

Satisfied: The Lie of Relationships

By Brian Flewelling 10.7.18

We're debunking some of the lies, some of the answers our culture chases after in an attempt to fill their lives with some kind of meaning for satisfaction.

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God's Design

Relationships are a good thing. God created us to need healthy relationships. Ladies he wants you to have girlfriends in your life, men he wants you to have camaraderie with other men in your life. He wants the generations to have healthy interaction. When our oldest child was five she asked, "Mamma, why are old people so wrinkly." For those of you married, God wants you to have a deeply satisfying marriage. It's not too late to change habits. Build out of the ashes.

The King of Love designed you to love, to need love. To give love. Relationships can be a tremendous blessing in our lives. But sometimes they become a stumbling block to God. Sometimes we have unhealthy expectations of them. We misuse them. We control them. In this message we'll learn to recognize when our relationships have gone out-of-bounds, and how to get them back on track so we can have meaningful connections to God and people.

This morning we're going to look at a few scriptures that will help create clarity for us. How do we know when our relationships are healthy, and when they start to go out of bounds?

Deut 13:6-11

The level of severity here may be difficult for you and I to comprehend today. Don't get distracted-that's a different conversation. We can agree on this truth. God is saying, **Slide-lower third: Human relationships are secondary. Your relationship to God is primary.** Notice how strongly he feels about that.

Matthew 10:37

Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

Love God, then love people. God is the source of true love. Sacrificial love. Protecting love. Perfected love. Ultimate truth. If you get that wrong, every human relationships begins to wilt and sicken with selfishness, insecurity, co-dependence, dysfunction, cynicism, abuse, sexual appetites, fear and control, disillusionment.

If I don't find my fullest and highest satisfaction in God I will look for

- a spouse
- an affair
- the opinions of successful people
- the court of public approval

- or I become jaded
- because people have hurt me deeply

Slide-lower third: The lie is that we look to people instead of God to provide identity, security, and a sense of importance. Human love is not the highest love!

Only your heavenly Father can pull you into his arms and tell you he loves you. Not your boyfriend. Or fame. Or the arts community. Or being recognized by the right people won't do that for you.

Let's tease out a couple of applications from this idea--God first, people second.

Application #1. Don't look to people for security only God can provide.

I get the biggest laugh out of Pop Music lyrics sometimes

Listen to some of these promises they make. (Have you ever been in a real relationship?)

- Song: Truly Madly Deeply; "I'll be your dream, I'll be your wish, I'll be your fantasy, I'll be your hope, I'll be your love, be everything that you need..." Run for your life.
- "I'm only one call away. I'll be there to save the day. Superman got nothing on me. I'm only one call away." if someone in your life is promising to be your savior...that should be a clue, and especially if they're wearing designer jeans and a leather jacket.
- If your hope is to be rescued by a person, or a political party...
- your counselor...
- **Psalm 62:8**
Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.
- I.e. illustration of child needing someone to go down into the dark.
- Don't look to people for something only Daddy can do. That is to walk you through the uncertain times. People can help. But only Daddy drives out fear.

Application #2: Any relationship that leads you to disobey God needs boundaries or needs cut off. If a human relationship causes you to disobey God, it's not outside God's framework for your life.

- When people are in the break room talking about everyone, acting like cannibals, you don't have to quit your job, but you do have to walk out of the break room.
- If your work relationships are pressuring you to sacrifice your Christian standards: fudging #s to make it look like your department is getting ahead, or cutting corners on vulnerable customers.
- Grandparent that's unhealthy. Kids have set boundaries.
- **Story: L.Mintr**

He rationalized his disobedience. He had a reason for it. God commands us to love people. For their good, not for my good.

Disobedience always uses other people to love myself; to protect ourselves, to feel important about ourselves, comfort, or pleasure ourselves...Disobedience to God's ways always uses and abuses others for self-gain.

- Flirtation Device: It makes you feel cute, or wanted, or noticed, It makes you feel pursued. Interesting. It uses that person. It uses that person as an emotional aspirin. I'm guilty of it. I've given it. I've received it. And it's sin.
- Set boundaries.
- Sampson toyed with it. Joseph fled from it. At the end of the story, their circumstances reflected their character.

- **Genesis 39:9**

My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?

- True love clings to God's standard as the standard for our relationships. Everything else misuses and abuses people.
- God's laws create a culture of honor. Love protects. When we have healthy boundaries we don't have to be afraid of each other. Always trusts. Trust can't grow without protection.

Mark 3:20-21

Jesus' family is thinking...Jesus is out of control. He's is bringing disrepute to our family honor. He is acting in a way that is not in agreement with the way this family acts.

Jesus has a family who feels they have an obligation and a duty to control him. Families can be ruthless at this. Churches can be vicious. And we use our approval or disapproval as a whip to keep people in line.

Mark 3:31-35

Now his mother and brothers show up, and what do they run into -- the crowd. The chaos feeling justified. *This is exactly what we're talking about Jesus. Your priorities are out of order. We are your family. We are your highest priority. Taking care of this family should be your responsibility without your father around. You're off filling your life with all this nonsense, all these other people.*

Slide, lower third: the lie is that we control people to find our identity, security, and a sense of importance

We feel unsettled because someone doesn't fit our mold, because our grown children aren't listening to us anymore, because I'm afraid I'm going to lose my job and I need to have power over something, because church isn't the way it used to be, because somebody has political views different from my own.

When we control each other, we try to conform our friends and family into our own image. This is what I look. This is what's important to me. This should be your priority, because it's my priority. Instead of releasing people to Jesus to be conformed in his image.

Jesus was on his great rescue mission from heaven. He even received that call from his father in front of community. His family thinks they know better than him, what his priorities should be.

Jesus' family, in trying to control him, would have killed the very purposes of God, because they couldn't understand it.

Mark 3:33-35

Application #3. We need to let go of others and trust God with our relationships.

We need to release them to the Father, and the Father assigns their life calling, gifts, personality, ways of thinking, that you may never understand. But you have to let go.

- Abraham sacrifices Isaac.

That kind of courage comes from being fully connected to God first. Fully satisfied in God first. Only then can our relationships come into alignment with God's order. Only then can we truly love people for their sake, and not for our sake.

1. What is one area in your life, you feel really insecure, you feel like you are walking through the dark looking for a hand to hold, and maybe you were running to people, and God wants you to trust Him?
2. Is there one relationship that is leading you to disobey God that you need to make some adjustments?
3. Is there someone that you are frustrated with or are trying to control that God is asking you to let go? Trust Him?