

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – July 23, 2020

The Lord be with you.

Imagine getting a phone call from a post or market researcher in the voice on the other end of the line asks you, what do you want most in life?

What would you say? I mean, really deep down in your heart of hearts, what is it that you really want in life? What we really want reveals a lot about us, what we really want becomes the programming of our lives, and here's where I've got good news again for you day, because the greatest thing did you could ever want. The greatest thing that you could ever desire can be yours.

We're back in the book of psalms at a Psalm 63 where we see what David really wants, David gets. And in the psalm David teaches us that if we want for the greatest thing in life, that which is most important, God will see that we get it. Let me say a few things about Psalm 63. The superscript on at the top of the Psalm is part of the inspired text, and it tells us that this is a Psalm of David when he was in the wilderness of Judah. I was in the wilderness of Judah last year, and I wanna tell you that the wilderness of Judah makes the Arizona desert where I live, it makes it look like an oasis. As the wilderness of Judah is harsh, desolate, barren. In David's roller-coaster life, he spends two periods of time in the wilderness of Judah, the first time he's hiding up from King Saul and his troops, the second time... and this is probably when the Psalm is written. The second time is during Absalom's rebellion against David, it's when David's son, Absalom rises up against his father, David, driving him out of the Jerusalem into the wilderness.

Now, if you had the psalm open before you or even if you don't, let me just give you a quick overview of the Psalm. It's really rather simple. Verse one, David says, My soul thirst. Verse five, David says, My soul is satisfied. That's interesting isn't it? In the agony of the wilderness, David finds satisfaction. He finds what it is that he's really looking for, my soul thirst. My soul is satisfied. So true in a wilderness of sorts today, here's good news.

In verse One, David begins, oh God, you are my God, I seek you. My soul thirst for you, my flesh faints for you. As in a dry and weary land where there is no water. Notice here that it is in a dry and weary landscape of the wildrness that David thinks on his own, so he thinks of his life as dry and weary. My soul thirst for you. As in a dry and weary land. In my years of ministry as well as in my own life, I've seen many times that it is when life is dry and weary, it is when life gets stripped down in the hospital, in unemployment, in grief, in pain, it's then that we discovered that it's God we really want... It is God that we really thirst for, we had thought we wanted all those other things, and we discovered that our soul thirst for God.

I love what Corrie ten Boom said that she discovered in a Nazi concentration camp. You could never learn that Christ is all you need until Christ is all you have. Notice here that David is not thirsting to get his thrown back, he's not bursting to get his son back, it is in the wilderness that David realizes that the one thing he really wants is he thirsts for God... To know God better, to love God more. CS Lewis says that our problem is not that we want too much. Our problem. Yes, that is. We want too little. We're half-hearted creatures. He says, wanting things that never satisfy. That's why Mick Jagger's saying, I can't get no satisfaction.

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David begins wanting big, he says, My soul, thirst for God. That takes us to verse 5, as verse 5 takes a radical turn as David goes from thirst for God to satisfied. Verse 5, my soul is satisfied as with a rich feast, and my mouth praises you with joyful lips, when I think of you on my bed and meditate on you and the watches of the night, for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings, I sing for joy. And just about the worst situation that I can imagine a human being, David can say to my soul is satisfied... Write this down, the soul that thirst for God will be satisfied. Jesus has a blessed, blessed are those who hunger and thirst.

So in some wilderness cave, David is singing away, my mouth praises you with joyful lips, when I think of you on my bed, the Hebrew here reads beds plural, implying that David is sleeping on a different bed every night. My mouth praises you with joyful lips, when I think of you on my beds and meditate on you in the watches of the night. The Hebrews kept three watch periods at night, so here is David with nothing to do for say, four hours, nothing to do but to keep watch. And What is David doing? He's thinking about God. He's talking about, God, I meditate on you in the watches of the night, Hey, I know what it is to be awake in the middle of the night, and it can feel so dark at 2 AM can't it? I discovered that there was talk radio on all night, but that didn't help.

But now in the middle of the night, I like to think about God, I like to talk to God, to tell him how much I love him. I like to ask him to help me, love him more. And it's wonderful. I received an email this morning about a young woman who was in prison, and she says she's thankful for where she is because God has my full attention. You know, it's in the wilderness of our lives that God often gets our full attention, life gets stripped down, and we finally realized that it... It's got, it's God that we really want. It's God that we really thirst for what David writes here can be your story. My soul thirst for God. My soul is satisfied. CS Lewis is right. We've wanted for too little. We've not wanted big enough. Can you say with David today, my soul thirst for God? Talk with God about it. Tell him about your desire for him, ask him to help you love him more, and then you will soon be saying, my soul is satisfied even in the wilderness.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler in the pilgrim way.

Thanks for listening until next time.

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