

NEWS AND VIEWS
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*“Southern Baptists with the Full
Gospel for the Whole World”*

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Two questions have been bouncing around in my brain for as long as I can remember. *What do you want?* and *Why did you do this?* As a young boy, tugging at my mama’s skirt or pulling on my daddy’s pants leg would usually provoke the first question. And even as a student in school, my raised hand would prompt the teacher to ask... *What do you want?* In a classroom it usually meant I wanted to go to the bathroom and at home it could mean just about anything! And I didn’t always get what I wanted. Sometimes I really didn’t know what I wanted. What occupied my mind for the moment soon faded away as another unsatisfied desire. And even if I did get what I thought I wanted, I soon moved on to wanting something else.

The second question, *Why did you do this*, usually followed the result of my bad behavior. I was often required to give an explanation as to *why*. This was the hardest question for me to answer. I could wrestle with that one for days. Still can. Why do I do the things I do when it comes to behaving badly? Could it be that I want something that I think will satisfy my longing? Could I be wanting something that I have access to already? Or could the root of my sinful desires be found in believing that God cannot satisfy my deepest desires, and I should try to do something on my own to get what I really want... whatever that is?

Consider some of the writing of one I consider to be a most poetic prophet:

*Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money come, buy and eat.
Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.
Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in abundance.
Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live;
And I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
According to the faithful mercies shown to David. (Isaiah 55:1-3)*

The Word of the Lord is telling God’s people of Isaiah’s day...and I believe the principles still hold true to the people of God in our day...that God is enough for me...and enough for you. *What do we want?* What our souls really desire is something the world may promise but cannot deliver. The thirst and hunger of the longing soul is full and unhindered access to the love of the Living God. To be complete and lacking nothing. To be full instead of empty. We want the fullness of life that is promised in this passage. I think I have lived long enough with wrong decisions and compromised principles to settle the *What* question. I want to live...and love LIFE! I want the life God has in mind for me. For that to come into view I must *listen* to the Living God, come to Him, and receive satisfaction that cannot be bought by men and worldly treasure. I want to delight in abundant life. That is what Jesus tells us in John 10...it’s why He came.

Now, let’s get personal...*Why* do we sin...keeping us away from the joy of living? We sin because we are sinners...that is our nature and that is the problem. What is the solution to our sin problem, that which robs us of the joy of the Lord? The Lord Himself. Jesus is the answer. And the more we listen to His word, practicing the principles of godliness, the more we will love life and hate sin. Stop wasting your life on deadly substitutes. *What do you want?* Let the answer be Jesus. *Why should you worship and trust Him?* He is your life! We live because He died...His life was a gift to me and you...the deal of a lifetime...and exchanged for us on the first Black Friday. Let that roll around in your head awhile as you give thanks to Him this day...

Blessings to you,

Pastor Sam