who like the world's junk food, that's what you're going to be into. If you want to have an appetite for godly things get around people who have a godly appetite. It's contagious. Spiritual hunger is contagious. Do you want to be more hungry for the things of God? Then get around people who are hungry for the things of God. If you get around people who eat junk food, you're going to eat junk food. And if you get around people who are always seeing the latest movies and reading the latest books, that's what you're going to be in to. And that does not satisfy. It's just stuffing. It fills but it does not satisfy. Spiritual hunger is contagious, so get around people who have a hunger for the Lord and you'll find spiritual hunger.

3. You start looking to Christ for satisfaction.

John 8:35 *"Jesus said, "I am the Bread of Life. Whoever comes to Me will never go hungry and whoever believes in Me will never be thirsty ... If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever!"* Wonder Bread! Bread is the basic essential of life. You can live on bread and water. This is the basic essential food of life. In a famine they fly stuff in. The first thing they unload is flour to make bread.

Jesus is saying "I'm the bread of life! I'm IT. What you really need to live is ME! I can meet your needs. You're looking for everything else, but I'm the bread of life, I'm the essential. I'm what you need. You need Me and you can't do without Me."

THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS

Don't worry - Be Happy! Part 4 of 8

There is a New Age movement these days. One of the things they say is "Find satisfaction in yourself." "Find happiness within." That is so stupid! When you are physically hungry do you tell your stomach, "Feed yourself!" Does that work? No, you have to go to an outside source to get some food to feed yourself. When there is a spiritual vacuum in your life you don't say to yourself, "Be your own god!" That leaves you just as empty as before. You have to go to an outside source, to God, who made you and created you with that vacuum so you would know Him and love Him and be loved by Him. He is the Bread of Life.

Jesus said, *"Whoever drinks water will get thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I give will never be thirsty again. It will become in him a spring of living water."* John 4:13-14. Water is even more essential than food. You can go several weeks without food, but you can't go more than about three days without water. About 70% of your body is water. Every cell in your body needs water to survive. You can't survive without water. Jesus is saying "It's more than you want Me -- you need Me. You need Me to survive. I am the Living Water. I am your bread I am your water. I made you and you can't make it without Me."

When you are thirsty, cost is immaterial. It doesn't matter what it costs, you've got to have it! This is what it means to hunger and thirst for God. There are really three stages in your life: I want God in my life; I need God in my life; I've got to have God in my life because I can't make it without Him. He made me and there's an emptiness in my life. I want to know the answers of the basic questions of life: Who am I? Why am I here? What's the purpose of life? Who's God? What's going to happen? Those are gut level things that are not satisfied by going to a movie, having sex, or getting stoned. Those are basic inner questions of life. That is a hunger to know God. That's what it means to hunger and thirst for God. I've got to have Him in my life. I want to know Him. I want to know why in the world I was put on this planet. Where am I going when it's all over?

John 8:35, 51 Circle the word "come" where Jesus says, *"Whoever comes to Me will never go hungry..."* And then circle the word "believes" -- *"... whoever believes in Me will never be thirsty."* And then in the next verse John 4:13-14 circle the word "drinks" -- *"Whoever drinks the water I give will never be thirsty again..."*

Three words "come...believe... drink". The point is that appetites are not filled until you do something about it. You can be hungry, your stomach growling... but you'll stay hungry until you take action. Get up, get some food, put it in your mouth and swallow it.

Jesus is saying here, You've got to take action. Just like physical hunger, when you're hungry, you go eat food, when you're spiritually hungry you need to do three things -- come, believe, drink. That's how you find satisfaction in life. First you "come to Me" -- You come to Christ. Second, you believe in Christ. Third, you drink of Christ. I receive Him into my life.

Some of you have never done this -- never taken these steps. You've never come to Christ and believed in Him. You've believed about Him, but there's a difference in believing about God and believing in God. I believe in Hitler but I'm not a Nazi. But I believe in Christ and I'm a Christian -- because I've committed my life to Him. It's more than just a head knowledge. I believe.

THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS

Don't worry - Be Happy! Part 4 of 8

Some of you have never done that. Have you realized yet that something's missing in your life? Something is dramatically missing in your life. In spite of all the success, and the apparent outward satisfaction, inside there is this undercurrent you know is there saying "I'm missing it! I'm not really satisfied. At the deepest level of my soul, in my gut, I know that there's got to be more to life than just get up, go to work, come home, watch TV and go to bed. There's got to be more." And there is.

Maybe you'd say, "In spite of the fact that life seems relatively good in light of the rest of the world, there's this gnawing dissatisfaction that even when I'm the winner, even when I'm number one, I'm dissatisfied on the inside. There is not a real peace and contentment in there."

If you say that, I want to say to you, "Congratulations! Because He's creating a hunger in your life to know Him." Nothing is worse than to feel like "I've got everything and I'm very self satisfied" and never understand that you're missing out on the greatest thing in life. What a tragedy that would be!

The fact is when you were born, God gave you a physical appetite to keep you alive. If you didn't have an appetite you'd just shrivel up and die. It's good to be hungry; hunger is a good part of life. It keeps you alive. He gave you a physical appetite to fulfill physical needs. He gave you a spiritual appetite to know Him. Only Jesus can satisfy that hunger. Only Jesus can produce ultimate satisfaction in your life. Sex can't. Money can't. Getting your picture on the cover of *People* magazine can't. Having a nice home can't. Having your kids get straight A's and be very proud of them can't. Being famous, being powerful, having all the pleasure, taking Club Med vacations, none of those things produce ultimate satisfaction in your life. Because it's a spiritual need. There's a God-shaped vacuum in you and only God can fill it. The sooner you learn that the better. Because you'll save a lot of time and a lot of money.

What do you do? Take these three steps: I come, I believe, I drink. Notice the promise. He says, "*Happy are those who are hungry and thirsty for true goodness, for they will be truly satisfied.*" God is saying "Satisfaction guaranteed!" If God can't guarantee it, nobody can! Your hunger for happiness is met in knowing God and being known by Him and in loving God and being loved by Him and developing a relationship with Him and finding out the purpose for which you were put on this earth. As you seek Him, you find that happiness and that satisfaction. He will not turn you down!

Others of you have already taken that initial step -- you've come to Christ, you've believed in Christ, and you've drunk of Christ. You're a Christian. My question to you today is, How's your spiritual appetite? Do you hunger for the things of God? Do you really want to know Him or is God just a convenience for you, like a little sip every Sunday morning? "That's all I need. I want five cents worth of God." Or do you hunger: "I've got to have God in all of my life. I want all that He has to offer."

The fact is, you are as close to God as you want to be. Don't blame it on anybody else. If you're not close to God, it's not God's fault, or your parent's fault, or your wife's fault, or your husband's fault, your children's fault. You are as close to God as you want to be, because God always

THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS

Don't worry - Be Happy! Part 4 of 8

works in our lives according to our desires. If you don't know God in His fullest it's because you choose not to. He works in our lives according to our desires. *"Blessed are those who are hungry and thirsty to know Him. They will be fully satisfied."*

It is amazing to me how so many Christians have a "take it or leave it" attitude toward spiritual food. They want God when it's convenient. Most Christians have enough faith to bug them but not to bless them. It's enough faith to make them miserable, so they can't just go out and sin. But they don't have enough to really enjoy life either. They are enough of a Christian to not want to go to the party where everybody is getting drunk and going home with somebody else's wife. They're not into that. But on the other hand, they don't have enough faith to really enjoy life in it's fullest. He's just a little appetizer.

Some of you say, "I used to have a hunger for God. I remember when I first became a Christian. I devoured the Bible. I read it and loved it. You couldn't keep me away from Christians. I wanted to be at church all the time. I had a hunger. But I don't have it anymore." A loss of appetite indicates illness. In a hospital, when somebody won't eat, they are seriously ill. A sign that they're getting better is they want to start eating again.

Some of you say, "I'm a Christian, but, if I were honest, I just don't have that appetite for God like you're talking about. I don't have this deep desire to know God or read the Bible or get to know Him. I don't have that hunger any more." I'll tell you why. You're stuffing yourself on junk food. Spiritual junk food. You have bought into the culture. You're doing the same thing everybody else is doing. And you're stuffing yourself with things, attitudes, and events that don't last or satisfy.

I think some of you need to go on a media fast to get your spiritual hunger back. When was the last time you sat in your car and turned the radio off just to talk to God while you're driving on the freeway? When was the last time you walked into your house and didn't automatically turn on the television? If you're filling yourself with all the world has to offer -- the books, the tapes, the records, the videos and all that -- it's no wonder that you're filled and you have no appetite for the things that really count in life. You are pigging out on junk food.

The word here, where Jesus says *"Happy are those who are hungry and thirsty for true goodness"*. For the word "hungry" there are two words in the Greek. One of them means, "I want a bite of something -- give me a piece of bread." The other meaning in the Greek is "I want the whole loaf." Guess which one Jesus uses here. This says, "I want all of God there is!" Jesus says "Happiness comes for people who say, 'I want all of God there is. I want to know Him in His fullness. I'm not satisfied with having a little blessing here or there. I want Him as the center of my life.'" That is the person who will be fully satisfied.

Prayer:

Happy are the hungry, the Bible says, because it means God is getting ready to do something in your life. Have you come to the realization that something is missing? just an uneasiness? a sense of restlessness? America has the highest boredom rate in the world because we move from thing to thing trying to fit it into our lives, into that vacuum that only God can fill.

THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS

Don't worry - Be Happy! Part 4 of 8

Would you just pray this in your heart, "Jesus Christ, I don't understand it all but I want to come to You, I want to believe in You and I want to drink of You. Christ, I don't understand it all but I come back to You! I've tried so many other things and those pleasures and those things last only a short time, but they are not satisfying. I want to believe in You and believe Your purpose for my life and believe You love me and You died for me. I want to know and understand that better. God, I want to drink of You. I want to know You in fullness."

Whether this is your first time to open your life to Christ or you've been a Christian for thirty years, would you take these steps with me? Say, "God, help me to recognize my real hunger." If you're dissatisfied with your life, congratulations! If you've got problems, wonderful! God's creating a hunger so He can teach you what real life is all about.

Say, "God, would You help me to stop eating spiritual junk food? Help me to not be automatically accepting what the culture says. Father, would You help me to start looking to Christ for satisfaction. Jesus, I realize that only You can meet that inner gnawing in my heart. It's not going to be filled with money or sex or fame or nice houses or beautiful kids or promotion or any of those other things. The spiritual hunger can only be met by You. I want all of You that You have to offer. God, I haven't had a hunger for You but I want You to reawaken that appetite in my life that I might not miss out on the best in life and that I might realize that it's found in You and not in all these other things."

Thank you, Father, for Your word. Thank You that You promote and teach us the ways of real happiness in life. That it is not in pleasure or performance or possessions or power or position or prestige but it's in a personal relationship to You. Thank You. In Jesus' name. Amen.