

Finding The Messiah - Finding Satisfaction

8-23-20

Sermon Summary

This message looks at one of the foundational doctrines of the Christian faith: How Jesus' life and sacrificial death make it possible for us to have eternal meaning and purpose in this life as well as eternal life! The first half of the sermon looks at Jesus' difficult teaching in John 6 on His flesh and blood. Jesus was going to literally sacrifice His physical life for us on the Cross in order that we might have a fulfilling, personal relationship with God. However, as He was explaining how His sacrifice is applied to our lives we must understand He was talking figuratively, not literally, spiritually, not physically. The magnitude and impact of what He was teaching is life changing! The second half of the message looks at four ways people seek to find satisfaction in life outside of a personal relationship with God through Jesus, which you will find in your readings this week..

1. Prosperity - Matthew 19:16-23
2. Pleasure (Partying) - Luke 15:11-16
3. Piety - Luke 18:9-14
4. Position - Mark 10:33-45

Full Sermon Notes

Jesus You Alone! There could not be a more appropriate song for the message today, Finding Satisfaction! Listen to what we just sang... "I've searched the world for a love that could fill my heart. Nothing compares to the wonder of who You are!" Let's pray and ask God to open our hearts and minds to the message Jesus the Messiah brought to the world thousands of years ago and which the world desperately needs today! Pray!

Father God I humbly come before You today, asking You to fill me with Your Holy Spirit and anoint me with Your power and wisdom to share this very important and foundational Christian truth. We will need Your presence to help us focus because of the storms that are in the gulf! Please be with our first responders and emergency workers as they prepare and then work to save lives. We need You, our nation needs You, our world needs You! I need You in a special way right now as I share. For it is in Your precious Name I pray and I believe. Amen!

Because what I'm going to talk about today is based on one of the most foundational and important doctrines of Christianity, I will spend the first half of my sermon explaining this critical component of our faith. The second half I will give you four applications from the teachings of Jesus found in your readings this coming week. I just didn't want you to get worried half way through the message!

In our world today, I don't think anyone would disagree that there is a tremendous amount of unrest! I do a short devotion and prayer for the fire department every week. This is what I shared with them two weeks ago...

“When you look up the word “unrest” in Google, you’ll get this definition:

Unrest: ‘a state of dissatisfaction, disturbance, and agitation in a group of people...’

We’ve certainly seen that in the public arena this year. However, there is such a thing as personal unrest! Being in a state of dissatisfaction, disturbance and agitation. And here’s something to consider: Personal unrest can be caused by things that are happening around us, but many times it is caused by things that are happening in us! Let me put it like this: Some folks seem to have calmness and peace regardless of how bad circumstances are around them while others seem to live in a state of unrest no matter how good they have it. The key is finding a sense of satisfaction, peace and calmness in your heart, soul and mind! There are several things I do to find this inner sanctuary. First I count my many blessings. This helps me find perspective! Secondly I consider why I’m here. This helps me find purpose! Thirdly I remember that I am loved. This helps me find my peace. Fourthly, I realize I’m not alone. This helps me find my power. Jesus once said this...”

Matthew 11:28 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Matthew 11:30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Unfortunately, so many do not take Jesus up on His offer. Instead they look for peace, relief, fulfillment, and satisfaction in other places. Somehow we think we know better than our Creator God what is best for us. We’ve bought into the ancient lies! Lies that have been proven to be lies over and over again down through the years. But we think we will be different and the lies will work for us, even if they’ve never worked for anyone in history! I sometimes wonder if that is arrogance, or stupidity, or a combination of both! In this coming week's readings we are going to hear Jesus speak the truth about finding real, meaningful, purposeful, and everlasting satisfaction! We will also hear stories of people who tried to find their satisfaction somewhere else. We’ll begin by seeing what Jesus said was the source of a truly satisfying life. Jesus had recently fed the five thousand with five small loaves of bread and two small fish. Afterwards, the crowds saw Jesus go up into the mountains to pray and later that evening they saw the disciples get in a boat, without Jesus, headed across the sea of Galilee to Capernaum. That was the night Jesus walked on the water. You’ll read that amazing story this week. The next day some of the people from the crowds who had been fed got in boats and went searching for Jesus and when they found Him Jesus had a tough conversation with them. Let’s join in...

John 6:25 When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?"

I wonder if their real question was “How did You get here?”

John 6:26 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill.

John 6:27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

John 6:28 Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?"

John 6:29 Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

John 6:30 So they asked him, "What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do?"

John 6:31 Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

The Problem

The people were wanting to know the formula for prosperity in this life. Jesus was offering them the formula for purpose in this life and the way to have eternal life!

John 6:32 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven.

John 6:33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

John 6:34 "Sir," they said, "from now on give us this bread."

John 6:35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

John 6:36 But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe.

John 6:37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

John 6:39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.

When Jesus says "I shall lose none of all that He has given me," He's not saying that God chose some to be saved and some to be lost. He clarifies that in the very next verse, listen...

John 6:40 For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

In other words, God gives salvation to everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord, believes, receives, and confesses their need for the Messiah to be their Savior! The Father gives those people to His Son and their salvation is secure because Jesus will not lose a single one of them! Praise God for that, amen? Amen!

John 6:41 At this the Jews began to grumble about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven."

John 6:42 They said, "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I came down from heaven'?"

They're thinking, wait, this is that carpenter's son. He's just a common man. Not kingly, nothing special about Him. The Jew's own prophets had foretold their reaction...

Isa 53:2 He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

Isa 53:3 He was despised and rejected by men...

Jesus continues His tough conversation with them...

John 6:44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Remember, never take a verse out of its context. If you do, you will likely misinterpret the verse. Before you draw conclusions, listen to what He says next...

John 6:45 It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.

So we see here the Sovereignty of God, and the responsibility of humankind, two indisputable truths that may be hard to understand, but which work hand in hand! God takes the initiative in any relationship. When you find God, just remember, He's the One who found you and offered you forgiveness, salvation, meaning and purpose! So you could say, finding God is more about a person finally listening to the voice of God who has been calling out to them all along! God draws those who will listen! You find God when you respond to the offer God is offering you! And what offer is that? The offer of life that is really life! A life that truly satisfies! A life that will feed your soul, your spirit! Jesus goes on to say...

John 6:46 No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father.

John 6:47 I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.

John 6:48 I am the bread of life.

John 6:49 Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died.

John 6:50 But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die.

John 6:51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

Again, the words of Jesus are backed up by the prophet Isaiah...

Isa 53:5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

But the people were having a hard time thinking outside the realm of the material world, they were missing the spiritual applications. Listen...

John 6:52 Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

John 6:53 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

And down in verse 57...

John 6:57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me.

John 6:58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever."

John 6:59 He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

John 6:60 On hearing it, many of his disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?"

Boys and girls, you might be wondering, like some of the adults, what in the world is Jesus saying. Kids do you think Jesus was talking about actually eating His body when He said "I am the Bread of Life"? Here we see the same issue come up that Dr. Nave talked about last week. Was Jesus speaking figuratively or literally? Figuratively speaking is when you are trying to get someone to understand one thing by using some other thing. It could be when you are trying to explain something complicated or hard by using something more simple and easy to understand. Jesus was so smart. He knew people understand food, and especially bread. Back in Jesus' day, bread was one of the most plentiful foods. Jesus wanted people to understand this: Just like our bodies need food and water to live, our spirit, our soul, our minds, need spiritual food for life! Bread can be very filling when you're hungry. And by the way, have you ever thought about hunger? Most people think of hunger as a bad thing, but if you never got hungry, then you wouldn't enjoy eating. Eating would become a chore, like taking out the garbage and making up your bed! I'm glad I get hungry because I like to eat! Some of you are thinking, yes, hurry up Pastor Larry, I've got lunch coming. Well, Jesus was trying to let the people know that they needed to be hungry for spiritual food, and He was letting them know He was the source of that spiritual food. You see, the life Jesus lived and the teachings Jesus taught were the best spiritual food you could have. But there was something else Jesus was trying to get them to think about. While Jesus was not talking about literally eating His flesh and blood, He was going to literally give His flesh and blood for us on the cross. While people back in Jesus' day didn't understand all of the medical and scientific things we know now about our physical bodies, they knew this: If your flesh was torn, and you lost most of your blood, you

would lose your life! Because of this, the ancient Hebrews believed life was in the blood, and when a person lost their blood they poured out their life! Jesus was trying to get the people to understand that His body would be torn and He would lose His life blood on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, our wrong doing, our injustices, our wickedness. His life for ours! But for Jesus' life blood to cover our sins and give us new life spiritually we have to be willing to eat the bread of life, drink the living water, and be washed in the soul cleansing blood of the Lamb. We have to accept that His body was broken and His blood was spilled to save us! At the end of the service, during the last song, we will observe communion. For those who have made the decision to allow Jesus to be their Savior, you will be remembering what Jesus did to win your salvation. The bread reminds us how Jesus' Body was broken, and the juice reminds us how His life blood was poured out! So how do I know Jesus was speaking figuratively and not literally when He was talking about eating His flesh and blood? Listen...

John 6:61 Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "Does this offend you?"

John 6:62 What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before!

John 6:63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

John 6:64 Yet there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him.

And here we have another example of the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of Man. God knows who will not believe in Him, but they are the ones who choose not to believe. God is God and He knows our hearts!

John 6:65 He went on to say, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him."

John 6:66 From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

John 6:67 "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve.

John 6:68 Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

John 6:69 We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

What a confession of faith! Those who believe are enabled by God to receive forgiveness, salvation, eternal life and the truest form of satisfaction in this world! A satisfaction that can be had in this world, but is not of this world! Every human being has a thirst and a hunger for meaning and purpose. There's a God shaped hole in our hearts and lives. We will never find satisfaction until we fill that God shaped hole with God!

Last week Dr. Nave gave a very powerful message in finding wholeness especially as it relates to our relationship with God, and how some folks try to find that in human relationships!

The way I put it to people in counseling is that no one can be God for you except God, and you can't be God for someone else! We all thirst for satisfaction in our relationships, but we must

first drink the living water and eat the bread of life in a relationship with Jesus if our other relationships are going to thrive. Here's the crux of the situation...

Finding lasting satisfaction only happens when you find wholeness in your relationship with your Creator God!

But here's what I've discovered in my 40 plus years of ministry: Some folks don't want wholeness, they just want satisfaction, aka, instant gratification! This, my friends, can lead to severe spiritual sickness and even spiritual death. Remember the words of The Rolling Stones- "I can't get no satisfaction"? Or the U2 song, "I still haven't found what I'm looking for"?

Jesus gives some very forceful and detailed examples of people who went looking for satisfaction in all the wrong places. Jeff talked about the relationship component. Sort of the song: "Looking for love in all the wrong places!" Jesus is about to expose some of the other wrong places people seek to find satisfaction.

1. Prosperity
2. Pleasure (Partying)
3. Piety
4. Position

Prosperity

Mat 19:16 Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?"

Mat 19:17 "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments."

Mat 19:18 "Which ones?" the man inquired. Jesus replied, "'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony,

Mat 19:19 honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Mat 19:20 "All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?"

Mat 19:21 Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

Mat 19:22 When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

Mat 19:23 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

The problems with prosperity being your priority: Enough is never enough! You can lose it as quickly as you gained it! It leads to a false sense of security! While it can buy temporary happiness, and lots of pretend friends, it can't buy wholeness or lasting satisfaction! God's Word gives us great wisdom on this point...

1 Timothy 6:10

10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

Proverbs 23:4-5

4 Do not wear yourself out to get rich; do not trust your own cleverness.

5 Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle.

Being prosperous is not a bad thing, if it's not your priority, your motivation, or your attempt to find satisfaction and wholeness in life. Prosperity cannot fill the God shaped hole in your life, but Jesus can. He can make you rich in a relationship with God that truly satisfies! This takes us to the next wrong place where people search for satisfaction.

Pleasure (Partying)

Luke 15:11 Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons.

Luke 15:12 The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

Luke 15:13 "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.

Luke 15:14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need.

Luke 15:15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs.

Luke 15:16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

There are multiple problems with allowing pleasure to become your priority! You only care about physical satisfaction and will get to the place you don't care how it hurts those around you! Can you imagine a son basically telling his father, "I'm tired of waiting on you to die, go ahead and give me my part of the inheritance!" That was pretty cruel, but people who seek satisfaction in pleasure are self serving, self seeking, and just plain out selfish! People who get caught up in this get to the point where they don't even care what it's doing to them! You see this in sexual addictions, substance abuse, and the willingness to gain pleasure at the expense of others. These things are often associated with the party life, and I'm not talking about a kids birthday party! Kid's, this point is listed as partying on your handout. I'm talking about partying with no moral or Godly standards, no restraints! I won't lie to you and say the party life is terrible and never fun, it is fun and satisfying for a moment, but the satisfaction is always temporary, short lived and there's always a huge price to pay! The lingering effects and consequences of the party life can be severe!

2 Timothy 3:1-4

¹ But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days.

² People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,

³ without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good,

⁴ treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—

Let me say this: Some people think that if they decide to follow Jesus the party's over! Nothing could be farther from the truth. When you follow Jesus' guidelines for living life, you can party and have fun, but without the guilt, worries, horrible consequences, and hangovers you have to put up with in the world! Why? Because you realize these things:

Physical pleasures are not all there is to life!

Physical pleasures are not bad when experienced within Godly guidelines.

Physical pleasures are not the only pleasures in life.

There's great pleasure and purpose to be found in honoring God, worshipping God, and serving God!

When I started following Jesus, I still loved my rock n roll music, but the lyrics changed.

Same passion, just in a different direction! When I was a youth pastor I once got this question:

"Brother Larry, are we going to be bored in heaven, I mean is all we're going to do is worship?" I told the young person God's going to have some amazing things for us to do when we get there.

I also told them if they ever got into the very presence of The Creator God of the universe, in worship that they would realize there's nothing boring about that! In fact, there's nothing you could ever experience in a mosh pit at a rock concert that could even compare to worshipping God with the heavenly host of heaven singing praise to the Savior of the world, backed by the band of glory!

When you find the Messiah, Jesus, the real party is just beginning! But once again, there's people who look for satisfaction in the wrong places and sometimes in unusual places. Like...

Piety

Piety is not always a bad thing! In fact here's the definition:

"the quality of being religious or reverent."

That would normally be a good thing, but when you mix piety with pride, the concoction can be deadly! Listen...

Luke 18:9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable:

Luke 18:10 "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

Luke 18:11 The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men--robbers, evildoers, adulterers--or even like this tax collector.

Luke 18:12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'

Luke 18:13 "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

Luke 18:14 "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

The problems with prideful piety are also many! Thinking your righteousness is good enough! Looking down on others. Judging others. Blindness to your own spiritual needs! Unfortunately I've seen this prideful piety many times down through the years. People who think they've arrived and are spiritually superior to everyone else. I'm not saying we shouldn't have strong convictions and beliefs which we are not willing to compromise, but we should never forget that true satisfaction is not found in religious activity but in an active and ever growing personal relationship with God! We must never forget these very important words...

Ephesians 2:4-9

⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,

⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,

⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—

⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

Trusting in your own righteousness will leave you uncertain and worried! Trusting in the righteousness of Jesus will leave you cleansed, holy, forgiven and satisfied!

There is one other wrong place people seek to find satisfaction...

Position

Listen to this conversation between Jesus and His disciples...

Mark 10:33 "We are going up to Jerusalem," he said, "and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles,

Mark 10:34 who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise."

Mark 10:35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask."

Mark 10:36 "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked.

Mark 10:37 They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory."

Kind of inappropriate. Jesus tells them He is going to die and they ask for a political position of power! Wow!

Mark 10:41 When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John.

Mark 10:42 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them.

Mark 10:43 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,

Mark 10:44 and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

There are horrific problems with trying to find satisfaction in position. There will always be those who are more powerful than you and that will drive you insane. People who seek positions to fulfill a personal need for satisfaction will do whatever it takes to gain the position or to keep the position regardless of who it hurts or destroys! Absolute power corrupts absolutely is usually true with human beings unless that person is humbly submitted spiritually to a higher authority, and who better than Jesus to serve as a good example of someone in authority for the right reasons, and with the right attitude!

When you study history you'll find that injustice, human abuse, slavery, genocide, and even wars usually boil down to those seeking satisfaction in power. Let me say this: Not all people in positions of power or authority are wrongly motivated. There are many who have come to positions of power and authority because they desire to be public servants. Thank God for those who humbly serve others like Jesus did. But let me tell you this: People who aren't called by God to serve in positions of authority, are insane to seek those positions. Who in their right mind would want that kind of responsibility? But those who feel a calling to positions of authority typically realize their dependence on God for wisdom and guidance and seek to do right. Those who are in positions of authority because of a selfish desire to find satisfaction in wielding power over others, those are the dangerous ones. You'll never find satisfaction in your position in life, but if you find your position as a child of God through Jesus, eternal satisfaction will be yours.

Colossians 3

1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Conclusion

You may have been seeking satisfaction in all the wrong places and if you're willing to admit it, while you may have found temporary satisfaction, lasting peace, wholeness, deeper meaning and purpose in life have eluded you. There's hope. If you are listening to my voice today and are considering the truths you've heard, that is God calling you, drawing you, and offering you the forgiveness, mercy and grace that comes through finding the Messiah, Jesus, the living water and the bread of life. Remember His Life Blood was spilled so you might find satisfaction and wholeness in a personal relationship with God the Father. Listen to what happened with the prodigal son caught up in the party life...

Luke 15:17 "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!

Luke 15:18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

Luke 15:19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.'

Luke 15:20 So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

Luke 15:21 "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

Luke 15:22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.

Luke 15:23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate.

Luke 15:24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'

Folks, the Father in this story represents God and the prodigal son represents you and me. This can only mean one thing. If you are willing to stop seeking satisfaction in the things of this world and turn to God, He will jump off heaven's front porch and run to embrace you! And did you ever wonder how a fully righteous and holy God could embrace a filthy sinner? Well here's your answer: When a person turns from their sins and accepts Jesus as their Savior, His precious blood that flowed from His broken Body cleanses you and clothes you in His righteousness! Because of His sacrifice God is able to embrace a sinner like me!

"We're about to sing these words: Worthy of every song we could ever sing, worthy of all the praise we could ever bring, worthy of every breath we could ever breath, we live for you!"

As this song is being sung, take the bread and think about the price Jesus paid so you could have the bread of life! Then take the juice and remember the life blood Jesus poured out so your sins could be washed away, cleansed and forgiven. Bend the little tab on your container down and that will separate the plastic containing the bread so you can pull it off. Then you pull the tab to open the juice. Do this anytime during this invitation song and if you want to come to the altar and pray feel free to do that as well.

Let's pray!

