

Breakfast with Jesus

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John 21:1-14

After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and in this way He showed Himself: 2 Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. 3 Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We are going with you also." They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing. 4 But when the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. 5 Then Jesus said to them, "Children, have you any food?" They answered Him, "No." 6 And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish. 7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea. 8 But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far from land, but about two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fish. 9 Then, as soon as they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread. 10 Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have just caught." 11 Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not broken. 12 Jesus said to them, "Come and eat breakfast." Yet none of the disciples dared ask Him, "Who are You?"—knowing that it was the Lord. 13 Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish. 14 This is now the third time Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after He was raised from the dead.

I have chosen this text because of what it demonstrates—the loving-kindness of God. No doubt we can climb Golgotha's hill and envision the Savior's death and there find all the evidence needed to prove that God is more loving than we can comprehend. There is no shortage of evidence of "His great love wherewith He loved us" in Christ Jesus. But this text displays this amazing love of God in the most tender of ways. The story argues that God not only loves us but also likes us and is most friendly and helpful towards us. God is friendly toward you because He likes you as well as loves you. He's helpful toward you.

I want to, with the help of God, put forth to you a more accurate view of our blessed Lord and His rock-solid support of you. It is my prayer that no one leaves here today believing that God is opposed to you or believing that if He loves you, He may not like you. Perhaps you are one of those who, for too long, have allowed a false image of God deprive you of joyful intimacy and fellowship with the Lord. You don't see the Lord as He is displayed here in this text. Who among us says with your mouth that God is good, but in your heart of hearts doubt that He will be good to you?

This is the struggle every Christian has had to fight with few exceptions, that God will be good to you all the time. This struggle comes cloaked in a coat of spirituality. It covers itself in the appearance of being spiritual and hence its deception and danger. You struggle to gain God's goodness and therefore you try to earn God's goodness by your own goodness. All of this seems to you to be what spirituality is all about. For example, the doubt is not that God is good, but that you must be good to experience His goodness. If you do not perform your absolute best and strive to be good, well then, God will not be good towards you. This is the lie that we must slay. That is not a biblical view of God and that is not the way He sees you. God is good to you regardless if you are good to Him. The goodness of God is not based on your behavior it is based upon His heart. And His heart is for you.

No doubt many of you can go through your lives and find examples, experiences, and trauma that haunts you to this day and you say, "If God is good, why did He allow *this*?" I say to you humbly, I cannot answer that question. I don't have the wisdom but He does. It is not beyond His wisdom to even allow difficult, even terrible circumstances, but this you can be assured of: if you are His child, He is working on your behalf to do something for you far better than you could conceive. Believe that. We have to fight to believe this morning that God not only loves us, He likes us and He is in our favor. He's in your corner.

Here we have seven of the remaining apostles physically spent after fishing all night and having nothing to show for it. It sounds like one of my fishing expeditions. Jesus prepared breakfast for them and served them this culinary miracle. Of all the meals cooked by the world's greatest chefs, this meal must rank above them all by virtue of who prepared this meal. And isn't it most fascinating that Jesus would choose to reveal Himself to the disciples in this fashion? This was His third appearance to them, with the exception of Thomas who had missed the first post-resurrection appearance the night of the resurrection. On this appearance, Jesus not only gives them a miraculous catch of fish, but also prepares and serves them breakfast. Breakfast with Jesus!

This story is important if for no other reason than Jesus is showing us what God the Father is like. Jesus is the perfect human representation of God. Even Jesus said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father." Jesus has made it known that God is not harsh or severe; nor is He difficult to please or easily ill-tempered. And yet for some of us this is the way we think of God. Most people view God the Father more on the temperamental side of anger and see Jesus on the side of tenderness and kindness.

But, according to Jesus, this cannot be. God the Father and God the Son do not differ in temperament or character; they only differ in their function in the Trinity. One is not judgmental and condemning while the other forgiving and merciful. One is not more loving than the other. Jesus is "the express image of His person," the person of the Father. When Jesus gathered the small children on His lap it was the same as the Father doing so. When Jesus showed compassion on the prostitute and cleansed of her sin, it was God through His Son loving that woman. There is no "good God" vs. "bad God" hustle going on here. God is as He is seen in the love and kindness of Christ. I come today to say we must do whatever is necessary to realign our view of God to match this if it is not already there.

Certainly there is a hindrance to our understanding this.

I. The Paradox of the Loving-kindness and Wrath of God.

It's a paradox, which means it looks like a contradiction but isn't.

A. The Indisputable Proof of God's Anger.

There is a side of God that can be aroused and it isn't pleasing. There are many examples found in Scripture of God's anger being displayed.

- The flood of Noah.
- Sodom and Gomorrah.
- Fire coming down on Nadab and Abihu, the two son's of Aaron, because they offered strange fire in the worship of God.
- Lot's wife turning to a pillar of salt.
- Ananias and Saphira being struck down in a church service because they lied to the Holy Spirit.

There are plenty of evidences in Scripture that prove God can be angry. The very nature of God proves His righteous anger. Therefore, when we read these elements, we begin to think that God seems to be easily angered.

We read the Old Testament and say, "We have a God of anger and judgment and wrath," and we read the New Testament and read of a God of kindness and love. But that's not so. In the Old Testament you find much grace and mercy and in the New Testament you find much wrath. Read the book of Revelation.

But, because we see these examples, these proofs of God's anger and judgment and condemnation, we suppose that God is easily ill tempered. But let me come to a Scriptural defense of His anger.

God could not love good unless He also hated evil. You must understand this. If God is a God of love, which we know He is because we see it demonstrated in Jesus Christ, therefore, He has to come against everything that is not loving and good. You cannot be a supporter of good and put your arms around evil. You cannot be a champion of good and condone evil. Yes, God's nature is so constituted because He is a God of love that He therefore opposes that which is not loving. God cannot declare Himself as love ("God is love." I John 4:8), if He does not pour out His anger and judgment on that which is the opposite.

Therefore, God's anger is an expression of His love for all that is good. It is a byproduct of God's holiness. I say it's a byproduct because there is no Scripture that says, "God is wrath," but there is the text that says, "God is love." It would be inappropriate to say, "God is wrath. God is judgmental. God is angry," and leave it at that because His judgment and anger is a byproduct of

something else, His holiness and, even more specific, His love. It's God's love that set Him apart in a class all of His own. Nobody loves like God. That is what holiness is—to love, to love good, and hate that which is evil. A.W. Tozer said,

“The holiness of God, the wrath of God and the health of the creation are inseparably united. Not only is it right for God to display anger against sin, but I find it impossible to understand how He could do otherwise.”

God cannot display love toward rebellion against Him and all that is good. But let me also hasten to give us biblical facts on the anger of God.

B. Facts About the Anger of God.

I fear in this area of God's nature we are grossly wrong.

1. God is slow to become angry.

God is not quick-tempered or short-fused. He is not like some of us who can, at the drop of a hat, flash our temper. No, He is slow to anger.

“The LORD is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.” (Psalms 103:8)

How slow is God to get angry? He told Abraham He would not give the children of Israel, his descendants, the Promised Land until after over 400 years had passed because the sins of the people of the land of Canaan had not been filled up. He was long-suffering in that He would wait more than 400 years for the people's sins to so accumulate before He would judge them. You see it evidenced in His dealings with Israel. For centuries He let them go in their idolatry and rebellion before He had the Babylonians come and take them into exile and destroy Jerusalem. God is slow to become angry. He does not work up His anger in a hurry.

2. God's temporal anger (opposite of eternal) is tempered with mercy.

His display of anger now—not eternal damnation—is always tempered with mercy. It's always in the context of mercy. Listen to Jonah in the last chapter of the book that bears his name as he says to God, “This is basically why I ran away from You and didn't want to do what You wanted me to.”

“So he prayed to the LORD, and said, “Ah, LORD, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm.” (Jonah 4:2)

“God, when You do show anger You're slow to get there and when You do You're quick, oh so quick, to relent, to change, if the person displays even a shred of evidence that he is penitent.”

Jonah had been sent to preach to the Ninevites that destruction was coming in 40 days. They heard the man preach, they believed it, they repented, and God didn't bring the judgment that Jonah had promised. Why? Because even in His anger there is much mercy.

3. God's anger is short lived.

It takes Him a long time to get angry and when He does it doesn't last very long.

"He will not always strive with us, Nor will He keep His anger forever." (Psalm 103:9)

"For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for life; Weeping may endure for a night, But joy comes in the morning." (Psalm 30:5)

4. God's anger is secondary to His mercy.

What does that mean? It means God would much rather be merciful to you than condemn and judge you.

God comes across in the Bible as if judgment is a secondary thing, a strange work to God. He is a God of mercy and love and He is compelled to be tender, even with those who rebel and refuse to be loyal subjects.

*"Who is a God like You,
Pardoning iniquity
And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage?
He does not retain His anger forever,
Because He delights in mercy." (Micah 7:18)*

Who is like this God? Look at how the nation of Israel had forsaken Him for other gods. I was reading this morning in Isaiah, where God seems to be mocking the people. They went out and chopped down trees and they had to carry the trees to the woodcarver who would chisel them a god they could pray to. How ridiculous! The idol couldn't move itself around. One had to put legs on it to make sure it stayed upright, and yet they prayed to it. These people had been so wicked and so adverse toward God and yet Micah said He will pardon them if they will repent. Not only does he say that, he says God does not retain His anger forever! Even when God is angry and displays that anger, He makes short work of it because He would rather be kind and merciful.

5. God's anger is proportional to human sinfulness.

It's proportional. It's a correct response. It's never overly harsh but exact to the crime committed.

“But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who ‘will render to each one according to his deeds.’” (Romans 2:5-6)

It’s not God who is storing up wrath against the sinner, no, it’s the sinner storing up wrath for Himself. God will only do what is just. He will measure out what is due to each person according to his or her own sins. God’s response in anger toward sin is in proportion to the person’s sins.

Now I pray you understand that while God may at times display anger, He does so very reservedly and yet never without mercy.

There is one more thing I want you to know about the anger of God before we can actually get to the text.

C. The Elect of God Are Saved From God’s Wrath.

You and I, who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, have been forever spared of God’s anger and judgment. Never shall you come under His anger. Never shall you experience His wrath. Never shall you know the pain and the power of God inflicting His righteous judgment on you.

*“For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
(1 Thessalonians 5:9)*

Dear child of God, He has no anger toward you. None! I know what you think when you sin. I sometimes do the same, “Oh, God is going to be angry. Oh, God is going to be upset with me.” I say to you, according to the authority of Scripture: that is not true. He is never angry with His children. You say, “He must! When we sin, isn’t He angry? You said He is so loving so He must be opposed to all that is evil, isn’t He angry with my evil?” If you want to define the word *angry* as the word *displeased*, then yes. But anger as far as judgment, anger as far as retaliation, anger as punishment, anger as far as casting you away, oh no! Absolutely not. I gladly rejoice that is not the case.

Why isn’t that the case? Jesus absorbed all of God’s wrath against us. Every sin was laid upon Him. Every sin. Not just the sins you’ve already committed but the sin you are bound to yet commit. They have been laid upon Him and by His stripes we are healed. In His soul an offering for our sins was made and within the body and soul of Jesus Christ all the infinite wrath of God was consumed. He consumed it. There is none left. Is God displeased with us when we sin? Yes. Are there consequences for our sins? Oh yes. But one of them is not the anger of God. We do not experience that at all.

The God of Scripture is not a schizophrenic God with dual personalities. What you see in this text, in this story, is one God with one nature and toward His children it is nothing but loving-kindness.

II. Features of the Loving-kindness of God

A. He Does Not Chide or Scold Them.

He does not rebuke them for not waiting for Him. The last instruction they had was that they were to go to Galilee and wait for Him. But, for whatever reasons, which we are not privy to, Peter got bored. He got tired of waiting. Perhaps he's discouraged due to his previous sins. The text does not tell us why. We only know he said, "I'm going fishing," and the others said, "We'll go with you," and this is where Jesus finds them.

When Jesus appears to them He does not rebuke them for not waiting. He does not say, "Why didn't you wait for Me? Why are you going back to your old occupations?" He does not scold them for leaving their calling of fishing for men and returning to their old occupations of fishing for fish. "I called you from this kind of life, why have you returned? Are you so unbelieving that you cannot believe that My love will allow you to be a part of this enterprise just because you have failed Me?" He doesn't chide or scold them.

Can anyone in this room tell us of one time where God spoke to you in harsh, angered tones? Anyone? I cannot ever remember such. I think I would remember something like that, but not once. Have I been corrected? Yes, many times, but never out of anger. Never once without tender kindness. Never once without compassion. Never once without pity. Yes, He's rebuked me. Yes, He's severely at times brought correction upon my life, but there was always the mercy of God when I was wise enough and believing enough to see it.

B. He Speaks Kindly.

"Then Jesus said to them, 'Children, have you any food?' They answered Him, 'No.'" (John 21:5)

The word *children* is a term of affection. It's a Greek word that is used with much affection and friendship. It is a colloquial expression more akin to an older man saying to younger men, "Boys, have you caught anything?" It was a term of affection. He speaks kindly to them. He doesn't have a sharp tone. He doesn't have a biting tongue or a stinging rebuke. He speaks kindly. *Boys. Children. Little children, it's not going too well, is it?* He speaks kindly.

C. He Blesses Them.

He performs a miracle for them. The same miracle He performed in Luke five when He called several of them, Peter, James, John, and Andrew. Though they have sinned against Him, though they have forsaken Him, though they struggle with faith even now so that they are not waiting patiently for Him, He does not come with a stormy response and make them to tremble because they have not believed as they ought to. No, He blesses them. He gives them a miracle catch of fish. What I like about it is that it's an abundant catch. One hundred and fifty three to be exact, says John, but not assorted in size. He's very specific—they're all very large. Not only 153 but

they're all big. This is a fishermen's delight; not just quantity but quality. Both are given. He's blessing them. This is loving-kindness. Have these men given Him reason to do otherwise? Absolutely. But did He respond that way? No, He responds kindly.

Not only does He give them a miraculous catch, He turns around and prepares breakfast for them. If that wasn't enough, He then serves them. Look at the text in verse 13.

“Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish.”

He's not only the chef, now He's the waiter. Can you imagine? This is on a beachside. This is not a delicatessen or a fancy restaurant. They're out there around a campfire on the seaside. These are a bunch of grown men. Jesus has prepared the meal. It would have been just as acceptable for Jesus to say, “Okay, guys, dig in,” and they all could have served themselves, but He doesn't do that. He gets up and takes the bread and the fish and disperses it among them personally. Why? Because He is saying something to them. “I love you. I'm here for you. I'm friendly toward you, because I care deeply for you. You are My prize.” He blesses them.

D. He Will Restore Peter.

In verses 15 through 22 Jesus singles Peter out and reestablishes Peter's calling. This man is down. He feels as if he has done the most terrible and dangerous thing he could have done to his own soul—deny Jesus. And Jesus comes to restore him.

There are some scholars that believe the 21st chapter is an added chapter, years later, maybe not even by John himself but by some other editor. One of the things that lead some to believe this is as you conclude chapter 20 you could say verses 30 and 31 would be a perfect conclusion. Thus, it is asserted by some that this is John's original conclusion. But after reading all the evidence, I believe that it was John himself who added it so that we could get a more accurate picture of the loving-kindness of God the Father through the Son. Whether it was an original part of the Gospel or John added it later, I cannot tell. But I can say without fear of contradiction that it is inspired, and it is inspiring to all who read it.

III. Applications of Jesus' Loving-kindness to the Disciples

I want you to see how you should apply Jesus' loving-kindness to the disciples to yourself.

A. God Kindness in Light of Their Failures.

Would you note the first two names listed here in verse two? Simon Peter and Thomas. Peter being mentioned first is not unusual. Every listing of the disciples in the Gospels always begin with Simon Peter—he's the chief among the disciples—followed, usually, by Andrew or James and John. But not in this case. In this case the second name is Thomas. Thomas is never mentioned as number two, he's always near the bottom of the list, of course Judas Iscariot is always the last one,

but Thomas is not usually very far above him. Here Thomas is named number two above James and John the sons of Zebedee. Here's why I think John appropriately penned these two names at the top of the list. John wants us to see that there is a purposeful mission here that Jesus was trying to accomplish.

These two men had miserably failed Jesus, one before His death, the other after His death and resurrection. What did Peter do? We all know it. The infamy lives on. Publically he denied knowing Jesus. He said before others he had no knowledge of this Nazarene and that he was barely acquainted with Him and knew only a little if anything at all. Then, he said, with profane language for all to hear, "I don't know this Man!"

Now let's suppose you're Peter. Thankfully, Jesus has been raised from the dead. You're happy about that but are you sure Jesus is happy with you? Think about it. How would you feel? How have you felt when you sin against God? What about when you sin in a way that others knew you sinned? How have you felt? Compound that 10 times. Here's a man who had been groomed by Jesus to be the leader in His absence.

Perhaps a better question is how would you deal with Peter? It would not be so far-fetched to believe that Peter was expecting the hammer to drop at any time. "Peter! For three years, I trained you. I invested more in you than I did any of the others. You had the potential to lead these men! How can I allow you to be their leader when you have given such a poor example?" How can he now lead? How can he be a good example to the others when he publically denied, in the face of danger, he knew Jesus? How can he lead these men into the fire of the Sanhedrin's persecution when he, at the first chance, bailed himself? Wouldn't you agree that has disqualified himself? And wouldn't you think that is probably the way he feels about himself? *I'm disqualified. I'm not worthy. I don't even deserve to be an apostle, much less the leader.*

Yet Jesus comes to Peter and doesn't rebuke him. He doesn't chide him. He doesn't shelf him. He doesn't bench him. What does He do? He restores him. And He does it before the others.

Then Thomas had said, "I will not believe unless I can see the print of the nails in His hands. Unless put my finger in the print of the nails and my hand into His side, I will not believe." Jesus appears to him. How does He appear to Thomas? Does He appear with a scathing, scolding tone, castigating and rebuking Him in front of all the other men? No. What does He say? "Peace be to you. Reach your hand into My side and your finger here. Look at My hands. Don't be unbelieving but believing." Thomas falls before Him and pronounces, "My Lord and my God." "Ah, Thomas, because you have seen you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." That's all Jesus says to him. He doesn't sit down and say, "You know, we need to talk about this. We need to talk about your faith. It's been very poor in its performance. What can we do to increase it? We need to do some work on this before we let you go back out there and teach that Sunday School class." No. Here's what He does, He gives Thomas what Thomas said he needed. He appears to him and shows him the holes in His hands and the scar on His side and said, "Come. Touch."

This is remarkable to me. I would be there saying, "Thomas, I told you this was going to happen! The others told you they saw Me, what's your problem, man?!" But not Jesus. He opens up His side, "Go ahead, Thomas, it's okay." You read that and you probably put your tone of voice in Jesus' words. You can't do that. I can't put Michael's tone of voice in there because I see Him coming and answering the very cry of a man's struggling faith. That's much different, isn't it?

All of these men had forsaken Him and now He's preparing them breakfast and donning the towel of a waiter and serving them. Let me say something to you. I know you've failed Him because I have too and I'm supposed to be the leader around here. We've all failed Him. God doesn't expect anything other than your failure when you will not believe in Him. It's all we're capable of.

I said that to a lady the other day. We were in a shop and she was waiting on us and we got to talking about the things of God and I said, "Don't you understand that all God expects out of you is your failure." She stood back and said, "I've been in church all of my life and I've never heard that before. Tell me more!" I explained to her that Jesus said apart from Him we couldn't do anything. So when you launch out apart from Jesus you're not going to succeed and He knows that. Yet, in the light of our failures, Jesus shows kindness not harshness. If I could reach into your brains and pluck out the part that has the image of God as being severe when you fail Him, I would reach in and do so but I can't. But the Word of God has been sounded forth. Believe it.

B. God Kindness in Light of Their Lack of Understanding.

"But when the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus." (John 21:4)

They didn't understand what was going on. They didn't know it was Jesus. But why should we be surprised? They didn't know it was Jesus when He was standing in front of them the day before He was crucified. "How long have I been with you that you that you don't know Me, Philip?" For three years and longer these men never really understood who this Man was before them, who this Messiah really was. It's funny when you read the last verses of John 16 where they say, "Okay, Lord, we now believe, we now know who You are." They never understood. How does Jesus respond to their lack of understanding? With kindness, not severity.

He knows you don't understand His plan for your life. He knows you don't get all that He's doing in you right now and He's not upset. Do you hear me? God is not angry that you don't get Him. He pities you and remembers that your frame is but dust. He gets why you don't understand and He loves you in spite of it.

C. God Kindness in Light of Their Trying Their Best.

I think this is the most remarkable to me. This too has application. Here they had fished all night and had done their absolute best and had caught nothing. This is only an allegory of the problem they had had for all of their ministries with Jesus.

The problem with the disciples is the same problem with us—trying to do our best in following Jesus. They never came to understand that their best was never going to be good enough. I want to suggest that's probably your problem, the problem with so many of us today. We think if we can just do our best that's what God requires. No, He doesn't.

I want to say to my non-Christian friends, don't look at Christianity and say, "Well, if I become a Christian I have to live my best, I've got to be on my best behavior and I've got to try and I know I'm not that good." But, you see, that's not the Scriptures. That's not the truth of the Gospel. The truth of the Gospel is God has never asked you to do your best. You may say that to your children, but our heavenly Father has never said that to us, nor will He.

God does not command us to do our best because our best is never enough. We seldom do our best. If we do our best it's nothing but the flesh's performance. Match your best performance with Jesus' best performance. Go ahead and do so. Do you think you still want to try doing your best? Your best compared to Jesus' best is, quite frankly, dissatisfying to God. There's only been one Man who has perfectly satisfied God the Father and it's Jesus.

God has not come to you and saved you so you could now do your best, He's come and saved you and He's offered you the best of Jesus Christ and told you to simply be satisfied with that. "Be satisfied with My Son because I am, and if you're satisfied in Him, I am well pleased with you." My whole Christian life is nothing but a love fest with Jesus and finding Him most pleasurable and delightful above everything else.

This is not a pretense. This is not pretending that Jesus is better than anything else, no, it's the grace of God opening my eyes and seeing the beauty of Christ and beholding that beauty and delighting in it. It's a natural response. You don't force yourself to delight in Jesus. If you are, then you've never seen the beauty of Christ. If you force yourself to be pleased with He, who is the greatest pleasure, you are not tasting and seeing that the Lord is good. Open your mouth! Come to the table! Come and eat! Come and dine! He's prepared something for you and when you taste it, you'll know it and you will be delighted. Jesus has perfectly satisfied the Father, therefore, this perfect Jesus, who satisfied the Father, now lives within me so that with Him I can do anything that He wants me to do.

There is a hymn in our hymnal on page 472, I Am Satisfied With Jesus. I don't think we've sung this song. Listen to the verse stanza.

I am satisfied with Jesus,
He has done so much for me:
He has suffered to redeem me,
He has died to set me free.

And everything in my heart starts to dance with joy because that's true. He suffered to redeem me; He has died to set me free. But then you come to the chorus that says,

I am satisfied, I am satisfied,
I am satisfied with Jesus,
But the question comes to me,
As I think of Calvary,
Is my Master satisfied with me?

It doesn't get much better after that.

He is with me in my trials,
Best of friends of all is He;
I can always count on Jesus,
Can He always count on me? [Chorus]

I can hear the voice of Jesus,
Calling out so pleadingly,
"Go and win the lost and straying";
Is He satisfied with me?

I understand what the hymn writer is trying to do. We're not to be lazy, slothful slackers. We are responsible. We are to *perform* but not our best, His best in us—the grace of God. I understand what the hymn writer is trying to do but I cringe at the words he uses. "Is He satisfied with me?" He is because of Christ! "Is He satisfied with me?" is not the question! The answer is yes, He is satisfied with you. If you are His child, you are His delight! You're always His delight. *No, pastor, that cannot be so. I can't be delightful to Him when I'm not delightful in my behavior. I cannot be the apple of His eye when I am in rebellion.* Oh yes you are. This is the very point of this text. This is the very reason for this story. It does not matter how much you have failed—you do not change the love of God. It is eternal, steadfast, and unchangeable. Why? Because you are in Christ and with Christ He is satisfied! It has nothing to do with your performance or behavior.

This is why I don't understand why people don't want Jesus, when He's done all of this. The issue of God's satisfaction in you and me has been forever settled in the satisfaction of Jesus Christ. Therefore I ask you to believe two things this morning.

Number one, would you believe, with strength and confidence, that you cannot do what's required of you? You must come to believe that. It's why you have this story. That's why you have Peter's denial. That's why you have Thomas' doubt. Christ was teaching them that their best would never do. "Your best will never work, but My best will."

Secondly, will you believe He is satisfied with Jesus' work on your behalf? God is satisfied with you if you are satisfied with Jesus. It's true. What else can we sing? *Amazing pity, grace unknown, and love beyond degree.* Amen.