

Title:            **THE RAREST OF ALL JEWELS**

Text:             John 4:31-34

Subject:         *Satisfaction Found in Doing God's Will*

Date:            Sunday Morning — December 21, 2008

Tape:            John #33

Readings:      *2 Timothy 1:7-14 and 4:1-8*

Introduction:

If God the Holy Spirit will enable me to preach it, I have a message for you today, a message you need to hear and heed. My subject is **THE RAREST OF ALL JEWELS**. I think the rarest of all jewels must be the jewel of contentment. Everyone wants it; but few, very few possess it. What would you give to have real, lasting contentment and satisfaction? What would you give, if you could say, with honesty, "I have enough"?

**I can tell you this** — There is no contentment to be found in this world. There is nothing here that can satisfy one created for eternity! All who drink from the wells of the earth shall thirst again. All who eat the bread of this world shall hunger for more bread. But there is a Well with Water which will quench the thirst of your soul. There is a Bread, which once eaten, will satisfy the deepest cravings of our immortal souls.

I pray that the Lord God will cause you this day to eat of that Bread and drink of that Water, that you may find satisfaction in your soul, that your conversation may be without covetousness, that you may be "*content with such things as ye have*" (Hebrews 13:5). Our text will be John 4:31-34. In these few verses of Inspiration God the Holy Spirit shows us the rarest of all jewels. Holding the Lord Jesus Christ before us as our Example, he here teaches us the secret of contentment, the secret to satisfaction.

(John 4:31-34) "In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. (32) But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. (33) Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him *ought* to eat? (34) Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

The disciples had been away buying groceries. When they returned from town and tried to get the Master to eat, he said to them, "*I have meat to eat that ye know not of...My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*" What does that mean? What is our Lord telling us?

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**Proposition:** Satisfaction, contentment of soul is found in doing the will of God.

If you are yet without Christ, if you are yet living in rebellion to God, in rebellion to your own conscience, in defiance of the Almighty, you will never find peace and satisfaction, until you bow to Christ, until you are reconciled to God, until you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

If you are a believer, if you are a child of God, and still you struggle with this matter of peace, contentment and satisfaction in your soul, the problem is your rebellion to the will of God.

I do not mean to suggest that that knowing and doing the will of God will give you perfect peace, complete contentment and total satisfaction in this world. It will not. It will not, because we simply cannot do God's will perfectly, so long as we live in this body of flesh.

**But I do say this** – If you are a child of God, you are here for a reason. God has a purpose for you to serve, a job for you to do. And the only way you will ever find contentment, peace and satisfaction in this world is to find out what God's will is and do it with all your might. Doing what God put you here to do will give you satisfaction. If you will give me your attention, I will show you what God's will for you is.

## **AN ENCOURAGEMENT FOR SINNER**

Here is an encouragement for sinners. The Lord Jesus declares, "*I have meat to eat that ye know not of...My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*" I cannot imagine a more comforting word for you who are anxious about your souls, or a more encouraging word to you who long for God's saving mercy and grace in Christ.

Our Lord Jesus had been seeking the salvation of one lost sinner. Once he had obtained the thing he sought, he said, "Do you see this saved sinner? This is my Father's will, this is the meat by which I am satisfied." Is that not what you see in his words?

How I want you to see this! **Our Lord Jesus Christ here declares that the salvation of sinners is his Father's will.** — Sometimes people get the idea

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that God the Father is an austere judge, a tyrant who delights in wrath and is bent upon the destruction of men's souls. Nothing could be further from the truth. True it is that judgment is his work; but it is his strange work. It is true that God must and will punish sin; but "*he delighteth in mercy!*"

The Lord Jesus did not come here to make God merciful. He came because God is merciful. He came to make it possible for God to show mercy to sinners while maintaining strict righteousness and justice. Christ did not die to get God the Father to be gracious. Christ died because God is gracious. He did not come to get God to love, but because "*God is love*".

(John 3:16) "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

(Romans 5:6-8) "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (7) For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. (8) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

(1 John 3:16) "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

(1 John 4:9-10) "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. (10) Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

As John Kent put it in one of his great hymns...

"'Twas not to make Jehovah's love  
Towards the sinner flame,  
That Jesus, from his throne above,  
A suffering man became.

`Twas not the death which he endured,  
Nor all the pangs he bore,

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That God's eternal love procured,  
For God was love before.

He loved the world of His elect  
With love surpassing thought;  
Nor will His mercy e'er neglect  
The souls so dearly bought.

The warm affections of His breast  
Towards His chosen burn;  
And in His love He'll ever rest,  
Nor from His oath return.

Still to confirm His oath of old,  
See in the heav'ns His bow;  
No fierce rebukes, but love untold  
Awaits His children now.

Soon shall my spirit realize  
That sacred, joyful scene,  
When all His saints, above the skies,  
Shall round His throne convene!"

If you get into the kingdom of God's dear Son, you will not come in as an intruder, but as a welcome guest. The gate of mercy is open. God himself opened it. If you get God's salvation, it is because he gives it to you. If you obtain the treasure of heaven, you will obtain it because God himself has made you his heir.

**This is what I am saying.** If ever you come to Christ, if ever you trust the Son of God, if ever you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you need not concern yourself about having violated God's decrees, overturned his purpose, or defying predestination and election. If you trust Christ, it is God's will that you trust him. He chose you to salvation. He predestinated you to be numbered among his sons and daughters. He called you by his Spirit. You were purchased by Christ's blood at Calvary. If ever you are saved, it will be because God the Father willed it. He willed it because he loved you with an everlasting love from which he can never be turned!

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**One of the most absurd fears a sinner ever entertained is the fear that he might believe on the Son of God and not be numbered among the elect.** I rejoice to preach the glorious gospel doctrines of God's grace and glory in Christ...

- Electing Love
- Absolute Predestination
- Effectual Atonement
- Irresistible Grace
- Perseverance of the Saints

These are all great, God honoring, gospel doctrines, plainly revealed in Holy Scripture. But they are misunderstood and abused by many, who would make them appear contrary to mercy. If these great truths appear to you to contradict the fact that "**HE DELIGHTETH IN MERCY,**" you do not understand them. All these things are true precisely because "**HE DELIGHTETH IN MERCY!**" Be sure you understand what I am telling you.

- If you desire Christ, he desired you from eternity.
- If you want him, he wants you.
- If you are hungry for him, he is the Bread of life to you.
- If you thirst for him, he is to you a Fountain of living Water, springing up into everlasting life for you.
- There is no secret decree by which God forbids you to believe on his dear Son.

He has not said, in some secret, hidden place, "*Seek ye me in vain.*" His word is plain and clear. "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*"

Not only is the salvation of sinners the Father's will, but **the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came into this world specifically for the purpose of saving sinners.**

(Matthew 1:21) "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."

(Matthew 9:13) "But go ye and learn what *that* meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

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(Mark 2:17) “When Jesus heard *it*, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

(Luke 5:32) “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

(1 Timothy 1:15) “This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.”

If Christ came to save sinners, there is no question about it, he came to save me. I qualify for his salvation, for I am a sinner! Why should I stand around and debate in my own mind or with anyone else as to whether or not he came to save me.

- A sick man is not reluctant to go to any physician.
- A poor, hungry man will not hesitate to go to a soup kitchen.
- A thirsty man will not pause before a bubbling well to see if it has his name upon it.
- Why should a sinner be reluctant about trusting Christ?

Not only is the salvation of sinners the will of God and the reason for Christ’s coming, but **our Savior here declares that the great work of saving sinners is that in which he experiences the greatest delight and satisfaction.** It is his meat and drink.

- From old eternity, he **looked forward** to the day when a body would be prepared for him, that he might come into the world and redeem his people from their sins.
- When the fulness of time was come, he **ran to the work**, as an eager volunteer.

(Hebrews 10:5-9) “Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: (6) In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin thou hast had no pleasure. (7) Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. (8) Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered

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by the law; (9) Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.”

- **While he walked through this world**, he was always busy about his Father’s business, seeking out lost sinners.

It was alleged of him, “*This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them!*” And, blessed be his name, the allegation is true! He could have healed the leper by the mere word of his mouth, or exercise of his will, as he did the centurion’s daughter. But, instead, he laid his hand on the polluted leper to let us know that he has come to be one of us, to make himself what we are, that he might make us what he is. He came here that he might be made sin, to die the just for the unjust, that he might make us the righteousness of God in him and take us to glory.

Can you grasp what I am saying? The Lord Jesus Christ is a willing Savior, the willing Savior of helpless, ruined, lost, doomed, damned, vile sinners! His soul’s delight is the salvation of sinners!

- **That great crowning work**, the work for which all things were made, his work of suffering and death as the sinner’s Substitute, that work by which our souls were effectually redeemed, was, at the same time, his greatest sorrow and agony and his greatest delight and satisfaction.

This was **the baptism** with which he must be baptized, and he was straitened until he was immersed in it. — This was **the bitter cup** he must drink, but he longed to drink it. Did he not say to his disciples, “*With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer*”? — **Even in his deepest agony, our blessed Christ had a joy before him, a joy which sustained and satisfied his holy soul, overflowing with infinite love for needy sinners** (Isaiah 53:9-11; Hebrews 12:2).

(Isaiah 53:9-11) “And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth. (10) Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. (11) He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.”

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(Hebrews 12:2) “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

**Illustration:** There is great satisfaction in suffering for another. — “*Help me! Help me! Somebody, please, help me!*”

- **Now that he is seated upon the high throne of heaven,** it is still the great delight of the Lord Jesus Christ to save sinners.

**If you would be saved, look away to Christ.** — Salvation comes by looking to Christ. Looking at your sin and hardness of heart will only drive you to despair. Look to Christ, and be melted in repentance.

(Zechariah 12:10) “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn.”

(Isaiah 45:22) “ Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else.”

Peace, joy, contentment and satisfaction come to sinners only as we look to Christ. This is the will of God revealed in the Book of God. — “*This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son, Jesus Christ.*” Our text stands, first and foremost, as an encouragement for sinners. The salvation of poor, needy sinners the will of God the Father, and the work and joy of God the Son, by which he is satisfied and filled with contentment!

**AN EXAMPLE FOR SAINTS**

But I also see in our text an example for saints. When our Master said, “*I have meat to eat that ye know not of...My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work,*” he set before us an example to be



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followed. That which gave him contentment and satisfaction on earth as a man is the thing that will give us contentment and satisfaction in this world.

I promise you that if you and I are struggling with frustration, failure, doubts, fears, inadequacies and a general sense of uselessness, it is because we are having a problem with one of the five things here exemplified in Christ. If we would have peace and satisfaction in this world, we must seek to imitate our Master in these areas.

1. **The Lord Jesus always made his will subservient to his Father's will.**

Our Savior did not come to do his will, but the will of him that sent him. In all things, he said, "*Not my will, thy will be done.*" — All our sorrows in this world spring from the root of self-will. If my will was totally subservient to my Father's will, my Father's will would always please me. — Pain would have a wonderful comfort to my soul, if I did not kick so hard against it. — Losses would enrich me, if I were not so covetous. — Bitterness would have a wonderful sweetness, if I did not crave my own will and my own way.

2. **Our Lord Jesus lived in great peace and contentment, because he always knew why he was here.**

He lived with a sense of urgency, pressed with great responsibility, because he knew why the Father had sent him into the world. He came on a mission, with a commission from God, as the Servant of God. He came to save his people, to build his kingdom, for the glory of God.

**Now, this may come as a surprise to some of you,** but if we are Christ's, we are God's servants, and his mission is our mission. His commission is our commission. His work is our work. The will of God for him, is the will of God for us.

(John 20:21-23) "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto you: as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you. (22) And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: (23) Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained."

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(Acts 1:8) “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

**Illustration:** *Paul the Pattern – Acts 26:13-18*  
(*His Testimony before Agrippa*)

(Acts 26:13-18) “At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. (14) And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks. (15) And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. (16) But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; (17) Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, (18) To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.”

3. **Our Savior’s contentment and satisfaction in this world was found in doing the Father’s will.**

He said, “*My meat is to do the will of him that sent me.*” Again, he said, “*I do always those things that please him*” (John 8:29).

- You will never find satisfaction in talking about God’s will. (*What you used to do. — What we ought to do. — What you are going to do. — What you would do.*)
- You will never obtain peace by debating God’s will, God’s Word, or God’s work.

When the ship is broken on an iceberg and sinking, what people need is life boats, not blueprints of the ship. — When the house is consumed in a blaze, it is utter stupidity and barbaric cruelty to debate about the cause of the fire. The way to help is break out the windows and fetch the victims!

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**The Lord Jesus found his meat, his soul's food, in doing his Father's will.**

I am convinced that the vast majority of what people call “depression” arises from a lack of meaningful responsibility. I have known very, very few people in my life who were engaged in work which they perceived as meaningful, whose hands were full with a weight of responsibility, who struggled greatly with depression.

I am neither a doctor, nor a psychiatrist or psychologist. So I will leave it to them to deal with such things. But I know this – **Spiritual trouble, depression, incessant doubtings and fears only overwhelm those who have nothing better to think about than themselves.** Full hearts and full hands have no room for such worthless lumber.

- Find me a person full of questions, and I will show you a person doing nothing.
- Find me a person constantly struggling with doubts and fears, and I will show you a person who serves no useful purpose in ministering to the souls of others.
- Find me a preacher who is forever in doubt of his calling, and I will show you one who should be, because he is not engaged in the work, but loitering about.
- Find me one who is forever questioning his election, whether or not he trusts Christ, whether he loves the Lord or no, and I will show you one who spends too much of his time thinking about himself, and too little serving the needs of others.

4. **Our Redeemer's peace, contentment, and satisfaction came by his perseverance in doing his Father's will.**

He was not content to do the will of God a day or two, or a year or two. He was resolved to do it until he had finished it! He said, “*My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish the work.*” — It was this same confidence and satisfaction which sustained the apostle Paul as he came to the end of his day.

(2 Timothy 4:6-8) “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. (7) I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: (8) Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous

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judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”

5. The Lord Jesus <sup>1</sup>made his will subservient to his Father’s will, <sup>2</sup>knew why he was here, knew what his Father’s will was, <sup>3</sup>did the Father’s will, <sup>4</sup>persevered in doing the Father’s will until it was done, and <sup>5</sup>**He did what God gave him to do with all his might, for the glory of God.**

(John 12:27-28) “Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. (28) Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified *it*, and will glorify *it* again.”

(Ecclesiastes 9:10) “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.”

(1 Corinthians 10:31) “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

Thank you, O my Savior, for doing the will of God and finishing his works for us! Give me grace, blessed Redeemer, to follow your example, doing my Father’s will until I have finished the work for which you have sent me into this world.

(1 Peter 2:21-25) “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: (22) Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: (23) Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously: (24) Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. (25) For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”

O Holy Spirit, make the will of God my meat and my drink! With Job of old, let me esteem my Father’s will more than my necessary food (Job 23:12). Then, only then, can I possess the rarest of all jewels —

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Contentment! When my will is one with his will, I shall be satisfied, not until then. That is the mark toward which I press. May God give us grace to press on. Then shall we be satisfied, when we awake in his likeness!

Amen.