



**TABLE FOR TWO:
THE DIVINE INVITATION**

The Word sometimes refers to spiritual matters like it is food. God invites us to come and feast at His spiritual table. He longs for us to stop hurting ourselves by wasting our time, energy, and resources on the temporal things of life. He offers us the complete satisfaction found in Him alone. But we have to choose to accept His divine invitation.

DAY 1

Today's Scripture:

Isaiah 55:1; Galatians 5:16-26

The Word

Children are controlled by their desires. When they are hungry, they will let you know. When they are thirsty, they will voice their complaint. By the time one of my nieces was 14 months old she would say "I hungry" and then would look at you until you met her need.

But as adults, we sometimes squelch our need. We pass on meals because of our busy schedules. Or when we do eat a meal it is on the go and lacking in nutritional value. We are often left unsatisfied and longing for a real meal. "I hungry."

The spiritual part in us also needs to be filled. We may be passing on "spiritual meals" because we are too busy. Or we may take in "a little Bible" during the week or just on weekends, enough to leave us unsatisfied and our spirits longing for more. The Lord wants to spiritually fill us. All we have to do is respond to His invitation.

Isaiah 55:1

*¹ "Come, all you who are thirsty,
come to the waters;
and you who have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without cost.*

Verse 1: The God of the universe is calling for us to come to Him. I think Charles Spurgeon, one of the greatest preachers from the nineteenth century, stated it best. To understand this quote, you will need to add the word "ho" (modern day translation may be "Hey") before Isaiah 55:1 to get the full impact:

"Ho! - this is the gospel note; a short, significant appeal, urging you to be wise enough to attend to your own interests. Oh, the condescension of God! That he should, as it were, become a beggar to his own creature, and stoop from the magnificence of his glory to cry, 'Ho!' to foolish and ungrateful men!" (Spurgeon)

Spurgeon is stating that the Lord Almighty is begging us to come to Him. We need Him; He does not need us. Yet, He is willing to lower Himself to reach us. Are you moved by that? The Ruler of the Universe is calling to us yet, we often ignore His cries. We go through our lives without acknowledging our need for Him but in so doing we are missing what we truly need, and not only need but what we want. God satisfies our every want. Everything you think will make you happy is only a shadow of the fullness of joy in Christ. But we run after everything that leaves us starving and thirsty. And the Lord, whom we have ignored, yells out to everyone “Come!”

Physical hunger and thirst are indicators of our bodies needs. We can ignore the signs for awhile but if we continue to ignore them, we will suffer effects from the neglect of our bodies. Spiritual hunger and thirst occurs when the Spirit within us tells us we need more of the Lord. If we do not respond, we will undergo detrimental spiritual consequences.

Galatians 5:16-26

¹⁶So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. ¹⁷For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

¹⁹The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. ²⁵Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

Verse 16-26: Reread the fruits of the Spirit in verses 22-23. These are the signs of a life that is spiritually full. If any one is missing, then we need to listen and respond to God’s invitation to “Come”. He is willing to give us everything we need to live a life that is utterly fulfilling. Upon the review of the list, what is your spirit saying? Are you spiritually full? Or do you need to tell the Lord, “I hungry”?

Up Close and Personal

Speak to the Lord about your spiritual need. Listen to His willingness to fill you.

How are you regularly “feeding” on the Word of God?

What are your thoughts on the quote by Charles Spurgeon?

Consider the list of the “fruits of the Spirit” found in Galatians 5:22-23. What “fruit” do you need from the Lord?

DAY 2

Today's Scripture:
Isaiah 55:1-2

The Word

During college I mainly lived on water, Ramen noodles, and popcorn. It was all I could afford. If anyone volunteered to cook dinner for me, I would arrive early to her house! I would never miss out on such a luxury. I still remember a friend who made me homemade guacamole. It was one of the food highlights of my college years.

Most people would not have guacamole as their luxury food. This would be especially true in Israel. A better description for them would be wine and milk.

Isaiah 55:1

*¹ "Come, all you who are thirsty,
come to the waters;
and you who have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without cost.*

Verse 1: My NIV text note describes the wine and milk as “symbols of abundance, enjoyment, and nourishment.” In other words, the Lord desires to meet more than just our basic needs. He wants us to be luxuriously supplied. I once again will defer to Charles Spurgeon on the matter:

"You are not permitted to drink freely of water, and then to purchase wine. You are not invited to come and eat freely that which is good, and then to spend your labor for that which is fat. No, the richest dainties of God's house are as free as the bread he gives to hungry souls." (Spurgeon)

Guzik, David. "David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible." 2001-2007. 18 October 2007.
<<http://www.studylight.org/com/guz/view.cgi?book=isa&chapter=055>>

Everything the Lord wants to give us is free. No one has to convince, beg, or bribe God to give to us. He desires to provide for everyone. There is no spiritual elite in the kingdom of our Lord. Everyone has equal access to all of the blessings, resources, provisions, and graces of God. But we must come to Him to receive; there is no other way.

Isaiah 55:2

*² Why spend money on what is not bread,
and your labor on what does not satisfy?
Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,
and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.*

Verse 2: We try to be satisfied in a variety of ways. We look at relationships, money, stuff, vacations and everything else to bring us the happiness we long for. We may get a temporary high but then we are brought low again. This makes us go in search of something else to satisfy us. Maybe the next relationship is the answer or more money or stuff or experiences...but nothing completely fills up our need. We still are incomplete, lacking something. We dull the pain and we can ignore it for awhile, but eventually the emptiness surfaces.

The Lord wants to “delight our souls”. Did you ever consider that? Often we picture God as this stern old man who does not want anyone to have any fun. If He does see someone enjoying himself, He will strike him with something bad. This is a false picture of the Lord. He wants to delight you. He knows what will truly stir your soul to joy. God knows what is good for you.

David Guzik is Pastor of the Calvary Chapel church in Simi Valley, California. I liked what he wrote in his commentary on this passage so I included it here:

Listen diligently to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance: The invitation is clear. The offer is made, the provision is made, and everything is available - but we must still do some things.

i. First, we must listen diligently. The satisfaction God promises doesn't come to those who don't listen, and listen diligently. It takes time, attention, and effort to listen diligently, and some aren't willing do this.

ii. Second, we must eat what is good. This requires some discernment. We must choose what is good, and then eat that. Many just simply eat whatever spiritual meal is set before them, without taking care to see that it is good.

iii. Third, we must let your soul delight itself in abundance. Even when we listen, even when we eat what is good, we still must let our soul delight itself in abundance. You can sit down at a great spiritual meal, but by your stubborn or bad attitude, simply *not* let your soul delight itself in abundance.

Guzik, David. “David Guzik’s Commentaries on the Bible.” 2001-2007. 18 October 2007.

<<http://www.studyight.org/com/guz/view.cgi?book=isa&chapter=055>>

Are you ready for your soul to be delighted?

Up Close and Personal

Confess any attitude or action that is blocking you from experiencing spiritual abundance.

How are you listening diligently to the Lord?

How are you able to discern if spiritual teaching is good or not?

How will you know when your soul is delighted? When have you experienced it before?

DAY
3

Today's Scripture:
Isaiah 55:1-3

The Word

As I was researching to write more on Isaiah 55:1-2, I came across a commentary by a man named Hampton Keathley III, Th.M. I read his article and I was impressed with his insight so I looked him up. This is what I found out:

Hampton Keathley III, Th.M. is a 1966 graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary and a former pastor of 28 years. In August of 2001 he was diagnosed with lung cancer and on August 29th, 2002 he went home to be with the Lord.

October 18, 2007. <http://www.bible.org/author.php?author_id=22>

As I read this mini-biography I realized that right now Hampton Keathley III is fully living the satisfied life. While I keep searching for it in all the wrong places, he knows that satisfaction, complete satisfaction, the delight of the soul, is in God's Presence alone. I can write that the Lord fully satisfies but do I really mean it? Am I living in the present day to day, moment by moment, reality of satisfaction? If not, then I am trying to get something from this world that it cannot give. For it cannot fulfill my soul.

As I evaluate my life, I realize I have a long way to go in this area. At this moment, I do not feel like I can teach you. However, I believe Hampton Keathley III can. If you will bear with me, I ask that you read his words on these verses because he is by far the expert, not me.

Appendix 2: Exposition of Isaiah 55:1-3

By:

J. Hampton Keathley, III, Th.M.

Isaiah 55:1-3

55:1 “Hey, all who are thirsty, come to the water!

You who have no money, come!

Buy and eat!

Come! Buy wine and milk

without money and without cost!

55:2 Why pay money for something that will not nourish you?

Why spend your hard-earned money on something that will not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me and eat what is nourishing!

Enjoy fine food!

55:3 Pay attention and come to me!

Listen, so you can live!

Then I will make an unconditional covenantal promise to you,

just like the reliable covenantal promises I made to David.

The Invitation (vs. 1)

The context is that of the coming of the suffering servant of the Lord, the Messiah, and His all-sufficient work on the cross where He bore our sins in His body, where He was wounded for us, the innocent dying as a substitute for the guilty. Because of what Messiah has done, the offer of this passage can be made.

“Hey.” This particle is an emphatic way to get our attention.

“All.” This is a universal invitation. No one is exempt; it applies to all. It is available to all and all need it.

“Who are thirsty.” Thirsts indicates an intense desire, but also an intense need. It calls attention to the futility of life to really satisfy the innermost needs of man. This is an invitation to those who, experiencing the dryness of the world, are looking for something more and are open to the salvation of God.

“Come.” Three times this word is used to highlight God’s offer of salvation and of a life that is truly satisfying and meaningful. God says “come.” He says, “I have what you need and I want you to have it.”

- Such an invitation first of all stresses that the needy one is not at the place of blessing or relief and he must make a decision and come to that place. Wherever he is now won’t cut it.
- The nature of this invitation expresses the urgency of the matter. It is urgent because the longer a person delays, the harder it is to come and the less opportunity there is to come (see 55:6).
- The invitation to come expresses the loving heart of God. God wants us to experience His love, comfort, and provision (Isa. 40:1).

“To the water.” This is emblematic of abundant blessing and of the fact that only the salvation of God as revealed in the person and work of Christ and the Word can truly satisfy the thirst and needs of man.

“You who have no money, come! Buy and eat! Come! Buy wine and milk without money and without cost!” What is this saying? How can one buy without money?

God’s offer is absolutely free. Neither money, power, position, nor prestige can purchase what God has to offer us. It is the free gift of His grace through the gift of His Son who purchased man’s redemption (Rev. 21:6; 22:17).

The word “buy” is used in the sense of acquire or get, but, as we are told, we may buy without money. The word “buy” is the Hebrew, *shabar*. It meant, “to break” and then, “to purchase.” It was used of grain as that which was broken in the mill, or of food which breaks hunger (compare our word *breakfast* for “break your fast”). So God calls us to not only to buy or acquire, but to eat. The idea here is get bread and eat.

As the next verses make clear, God is calling man to come, listen, and feed on the living Word which in turn will produce faith ([Rom. 10:17](#)). Peter, remember, tells us faith is more precious than gold which perishes ([1 Pet. 1:7](#)). Why? Because faith is the channel by which we acquire or obtain the salvation of God and its manifold blessings ([Eph. 2:8, 9](#)).

"Wine and milk." God's salvation and its blessings are portrayed under these two symbols. Wine was often used at special feasts and portrays the joy and exhilaration which God's salvation brings. Milk portrays sustenance, that which nourishes and is nutritious and healthful.

The Call for Evaluation (vs. 2a)

By means of a question and through the prophet, the Lord calls upon us to see the futility of life and the efforts of people to find happiness or salvation apart from the free gift of His grace and a life lived out of the fullness of Christ through the Word where we can hear the voice of God.

"Spend." This word literally means "weigh." It referred to the counting out and weighing of silver or gold as the price paid for something.

"For something that will not nourish you." Literally, the Hebrew says, "why do you weigh out money for the *not-bread*." This is emphatic and dramatic. Bread is emblematic of the support of life or of whatever contributes to man's support, happiness, and comfort. But in this regard, what man finds is really not-bread, it is futility. The Apostle Paul warns us against this same futility in a context that stresses the importance of the Word ([Eph. 4:17](#)).

The choice of the verb in [Isaiah 55:2a](#) and this negative noun, *not-bread*, dramatizes the difficulty and the futility of man's ability to find or procure that which will supply his real needs apart from God and His plan (cf. [Deut. 8:3](#)).

"Why spend your hard-earned money on something that will not satisfy?" "Wages" is literally, "toil or labor." Our wages are the result of our toil or work.

People are habitually weighing out what they have earned by toil for that which does not, in the final analysis, truly satisfy. Man, therefore, is left running on the gerbil wheel of fortune in hot pursuit of things—position, power, pleasure, possessions—looking for happiness in all the wrong places and things which are simply incapable of giving it. Is man ever satisfied with what he has? How much money is enough? More! How much pleasure? More! How much power? More!

Compare these verses: [Proverbs 27:20](#); [Ecclesiastes 1:8](#); 4:8; 5:10. There is a void in man which only God can fill, so we naturally have the next point in [Isaiah 55](#).

A Call for Investigation (vss. 2b, 3a)

Verses 2b and 3a call us to an investigation of God's Word, which, far in excess of the purest of gold, reveals and provides the real values of life.

"Listen carefully to me and eat ..." Where do we listen to God? In His Word. The idea is, that by attending to God's Word and by feeding upon its truth, men will find, without money or price, that which they were seeking at so much expense, toil, and pain. Finding and experiencing God's truth will lead to resting in and enjoying the blessings of God's covenant which offers salvation to all men with all its consequent blessings of life. Here and here alone is the source of real security, satisfaction, and significance in life.

Up Close and Personal

Thank the Lord that He is merciful enough to repeat His warnings. Ask for His help to respond to His Word today.

When do you come to God to listen to His Word?

What are you pursuing besides God (money, power, pleasure, etc.)? Why do you think it will satisfy you?

What is holding you back from believing that the Lord through the Word and the Person of Jesus Christ can completely satisfy?

How will you begin to feed more on the Word of God?

DAY 4

The Word

Today's Scripture:

Leviticus 23:39-43; John 7:37-39; Deuteronomy 16:16-17

The Jewish calendar has special celebrations held throughout the year. These festivals were to celebrate or ponder the ways of God. One of these events is called the Feast of Tabernacles.

Leviticus 23:39-43

³⁹ "So beginning with the fifteenth day of the seventh month, after you have gathered the crops of the land, celebrate the festival to the LORD for seven days; the first day is a day of rest, and the eighth day also is a day of rest. ⁴⁰ On the first day you are to take choice fruit from the trees, and palm fronds, leafy branches and poplars, and rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. ⁴¹ Celebrate this as a festival to the LORD for seven days each year. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come; celebrate it in the seventh month. ⁴² Live in booths for seven days: All native-born Israelites are to live in booths ⁴³ so your descendants will know that I had the Israelites live in booths when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.' "

Verse 39-43: This joyous celebration was a required event. All male Israelites had to attend this festival every year. (Deuteronomy 16:16). Wouldn't it be wonderful if our government had built in holidays for everyone and we were required to celebrate them with joy! The Lord had built in holidays for His people but these holidays were for a purpose. It was to give the people time to reflect on the way they had been blessed by God in the past year. By living in the booths, they were reminded of their people's history when God brought a group of slaves out of Egypt and made them into a mighty nation. The Lord is powerful, loving, and a blessing to His people.

Jesus Himself celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles. Obedient to the law, He made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem to be a part of the celebration. But one year He took the event to an entirely new level.

John 7:37-38

³⁷On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. ³⁸Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him."

Verse 37-39: My NIV text note states that "Teachers usually sat, so Jesus drew special attention to His message." Does this remind you of the Charles Spurgeon quote from day one?

Oh, the condescension of God! That he should, as it were, become a beggar to his own creature...

In that culture, the teaching authority sat. But Jesus breaks the cultural rules so that He may beg the people to come. A standing teacher would have been unusual so it would have caught the attention of the people. Today, it would be like someone standing on a box in the street while shouting through a megaphone. Jesus wanted the people to hear His words: "Come to Me." If you are spiritually thirsty, Jesus will fill you. He explains to us how this is done.

John 7:39

³⁹By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

Verse 39: The Holy Spirit is the answer to our every need. When we believe in Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we are given the Holy Spirit, God Himself, to reside within us. The Lord within will enliven us. He who created the heavens and earth creates within us. Somehow the Spirit transforms us into being all we were created to be. This is not a carbon copy of anyone else. Instead our personality, talents, and experiences are energized into more than what we could have ever been on our own yet everything we have ever desired but have been unable to attain. Jim Cymbala explains this truth in this way:

God has given us a very simple equation if only we have the faith to reach out and experience it:

- 1. The Holy Spirit's power is our greatest need.*
- 2. This power and blessing is freely promised to all of God's people.*
- 3. This promise can only be fully received through sincere praying in faith and through waiting on God for His blessing to come.*

This is what happened in the New Testament, and this is the only thing that will satisfy our soul's thirst.

Jesus cried out to the people, desiring to give them everything their souls were longing for. But He was just being obedient to the law.

Deuteronomy 16:16-17

¹⁶ Three times a year all your men must appear before the LORD your God at the place he will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Tabernacles. No man should appear before the LORD empty-handed: ¹⁷ Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the LORD your God has blessed you.

Verse 16-17: Jesus was bringing the greatest gift to the Feast of Tabernacles: God Himself. The Most Blessed in the universe was wanting to bless others with the gift of His eternal salvation which was proven by the giving of the Holy Spirit to dwell in those who believed in Jesus. The Spirit, God Himself, is within us. He is not giving us any leftovers. He wants to make our lives overflowing not barely getting by but living in spiritual abundance. That is reason for true celebration. The Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated by people living in booths. We can celebrate because the Spirit lives in people!

Up Close and Personal

Praise Jesus Christ for giving us the Holy Spirit!

How does it feel to know that the Spirit resides within you (if you are a believer in Christ Jesus)?

How do you draw upon the power of the Holy Spirit in your day to day life?

Why is the Holy Spirit such an amazing gift from Jesus to us?



The Word

Today's Scripture:

Revelation 3:14-21; Isaiah 55:1-2

I am unsure of how to end this week. We have probed the reality of the Lord as being able to satisfy our hearts and delight our souls. Yet, as I look upon the churches in our nation, it seems to be untrue. Our lives do not reflect ones satisfied completely in Christ. As I think about how we act compared to all we have been offered, I must come to the conclusion that we are not accepting God's gifts but choosing our own to the detriment of our souls.

Revelation 3:14-18

¹⁴"To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation. ¹⁵I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! ¹⁶So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. ¹⁷You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. ¹⁸I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.

Verse 14-18: America is the wealthiest nation on earth, yet spiritually we are one of the poorest. We are the fifth largest mission field in the world. Churches from other nations are sending missionaries to convert us! To me, it proves that the majority of American churches are ineffective. We think we are "rich" while in reality we are "poor, wretched, and blind". If we as the church are not finding our full satisfaction in Christ, why would the world want to listen to anything we say? We are hypocrites.

Revelation 3:19

¹⁹Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent.

Verse 19: Repentance. That is the answer we need. The church of God needs to repent from our self-righteous, self-sufficient ways. The Lord tell us to come to Him to receive all we want and need, the answer is Jesus, not ourselves. We must receive His rebuke and discipline so we may experience everything that we were made for: full satisfaction in Him.

Revelation 3:20

²⁰Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.

Verse 20: Once again we see the King of the universe stoop down to us. His church has shut Him out and He reaches out to the very own who closed Him off. In the book "Mr. God, this is Anna," an eight year old girl sees the amazement of this truth this way:

You could, if you wished, deny that Mister God existed, but then any denial didn't alter the fact that Mister God was. No, Mister God was; he was the kingpin, the center, the very heart of things; and this is where it got funny...This is the curious nature of Mister God: that even while he is at the center of all things, he waits outside us and knocks to come in. It is we who open the door. Mister God doesn't break it down and come in; no, he knocks and waits.

Fynn. Mister God, This is Anna. New York: Random House, 1974, p. 167.

I cannot get over the grace of God: He comes to us in our arrogant state and reaches out to us. Why would He want to dine with the very ones who rejected Him? We meet together on Sundays but our hearts are far from Him. For if this was not true our nation would be completely different. We cannot blame the world for being corrupt, for sin is all it knows. The moral blame is upon the church, the only one who can set up moral boundaries. If the church is blind, poor, naked, and wretched what will become of the world?

Revelation 3:21

²¹To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.

Verse 21: Jesus is offering us everything we need in this world, not to just "survive" or make it through but to overcome. He is talking about victory, enjoyment, satisfaction! That is the kind of life I want, don't you? We can have it. It's available. God is offering it to us.

Isaiah 55:1-2

*¹ "Come, all you who are thirsty,
come to the waters;
and you who have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without cost.*

*² Why spend money on what is not bread,
and your labor on what does not satisfy?*

*Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,
and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.*

Verse 1-2: The Lord is willing to meet with us. He is ready to forgive us. He wants to grace us with everything we need in life. All we have to do is come; He is as close as someone knocking on your door.

Up Close and Personal

Confess the ways that you search for satisfaction in this world.

Why is the corruption of society a reflection on the churches?

What are your thoughts about other countries sending missionaries to America?

How does our lack of satisfaction in God affect our testimony about Christ to those who are unbelievers?