



The Poverty Of Satisfaction

2 Kings 7:1-9 KJV Then Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the LORD; Thus saith the LORD, To morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria. [2] Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the LORD would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. [3] And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? [4] If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die. [5] And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there. [6] For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us. [7] Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life. [8] And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it; and came again, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went and hid it. [9] Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household.

I. THE POVERTY OF SATISFACTION

-Complacency is the enemy of the soul. Spiritual satisfaction can lead us to a place of spiritual poverty. Our own spiritual complacency keeps men from striving toward the great places of the Kingdom of God.

-Spiritual satisfaction leads to spiritual paralysis and our soul atrophies and becomes useless.

-Spiritual satisfaction is a vice that must be fought against every single day of our lives.

Abraham Lincoln -- “Failure is not a crime, but low aim is.”

Anonymous -- “Indifference never wrote great works, nor thought out striking inventions, nor reared the solemn architecture that awes the soul, nor breathed sublime music, nor painted glorious pictures, nor undertook heroic giving—All of these things were born of great zeal and were done with much heart.”

J. P. Senn -- “Nothing for preserving the body like having no heart.”

-There has to be a refusal in the heart to allow life to stuff you into a place of complacent and apathetic existence.

-But there are some things that create a sense of spiritual complacency for men.

- Insurmountable Odds.
- Overwhelming Losses.
- Entrapment in the Past.
- Fear of the Future.

-Contentment with earthly goods is the mark of a saint; contentment with our spiritual state is a mark of inward blindness.

Philippians 3:13-14 KJV [13] Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, **[14]** I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

1 Corinthians 9:26-27 KJV [26] I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: **[27]** But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

-Spiritual growth never comes without some form of sacrifice or suffering.

-The greatest men of God have always had something inside of them that was hungry for more of a work of the Spirit.

Psalms 42:2 KJV My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

Psalms 63:1-2 KJV <A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.> O God, thou *art* my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; **[2]** To see thy power and thy glory, so *as* I have seen thee in the sanctuary.

-The cries from the Psalms are nothing more than the echoes of life. They are true to life because they are drawn from the stuff that life is made of:

- Hope and Fear
- Love and Hate
- Jubilation and Frustration
- Faith and Anxiety
- Joy and Despair

-We find the writers of the Psalms not only experiencing the varied emotions of life but also in different places of life:

- One moment the singer stands on the bedrock of hope, the next wallowing in the quicksand of horror.
- One minute he is shouting, the next he is shaking.
- One minute faith thrills him, the next fear threatens him.
- One minute full of confidence and the next at the point of collapse.

-All of our struggles and all of our victories should have one common purpose and that is to create within an insatiable hunger for God.

-God's greatest were those who had a longing for God that consumed them. It propelled them onward and upward to heights that the average eyes never see. What the average did see, through lethargic spiritual eyes, they never had any hope of reaching such a place with God. I never want to be in that category of just marking time with my life.

II. SOME PRINCIPLES FOR LIVING FROM 2 KINGS 7

-Within the text of 2 Kings 7 are some important principles for us to consider in overcoming complacency.

A. The Setting of the Text

-The area of the text tells a morbid story. There came a time in Israel's history when Benhadad, King of Syria, surrounded Samaria and was intent on conquering it. (You can read this in the preceding chapter.)

-The city of Samaria had been overtaken by an enemy army and by a famine. The people on the inside of the city were driven by their hunger to become cannibals. Their fear exacerbated the whole situation.

-As Benhadad's army threatened from the outside, they were dying by the droves on the inside of that great capital city

of Israel. Benhadad cut off all communication from the outside world.

-But while all of this was going on, outside of the city, ostracized by the city, left to die by the city were four lepers. No doubt, these men had talked over the situation among themselves and obviously it appeared pretty grim for them too.

-It was certain death for them if they stayed where they were. The city would not let them back in because of their leprosy. The Syrian army would kill them if they came in to their camp. So the Bible says that they asked an important question, "Why sit we here until we die?"

-What those four lepers did at that point brings to us some very important principles.

B. How Hungry?

PRINCIPLE # 1 -- It is not how sick you are, but how hungry you are.

-Those lepers had been thrown out of the city for a reason. Their bodies were falling apart at the disease of leprosy. Lepers in those times were looked up with great disdain. They were failures. They were outcasts. They were mistakes.

-But I want to say to you that sometimes failure and frustration are nothing more than the ushers that God uses to bring men into their greatest destiny. Because of their own misfortune, God was about to bless any entire city and save them from a certain death.

-In fact, the man who has the emptiest stomach is more likely to find the place to eat. Never eat something that a skinny cook has to offer. Furthermore, the man who feels his sin the most is likely to be the one who seeks after God with the most focus.

-Those lepers could have continued to live just like they always had, hand to mouth, just trying to make ends meet. But something called hunger began to stimulate them to dreaming about what God might be able to do if they would go into the army of the Syrians.

-These men did not need to take some poison to commit suicide. They did not need to find some cliff to jump off of. They were already far spent by their own starvation. So their situation and their hunger called for immediate action.

-Despite their difficulties, they found something to work with.

Proverbs 23:7 KJV For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: . . .

-God has got a plan for our lives. Daniel brought to life some purpose in his heart and it made all the difference in the world.

-There hunger pressed them to find out what God had waiting on them. This is what the devil does not want you to know, that this gnawing and driving discontentment in your soul is going to open a path to you that will cause great exaltation of life.

-This is why the devil hates for churches to get hungry for revival. It is why he hates for a preacher to decide that more can be attained. It is why the devil hates for a crew of saints (sometimes just a minority) to start feeling that there is something beyond where they are living now.

-When you look at the spiritual principle that is magnified here, it will make you want to get up.

- These lepers found horses and mules saddled and ready for them.
- These lepers found supper already on the table.
- These lepers found spoils of war waiting to be gathered up.
- These lepers found silver and gold for the taking.

C. How Many?

PRINCIPLE # 2 -- It was not how many lepers there were but how united they were.

-There were only four of them, but those four decided that together they could shake their world. It was just a minority of the citizens of Samaria but it was enough to break open a revival in their place. They decided that they were not going to sit in their misery and apathy any longer.

- Together we will either live or die.
- Together we will either find food or die trying.
- Together we will depend on God.
- Together we will make the journey.
- Together we will seek out the Syrians.

-Quit crying about what you do not have and start focusing in on what you have been blessed with.

- Together we will give ourselves to prayer.
- Together we will give ourselves to witnessing.
- Together we will give ourselves to teaching home Bible studies.
- Together we will give ourselves to working for Sheaves for Christ.
- Together we will give ourselves to filling up our already filled up Sunday School rooms.
- Together we will give ourselves to praying for people who are on the fringe.

D. How Powerful?

PRINCIPLE # 3 -- It is not how preposterous the method may be but how powerful the God is.

-These lepers were looking for deliverance from the famine. When God starts working in your behalf, it is not how difficult the dilemma is but how powerful that God is!

-They were only looking for a little food to eat but instead they got a whole lot more. They got deliverance from the famine, they were delivered from their poverty, and they found a new set of clothes to accompany all of that.

-Their method may have been a little wild but their God was more important than their method.

-This is the way it always turns out with God. You get a whole lot more than what you anticipated. Just like Bartimaeus who received his sight, God went beyond his expectations. Practically every miracle you find in the Book comes with that promise.

- Seeking healing, they got mercy.
- Seeking sight, they got salvation.
- Seeking health, they received power.

-This is how God works in the lives of men. Unanticipated blessing always comes with preposterous methods.

- Just touch the hem of the garment.
- Wash that mud out of your eyes.
- Just put that water into the vessels.
- Just reach into that fish's mouth.
- Just give Him a drink first.

E. How Blessed!!!

PRINCIPLE # 4 -- What God blesses us with, we must take it to others.

-The lepers could have been very silent about what had been granted to them. They could have decided that since they had been thrown out of the city that they would not give anything back to the folks who had mistreated them.

-Yet these men understood that they did not own anything. The whole company of the lepers did not have a dime between them before they went in and now they are rich beyond their wildest beggars' dreams.

· They have enjoyed the feast and are filled up like they had not been in many years.

· They see that they are beggars who have who are now reveling in great abundance.

· Their hunger is gone, their desires have been met, they have tasted and handled for themselves the very blessings of God. . . . this makes them qualified messengers.

-But what some don't often understand about deliverance is that it will make you want to do something. Just like that old song about "old-time" religion, it will make you want to love everybody!

-There is something about this thing called the Holy Ghost!

· Once you have been fed with the Bread of Heaven.

· Once you have drunk the Water of Life.

· Once you tap into the blessing of the New Covenant.

· Once you find the treasure has been put into an earthen vessel.

-You will want to tell somebody!