**FINDING HAPPINESS IN AN UNHAPPY WORLD**  
Part 4 of 8

*FINDING FULFILLMENT*  
Matthew 5:6

We're in a series on Finding Happiness in an Unhappy World. We are looking at the eight secrets of happiness given to us by Jesus in Matthew chapter 5.

*Look at Matthew 5:6* Blessed (Happy) are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (true goodness), for they will be filled. NIV

They will find true fulfillment.

**ILL** In America, most of us don't know much about hunger or thirst. For us, hunger is just a Big Mac attack. The longest I have ever gone without food was three days. But I drank plenty of fruit juice and I chose to do it for the purpose of focusing on prayer. That is just not anything like the real hunger and thirst that people in other parts of the world experience all the time. That kind of gnawing hunger and desperate thirst is what Jesus is talking about.

In America, even though we are not physically hungry, we are starving to death spiritually. But people in our society do not think of it as spiritual hunger; they use phrases like "My life is empty", "Something is missing in my life", "There must be more to life than this", “there’s got to be more.”

Even when life is going good and there is plenty of success, there is still a gnawing feeling on the inside that there is something missing!
*The Rolling Stones* expressed this *feeling* with the song, "I Can't Get No Satisfaction" in the sixties.

https://www.google.com/?gws_rd=ssl#q=can%27t+get+no+satisfaction+video
Start at 13 sec. go to 1 Minute 13 seconds.

I can't get no satisfaction
I can't get no satisfaction
'Cause I try and I try and I try and I try
I can't get no, I can't get no

*1. WHY ARE SO MANY DISILLUSIONED, UNSATISFIED, AND UNFULFILLED?*

It's because we're looking in all the wrong places.

*(1.) WE DON'T FIND FULFILLMENT IN PLEASURE.*

There is a myth that says pleasure brings fulfillment. Some people think, “If I could just take a cruise” or “win the lottery”, retire and spend my days in leisure and luxury, then I would find lasting satisfaction and fulfillment.

*The Bible tells us,* “No matter how much we see, we are never satisfied; no matter how much we hear, we are not content.” Ecclesiastes 1:8 LB

ILL Most ads on television are designed to appeal to this hunger for lasting satisfaction and fulfillment because it is so prevalent.

Many people come to the point that they'll try anything to find fulfillment. They'll break all the rules. They'll go get drunk or have one night stands, but when it is over they are more empty than when they started.
The Bible tells us that the pleasures of sin only last for a short time. It does not bring lasting satisfaction or fulfillment. (Hebrews 11:25)

*(2.) WE DON'T FIND FULFILLMENT IN PERFORMANCE.

There is a myth that says "Success produces fulfillment."

But it is just not true. Many successful people are very unsatisfied with life. After the thrill of winning, comes the emptiness, and the feeling that something is missing.

Most workaholics experience this. One workaholic that experienced this was Solomon. This is what he said.

*Ecclesiastes 2:20* So I turned in despair from hard work as the answer to my search for satisfaction. For though I spend my life searching for wisdom, knowledge, and skill, I must leave all of it to someone who hasn't done a day's work in his life; he inherits all my efforts, free of charge. This is not only foolish but unfair. So what does a man get for all his hard work? Days full of sorrow and grief, and restless, bitter nights. It is all utterly ridiculous. TLB

Hard work and success do not bring fulfillment.

*(3.) WE DON'T FIND FULFILLMENT IN POSSESSIONS.

Today there are more products available than ever before. Are people fulfilled? No. One person said, "Even when I get what I want, it's not what I want. I'm dissatisfied."

*Ecclesiastes 5:10* Those who love money will never have enough. How meaningless to think that wealth brings true happiness! NLT
The poor people say, "When I get enough money, then I will be happy." The rich people know that fulfillment is not found in possessions. At least the poor person has hope even if it is false hope.

*2. HOW DO WE FIND FULFILLMENT?*

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

Don't seek happiness, seek God. Happiness is a byproduct of your relationship with God. *If you make happiness your goal in life, you will miss it.*

**TS How do we find fulfillment?**

**(1.) RECOGNIZE WHAT IS MISSING.**

**What is missing in your life?** A lot of people know that something is missing, but they do not know what it is.

*In 2003 Stacie Orrico came out with the song More To Life and she asked this same question.*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IfBTH9rltoA
Start at 18 sec go to about 1 minute 14 sec.

*I’ve got it all, but I feel so deprived I go up,
I come down and I’m emptier inside.
Tell me what is this thing that I feel like I’m missing
And why can’t I let go?
There’s gotta be more to life,
Than chasing down every temporary high to satisfy me!
Well, it’s life, but I’m sure, there’s gotta be more,
than wanting more.*

The Bible says we are spiritual beings and God made us to love Him, to know Him, and be loved by Him. Nothing can
take the place of that kind of relationship with God. There is no substitute.

God led the children of Israel out of slavery in Egypt across the Red Sea right up to the Promised Land, but the people thought they knew better than God. In that arrogance, they refused to obey God. They refused to enter the Promised Land (the land of blessings) instead they wandered in the desert for forty years. There are a lot people today that are wandering in a Spiritual wasteland because they refused to obey God.

Now there are no Taco Bells in the Sinai desert. It is a wasteland with almost no food. So the people got hungry.

*Deuteronomy 8:3 ...he (God) humbled you by letting you go hungry and then feeding you with manna... He did it to help you realize that food isn't everything, and that real life comes by obeying every command of God. TLB

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 and I get spiritually hungry for the same reason. God allows problems in our life so that we will realize we really need Him. Many of the problems in our life are caused by our own bad choices, but God uses all the circumstances of our life to help us see that we need Him.

The Bible says, "Happy are those that hunger after God’s righteousness, because those are the people that realize they need God. He will satisfy the deepest longing of their heart.

The hunger inside of you cannot be filled with pleasure, or possessions, or performance. It can only be filled with God’s presence.
**God created you** and me to live in a relationship with Him. **As long as we are separated** from God, there is an empty vacuum in our life. That God shaped vacuum can only be filled by God’s presence.

**TS How do we find fulfillment?**

*(2.) **RECEIVE REAL FOOD.**

And **stop eating spiritual junk food.** Quit settling for things in life that don't satisfy, don't meet your real need.

*Isaiah 55:2* Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. NIV

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!**

**ILL During the great famine in China** that began in 1959 and lasted 3 years, more than **36 million people died** from starvation. Some of the starving people made “bread” from a kind of edible earth. But it was devoid of any nutrition. So, those who ate the loaves filled their stomachs, but they still starved.

There are a lot of people **starving to death from eating spiritual junk food out there**. Do you know the difference between **spiritual junk food and good spiritual food**?

**We need to be around people who are hungry for the things of God.** They know what **real spiritual food is**. **We all need a good church** home and a **good small Bible** study group.

*(3.) **RELY ON CHRIST ALONE TO FILL YOU.**
*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." NIV

*John 6:51* If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. NIV

Bread is a wonderful thing. In a famine, the first thing they bring in is flour to make bread. You can live on bread and water.

Jesus is saying, “I'm It. I am what you really need to live! I'm the essential ingredient in life. You need Me and you can't do without Me."

God made me to be with Him and there's an emptiness in my life without Him.

**Challenge:**

Jesus tells us we have got to take action. He says come, believe, and eat. That's how you find fulfillment in life.

First, you come to Christ as the only source of fulfillment in life. Second, you believe in Him as your only Savior and God. Third, receive Him into your life.

Some of you may have never done that. I invite you to take that step right now. It is much more that believing that God exists. I believe that Hitler existed, but I'm not a Nazi. It is believing in Him enough to put your life in His hands and follow Him.

Would you pray with me? Lord, Jesus, I want you to be my Savior and God.
Others of you have already taken that initial step -- you've come to Christ as your Savior. My question to you is, “How is your spiritual appetite? Do you hunger for God? Do you have a passion for doing His will and fulfilling His mission on earth?

Would you pray with me? Lord Jesus, I want to know your fullness in my life. I'm not satisfied with a little bit. I am willing to obey your Word so that I might experience all your blessings and so I might find fulfilment in you.