

“The Savior Satisfies” (Proverbs 27:17–22)(2.23.20)

Proverbs 27:17–22 (NIV84)

17 As iron sharpens iron,
so one man sharpens another.

18 He who tends a fig tree will eat its fruit,
and he who looks after his master will be honored.

19 As water reflects a face,
so a man’s heart reflects the man.

20 Death and Destruction are never satisfied,
and neither are the eyes of man.

21 The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold,
but man is tested by the praise he receives.

22 Though you grind a fool in a mortar,
grinding him like grain with a pestle,
you will not remove his folly from him.

John 4:13–14 (NIV84)

13 Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

The word of God for the people of God.

Title: “The Savior Satisfies”

LET US PRAY.

INTRODUCTION:

We are created with a desire to know God. Not to know about God, but to know the Lord in a personal way. The Wesleyan faith tradition talks about prevenient grace; which is the initial witness of the Creator within our spirit. Jesus said, John 6:44 (NIV84) “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

Jeremiah 31:3 (NIV84) tells us: The Lord appeared to us in the past, saying:

“I have loved you with an everlasting love;
I have drawn you with loving-kindness.”

There is a void within us that can only be filled with the Lord Jesus. Because sin has entered the world, and because Satan is the Prince of this world, we get things twisted. Some try to fill the void with success or accomplishments. Some try to fill the void with another person. Some try to block out that angst and uneasiness by pushing it down into the dark places of their being.

Some immerse themselves in “good works.” Still others try to anesthetize themselves. They want to escape

pain or a hidden secret. Maybe they seek out entertainment after entertainment. Then there are the destructive responses, losing themselves in some kind of addiction: pornography, drugs, alcohol, gambling, etc.

BODY:

Like we read in Psalm 42 in our Call to Worship, the thirst cannot be denied. As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. Here is another supportive text:

Psalm 63:1 (NIV84)

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.

Proverbs 27:20 gives a strong warning:

Death and Destruction are never satisfied,
and neither are the eyes of man.

The grave is insatiable. Think of it as a huge dragon breathing out hellfire; but when it inhales it sucks in more of its victims. The Apostle John warns us that the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes, the pride that destroys, ALL lead to death.

In our current culture there is great evidence of human despair, depression, and discouragement. People feel isolated and alone. Young people are losing their lives to drugs. Others are even taking their own lives.

Now, I want to introduce Shaun Smith to you.

Proverbs 27:17 (NIV84) As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.

Demonstrate the sharpening of a knife.

There is an actual national men's ministry called Iron Sharpens Iron. We need each other to be at our best. Like Shaun sharing his life experience, we can learn from each other and grow. We can encourage each other, pray for each other. A lone Christian is much more susceptible to an attack from the Enemy. Also, if we see a brother or sister going astray, we can correct them in love.

Proverbs 27:18 (NIV84) He who tends a fig tree will eat its fruit, and he who looks after his master will be honored.

Where are you investing your time and talents? Do not waste your God-given gifts. We sow what we reap. We enjoy the blessings that we help to nourish. In everything we do, we are to honor God from whom all good gifts come. Know who you belong to and do your part for the kingdom.

Proverbs 27:19 (NIV84) As water reflects a face, so a man's heart reflects the man.

Water was probably the first ever mirror and you have to look into it to see your reflection. Make sure you

look deep within yourself. Be honest and make an accurate assessment of the kind of person you are in truth. But remember, your identity is found in Christ Jesus. The standard of measurement is the word of God. Proverbs 27:21 (NIV84) The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but man is tested by the praise he receives.

This follows on closely to the last proverb. Be careful to whom you are listening. Most every person is susceptible to flattery or false praise. One of the most prominent scriptural admonishments is to avoid pride and grab hold of humility. We are not to think more of ourselves than is true and we should consider others before we consider ourselves.

Proverbs 27:22 (NIV84) Though you grind a fool in a mortar, grinding him like grain with a pestle, you will not remove his folly from him.

Demonstrate the grinding of the wheat toast.

Certainly you can see how this relates to addiction. Often times you will hear people say, "I just can't help it." Or they make a million excuses. A lot of people do not recover until they get sick and tired of being sick and tired. Others have to hit rock bottom before they seriously seek help. When they have nowhere else to turn, they turn to God.

Let me share a little about my friend Rob's experience. He is the man in the middle of this picture. He has posted this brief testimony on Facebook:

"On October 18th of 2005, I shot my last bags of heroin in active addiction – I was a skinny shell of a man, I was lost scared and alone, my self-esteem was at an all-time low as my life spiraled out of control. As I laid in that jail cell broken and feeling forgotten I knew I had a choice, either continue on this road of destruction or CHANGE. I knew for a long time that God wanted more for me but FEAR was my friend and FEAR was my comfort, an excuse to keep using. Over the next 14 months I confronted the fear and came to realize FEAR is a LIAR; my mind was lying to me with all kinds of accusations. To this day, by the Grace of God I have learned to confront fear and get comfortable being uncomfortable. Put God first and the fear will subside...

Life is hard at times, but truly is Beautiful all the time. Taking the narrow path is not so scary after all.... God is good ALL THE TIME!"

Today, Rob is a Certified Drug and Alcohol Counselor; and, counseling is what he does for a living.

CONCLUSION:

Psalm 63:5 (NIV84)

My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you.

A few minutes ago, you heard the choir sing:

I have a song that Jesus gave me,

It was sent from heav'n above;

There never was a sweeter melody,

'tis a melody of love.

Psalm 107:8–9 (ESV)

Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love,
for his wondrous works to the children of man!
For he satisfies the longing soul,
and the hungry soul he fills with good things.

Satan promises pleasures that only last for a season and do us more harm than good. What our Enemy offers is salt water. You drink and drink and drink and you are still thirsty. Not only are you still thirsty but you go insane.

John 4:13–14 (NIV84)

13 Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

The Good Shepherd leads us beside still waters and restores our souls. He cares for us always. He soothes our fears and makes a whole again. Even when we are dealing with the shadow of death, Jesus is with us. He comforts us and fills our cup to overflowing. We, who are saved by our faith in Jesus, will live with him forever.

Amen and amen. Let us pray.