A World of Satisfaction

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. Well, it's a privilege for me to stand here in Michael's place and open God's word with you.

As Jeremy said, Michael's away this morning preaching elsewhere, and so I count it an immense joy and privilege to stand here in his place while he's gone. If you would open with me to Isaiah chapter 65.
Isaiah chapter 65. And if you're unfamiliar with the Bible or new to church, the big numbers in your Bible are what we call chapters.
The little numbers are what we call verses. And so we'll be in chapter 65, verses 17 through 25. Are you familiar with dissatisfaction?
Do you know what it feels like to be dissatisfied? And I'm not talking about dissatisfaction with the food at a restaurant or dissatisfaction with the temperature of a room, but a much deeper, more painful dissatisfaction.
[1:18] A dissatisfaction with life itself. A dissatisfaction with the way the world works. Dissatisfaction is the frustration of expected outcomes.

It's when there's a disconnect between what's deserved and what's received. Dissatisfaction comes when our expectations from this world don't match up with our experience of this world.
When hard work doesn't result in a fruitful reward. Dissatisfaction is a common problem to humanity. It's part of our life in this fallen and broken world.
And in our culture today, anxiety, burnout, depression are at all-time highs. Sociologist Hartmut Rosa describes in his book called Social Acceleration that the hamster wheel we're on is spinning faster and faster.
And we need to keep up. We need to do more. There's more productivity expected of us, more efficiency expected of us, not to get ahead, but just to stay where we are, just to keep up.
[2:32] And technology has made this worse. Technology is a useful tool, but technology makes you more accessible more quickly, which also lowers the expected response time.

And so people are running these days not to get ahead, but just to avoid falling into the abyss that's behind the treadmill they're on. And this leads to dissatisfaction with this life.
Rosa describes it as a frenetic standstill. Lots of activity, lots of effort, lots of energy exerted, all to remain in the same place. Dissatisfaction is a common problem, and it's becoming even more prevalent.
And it's possible that we expect more from the world than this world can possibly give. I think that's true. We expect to be able to program and engineer everything in this life, even life itself.
We expect and we want to ensure that every time we put a dollar in, life gives us the snack that we ordered, but that's not how life in this broken world works.
[3:38] And even when we're able to put a plan together and accomplish that plan, it doesn't satisfy. It doesn't last long.

In a 2005 interview, Tom Brady spoke on winning the Super Bowl, and he said there's got to be more than this. He made it to the top.
He succeeded and realized that success itself was a false summit. It did not satisfy his desires.
We're all too familiar with this dissatisfaction.
What's wrong with us? What's wrong with this world? And maybe the most unsettling thing about this is it's a problem that's too deep to be fixed by us.
How do we fix something we don't have control over? However, we as human beings are alienated from this world that's supposed to be our home, and there's nothing we can do about it.

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[4:47] And as Christians, we're twice alienated from this world. Not only do we experience this routine dissatisfaction that's the common lot of humanity here in this broken planet, but we're also swimming upstream against this world's desires, against what this world would have us believe and do and think.

Will we ever feel like we're at home? Will we ever be at home? Will we ever be satisfied?
The fact that we expect to feel at home indicates that we were made to be home somewhere. And the fact that we have desires that this world cannot satisfy indicates that we were made for another world entirely.
And our passage today in Isaiah 65 tells us about that world. Isaiah 65 is an open house where we can come and see the home that will one day be ours in this new world that God makes from scratch.
The world that will one day be home for us is a world of satisfaction. Read with me in Isaiah 65, starting in verse 17. Verse 17.
[6:35] Verse 17.

Verse 17.
In all my holy mountain, says Yahweh. This is the word of the living God to us this morning. Isaiah was written in about the mid-700s BC, almost 3,000 years ago.
And at this point of Isaiah's writing, Israel and Judah had already split, and it was a nasty divorce. They split into two countries, and Israel, from the jump, was consumed with idolatry.
They abandoned the Lord. They abandoned his covenant and set up their own place of worship and their own objects of worship. And Judah, the southern country from the split, had some redeeming qualities and some highlights, but it wasn't great either.
[8:20] Israel in the north would soon be exiled in about 25 years from the point of Isaiah's writing. Judah's exile would be a few more years in the future, but would be soon coming as well.

Judah, to whom Isaiah was writing, had become increasingly dissatisfied in God.
Not only had they become dissatisfied in God, they'd started to become increasingly fearful of the political intrigue of the countries around them. Israel to the north, Syria to the northeast.
And instead of, in their fear, turning to consult the Lord, they conspired and tried to come up with their own means of procuring their own satisfaction and safety by appealing to even yet more ungodly countries for help.
And King Ahaz of Judah and all of his plotting and all of his planning and all of his anxiety and all of his worry never once consulted the Lord.
[9:25] He was not satisfied in God. And so he resorted to his own ability to control outcomes and manufacture his own safety. And the Lord would say to him and to Judah in Isaiah 48, oh, that you had paid attention to my commandments.

Then your peace would be like a river. They failed to listen to God. And the Lord is saying, I would have been your safety. I would have been your peace if you had paid attention to my word.
And we see here in Isaiah 65 that God has a plan to provide satisfaction that no human king could even dream of providing for his people.
The Lord will remake the world and it will be a world of satisfaction. Our God will create new heavens and a new earth. Judah would be exiled for their violations of the covenant, but a world was coming from which they would never be kicked out of again.
So we'll cover this text in two points this morning. Number one, God's recreation. God's recreation. We see this in verses 17 through the first half of verse 19.
[10:42] For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth. Just like Jeremy read for us in Revelation 21 already this morning, this is yet to be fulfilled.

The Bible speaks of this elsewhere in the future when God makes all things new. And it's spoken of in language reminiscent of Genesis 1. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.
And that word create, which shows up three times here in this section, is a word that's only used in the Bible to describe God's activity. Only he is worthy of this word.
We as human beings cannot create. We do not have the ability or the power or the ingenuity to create. This is only used of God and it's used in a tight cluster of three times here in this passage. It's only something that he can do and he declares to us that he is about to do it again. And when this happens, the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.

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[11:47] The former things refers to our life here on this earth. And we won't remember much of it. I don't take this as saying that we won't remember the good times.

We won't remember the blessings that the Lord gave us. That we won't remember redemption. In Revelation 4 and 5, we get a view of heaven and they're praising the Lamb for laying down his life for his people.
So it's not that we'll forget everything. It's not that we'll forget every good thing. I think God's glory would be robbed if that was the case. But the former things that are no more.
Death, pain, tears, sorrow, trials, difficulties. The things that are such an integral part of our life here on earth will not be remembered by us.
Remembrance describes something that's meditated on. Something that's dwelt on. Or come into mind.
[12:50] Remembrance is kind of a steady meditation. Coming into mind describes a sudden memory. And you've experienced these triggers before. A smell, a sight, a taste.

The mention of a name and memories come flooding back. Memories maybe we didn't even know that we had. And in this new world, nothing will jog our minds to conjure up memories of our negative experiences from this life.
There will be no triggers to cause us to remember the dark days of this world. Verse 18, But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create.
Nothing will come into our minds of the former things of this world. And that will be an impetus for us to rejoice.
That will be a cause for us to rejoice in God and what he has done and done again. We rightly praise God for his creation in Genesis 1. The power put on display. How much more worthy of our praise is he when he does it again and makes all things new?
[14:02] He says, For behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy and her people to be a gladness. And so here we have this shift from the cosmic to the local.

From the new heavens and new earth in general to Jerusalem in particular. Just like Genesis 1 describes the cosmic creation of the universe. And Genesis 2 zooms in on Eden.
Here we get a zoomed in shot of Jerusalem and the people who live there. Jerusalem will be the center of this new creation. And they will be a joy.
Not as an end in themselves, but the whole world will have joy through them. They will not just have joy. They will be a joy to the world. They will be a joy to the ends of the earth.
They'll be the epicenter of existence in that new world. But even more wonderful and more excellent than God's people being joyful is God delighting in his people.
[15:05] In verse 19, I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people. This city, Jerusalem, has caused God so much anguish, so much grief throughout the years.

But Jesus will have no more tears to weep over Jerusalem. His people will eternally be his delight. He will make them satisfying to himself. No longer will they grieve God. They will live up to the fullness of their purpose. They'll no longer fall short of God's glory.
And this city and this people stand as a representative for all of God's people. So we, the church, primarily made up of Gentiles throughout history, are recipients of this promise made to Israel.
We are recipients of all of God's promises made through the nation of Israel. And so as Jerusalem goes, so we go. And so when we hear that God will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in his people, we can take comfort.
[16:16] There will be nothing within us any longer that will cause God grief. God will delight in us even as we delight in him.

John Piper has famously said that God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him. And this day will be a glorious and satisfying day for God.
It will be a glorious and satisfying day for us. And it will be that way forever. And the idea of forever is so contrary to our experience here and now.
In this life, even the happiest, most satisfying of times have dark clouds of pain and temporality hovering over them. The best weekend will end in yet another Monday morning.
The most refreshing vacation is intruded by thoughts of deadlines and responsibilities that await your return. And this isn't just a future-oriented kind of dread.
[17:25] Even looking at old pictures, we delight in them. But part of us aches. Because those days are no more. But forever, we will delight in the Lord.

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Forever, he will delight in us. With no change. There's no pain of what could be in the future. There's no sorrow looking back on days that were sweet but are no more.
We will enjoy his fullness with no emptiness in ourselves at all. This is the new world that God is making. So we see the recreation.
Secondly, we see the results. Such an act of God will have massive ramifications on our daily life. And Isaiah calls our attention to three of them here. He tells us that death will be reversed. Dissatisfaction will be resolved. And destruction will be removed.
[18:30] So the first result is death is reversed. Second half of verse 19. No more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress.

The sound of crying will be removed. All causes for crying will be done away with forever. And Jerusalem at times has been marked by these sounds.
But no day would be like the day when Babylon, about a hundred years from when Isaiah was writing, would stampede in, surround the city, and lay siege to it.
They would sit and they would wait for the people to starve or get desperate enough to come out and fight. Food would become so scarce inside the city that people would just be dying in the streets.
Young babies would die in their mother's arms because there weren't enough calories their mothers could consume to provide milk for their own children. This isn't the weeping you do silently in the corner.
[19:34] This is the cry of anguish from the bleeding heart of a helpless mother. No more will there be anything to weep over.

No more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress. Verse 20. No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days or an old man who does not fill out his days.
No more miscarriages, no more stillbirths, zero infant mortality, no more lives that are cut short in any way, even in old age. For the young man shall die a hundred years old and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed.
There will be a kind of patriarchal length of life returned to God's people such that if someone dies at a hundred, the conclusion of the people will be that his sins found him out.
Life as we know it will be radically different. Death is reversed. Secondly, dissatisfaction is resolved.
[20:47] Dissatisfaction is resolved. In verses 21 and 22 serve as a positive and negative couplet. These two verses go together. They shall build houses and inhabit them.

They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit. They shall not plant and another eat. These were part of the covenant curses that God gave to Israel.
If you will obey me and listen to my voice, you'll build houses and inhabit them. You'll plant vineyards and eat their fruit. If you do not obey me, you'll still do the work, but you won't get the satisfying result of enjoying the reward of that work.
We as God's people in this new world will have the privilege of working hard and enjoying the fruits of our labor. And so many times in this life, we put in the hard work, but don't even get to see the fruit, let alone enjoy the fruit.
And this is part of the root of our dissatisfaction with this world. Things don't always turn out as they're expected or as they're worked for.
[21:57] And even if we do get to enjoy the fruit of our hard work, the fruit doesn't last and neither do we. Our life is a vapor. Our life is so quickly over.

It's blown away. It doesn't last. And our enjoyment of it is even less than the number of our days. My wife Lacey and I have been married eight years this July.
And so this past Christmas was our eighth Christmas as a married couple. And for seven Christmases, Lacey tried to talk me into inflatable lawn ornaments, decorations, whatever you call them.
And I had resisted for seven full years, stayed strong. In Oklahoma, don't use those things. They'll wear out. They'll blow away. They won't last long. But I caved for the eighth Christmas.
So we bought these inflatable lawn ornaments. They're like six feet in diameter. One Sunday afternoon, I anchored them down, spent about an hour inflating them, anchoring them down with bricks, anything I could think of.
[22:58] It wasn't a tornado shelter, but I was pretty confident in my work. Well, late Sunday night, early Monday morning, there were a system of thunderstorms that went through. And we got some

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60, 70 mile an hour wind.

I woke up the next morning. They were gone. There was zero trace of them besides the bricks that were still left on the ground, completely swept away. And so they were up for 12 hours.
We got to enjoy them for maybe two because we were at church and sleeping. And Lacey said, you were right, which are sweet, sweet words spoken to a husband. But that's a picture of our life.
We work and it is swept away. The enjoyment of it is so brief if we get to enjoy the fruit of our labor at all. Our life is a vapor.
It's here and it's blown away. You work, you enjoy, and then it's gone. We expect this life to be an equation that we put into and get out of.
[24:07] That's not how this life works. You do your best to help your parents' marriage run smoothly, and they still get divorced. You work hard for years and get laid off.

You're pregnant for nine months and labor only to give birth to a child who lives for but a few hours. You work and you save, and as retirement nears, cancer takes and does not give back.
You get to retirement and the economy collapses. Even if you work hard and are able to retire, it just doesn't last. And even while it lasts, it doesn't satisfy.
No more. God's people will work and will enjoy the fruit of their work. They will plant and will eat of the fruit.
And the former things won't even be remembered anymore. There will be no more futility, no more vanity in this world. Cause and effect will have a completely positive relationship.
[25:14] There will be no more disconnect between hard work and results. If you work hard, you will be rewarded with the fruit of that labor.

For like the days of a tree, verse 22, shall the days of my people be. And my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.
Literally, the text says, my chosen will wear out the work of their hands. They'll get to use to the full the things they've worked for. Such a picture of longevity and stability and fruitfulness by comparing his people to trees.
Psalm 1-3, the righteous man is like a tree planted by streams of water. Isaiah 61, verse 3 says that his people will be oaks of righteousness.
Their strength and stability and longevity and fruitfulness in this image. Verse 23, they shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity.
[26:20] For they shall be the offspring of the blessed of Yahweh and their descendants with them. Dark clouds over parents' heads is the thought of something bad happening to their children.

But here the whole family will be home. As children of the Lord. Not born for calamity, not laboring in vain, but blessed.
Verse 24, before they call, I will answer. While they're yet speaking, I will hear. The relationship with God will be so close and so flawless that while a prayer is still being formed on our lips, God will answer it.
While our requests are still on our tongue, God will answer it. He is near to us. He will live in such close proximity to us and our will will be so aligned with his that whatever we ask, we will have. Even before we're finished asking. And the Lord's making this promise to Judah saying, before you even know you need this, I'll provide it for you.
[27:37] We've encountered the questions that come from unanswered prayers in this life. We know what it's like to feel like you are not heard by the Lord.

And one day the sense of that feeling will be completely gone from your memory. While you're praying, he will answer. And the third result is that destruction is removed.
Destruction is removed. We see that even the destruction and savagery of the animal world will be completely removed and restored.
The wolf and the lamb shall graze together. The lion shall eat straw like the ox and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain.
A lot of language here shows up in Isaiah 11, which talks about the Davidic Messiah coming and bringing this change to the animal kingdom. The wolf and the lamb will graze together or literally as one.
[28:44] Predator and prey will have a redeemed relationship. No more cat and mouse relationships. No hatred but unity. And the king of the jungle will be an herbivore.

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The lion shall eat straw like the ox. The world will be in its pre-sin, pre-fall state forever. And dust shall be the serpent's food.
The serpent will be fully consigned to his fate after the fall. The Lord cursed him and said, on your belly you shall go and dust shall be your food all the days of your life.
This curse will still show up on the serpent even in this new creative act of God. And in larger biblical metaphor, Satan will be barred from entering this new garden.
This will be the new wild in a completely different sense of the term. The wild will be tame. No more need for zoos or animal traps. Everything will be at peace and harmony.
[29:52] And they shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain. No hurt, no destruction, no pain, no evil, forevermore.

And they is a specific reference to the animal kingdom, but more broadly it will certainly be true of all of God's creatures in that day. No more pain. No more harm done to each other.
And Isaiah caps off this brief picture of the new world by saying, says Yahweh. Just as God spoke creation into existence in the first place, so he calls his shot here in creating this new world.
And when he speaks it, it will exist. Jeremy read earlier Revelation 21, behold, I am making all things new. It is done.
The Lord will speak it, and so it will be. But zooming out from this passage now, viewing it as a whole, there's a surprisingly large amount of negative language here.
[30:59] It says, not remember, not come to mind, no more two or three times, not build, not plant, not labor, not bear, not hurt, not destroy. And yet the theme of this passage is so positive.

It's so uplifting and encouraging, so why all this negative language to describe it? Well, this new world will be so radically different from our present experience that the best way for Isaiah to describe it is by saying, what won't be there?
This pain and suffering so mark our world in this life that Isaiah can't even adequately describe what he's seeing, and John can't adequately describe what he sees in Revelation. Our human language fails us, and the best description of it is by what won't be there any longer.
This new world is our future home, and we will be satisfied there. How does God do this?
It's not like Israel had earned this. It's not like we can work for it to be worthy of it. How does he do this? How will he do this?
[32:11] Israel had broken the covenant. Judah had broken the covenant. How is God going to make good on his promises? By sending his son, whose shed blood starts a better covenant that's ratified by a better sacrifice, his own divine flesh.

As we think about Jesus, he understands dissatisfaction better than we ever will. There was never a greater disconnect between what was deserved and what was received.
Who deserved better treatment than God's own son in the flesh? Who suffered as more of an innocent person in this world?
Never should someone have received better outcomes than the son of God. But Jesus bought this world for us.
In his death, he defeated death. In his resurrection, he destroyed all chances of dissatisfaction in the future world. Jesus did this for us. He took on the curse of this world.
[33:26] He took on the sin of his people and died in our place so that we can be welcomed into this new world as sons and daughters. This world will be ours, friends.

But it's not ultimately from us, by us, or for us. This is by, from, and for King Jesus, whose rule and reign will extend from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.
And the whole world will be filled with his glory as the waters cover the sea and everything alive in creation will hum and resonate with the glorious grace of our God in the face of Jesus Christ.
We will see him as he is and then we will feel at home. Then we will be at home. Then we will be satisfied.
But something isn't quite right here. Isaiah says that God's going to create a new heavens and a new earth which in Revelation 21 has eternal implications and yet here in verse 20 there's still death, there's still infants dying, there's still sinners, there's still people dying at a hundred.
[34:47] What's going on here? Why is there still death? Why is that still a reality if God's made all things new forever? Well in part this passage is describing the millennial kingdom.

Jesus' thousand year reign here on this earth. And as Isaiah is getting this glimpse into the future he sees this earthly kingdom, he sees the new heavens and the new earth and he collapses these

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realities into one another.
From his perspective they're so chronologically close that he describes both of them at the same time and can't quite see the distinction between the two yet. And this is common in Isaiah, he frequently does this with the first and second coming of Jesus as well.
Isaiah 61 says, the spirit of the Lord God is upon me. He sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and give sight to the blind. And Jesus actually quotes that about his own ministry.
And then in the very next verse it says, to declare the day of the vengeance of my God. And so Isaiah from his perspective these things are so far in the future he often combines two true things into one event and here the description of this earthly thousand year kingdom of Christ is described in tandem with the eternal state that will one day mark us in the new heavens and the new earth.
[36:21] So here's the upshot. This picture as glorious as it is is still not a full description of what heaven will be like forever.

This vision is glorious. The millennial kingdom will fulfill promises. It will be restful. It will bring peace to the world but it will not be ultimate.
If Isaiah's words fail him even when he glimpses the earthly reign of Christ how glorious is heaven. How glorious will the eternal state be when God does make everything new permanently no more sin no more death at all.
Death is reversed in the millennial kingdom but one day it will be completely removed. There will be no chance of anything dissatisfying coming up in the new heavens and the new earth.
Are you dissatisfied? Where are you seeking satisfaction? You will not find it outside of Jesus.
[37:30] You won't find it in a different sin or a different job or a different drug or a new or better house or a more relaxing vacation. Where are you looking for satisfaction to come from? Only in Christ will we find it.

Only through Christ and his work. And maybe that sounds trite to you but you were created to delight in him. And if you fail to do that you failed to accomplish the purpose for which you were created.
and you'll never know satisfaction. If you do not delight in God now you will never have rest.
You'll never have satisfaction. And you'll never see the fulfillment of satisfaction when our God makes all things new. But how does this help us now?
How does this help us overcome dissatisfaction now in this world? How does this help us cope with trials here and now today? This hope gives meaning to our suffering.
[38:45] This hope gives meaning to our dissatisfaction. God is using our dissatisfaction our trials to prepare us to receive glory and the wingspan of this hope is enough to carry you through your trials here in this world until you see Christ face to face.

We can have joy now because of the joy that will be ours on that day and one day we will be satisfied in God forever. And one day this fallen broken world so full of death dissatisfaction and destruction will be made brand new by the Lord of love and we will be satisfied in him.
Are you ready for that? Worship him. Obey him. Live for him. And one day life lived for him will be life lived with him.
And that's the sweetest reality of heaven. We will be with our redeemer. We will be satisfied in him. He will delight in us.
We'll worship Christ forever and ever who paid the price, laid the foundation, planted the seed for this new world to blossom into reality and we will be satisfied in him.
[40:13] And Paul when he contemplates these realities says in 1 Corinthians 15, therefore my beloved brothers be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

And in Galatians 6, 9 he says do not grow weary of doing good for in due time you will reap if you do not give up. Live for him. Obey him.
That's the true source of all satisfaction and one day we will meet him face to face and be with him forever. Let's pray. Amen. Our Father we praise you for this magnificent promise you've made us in your word.
I pray for your people who are here that we would let this hope fuel us through life's trials that we would not lose sight of our destiny knowing that it's through the blood of Jesus that has purchased our lot in this new land.

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Father I pray we would look to him, be sustained by him and be satisfied in him. I pray for those who do not know your son that you would use their sense of dissatisfaction to drive them to you knowing that you are the creator.
[41:39] You're the one who's made all things and the creator of joy itself. So Father I pray we would draw near to you and find true satisfaction at your right hand and joy forevermore.

In the name of Jesus we pray amen. Love you guys I encourage you to come back tonight there will be a Kids Praise concert you won't want to miss it we'll see you tonight. If you have any questions whatsoever about our church or the ministries that our church provides, please visit us at fbcmustang.org. We would love to follow up with you and get to know you better. As always, we try to emphasize if at all possible, if you could be here physically present with us, we would love that. And that'd be a joy to serve you in that way. But thank you again for joining us via live stream today. Have a great day.
Thank you.
Thank you.

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