**Colossians 2:16-23**

I. Introduction

A. How satisfied are you with Jesus?

1. Paul is reminding us of the fullness we have in Christ (v. 9)

2. He often reminds us of the fullness we have in Christ (see Eph 1:3ff and 3:16-19)

3. While we have fullness in Christ, we often don’t live as though that’s the case. When we lose our satisfaction with Jesus, our hearts get hungry and restless and we start going after cheap substitutes to fill our hunger

B. Sometimes the best defense is a good offense. The best way to avoid harmful substitutes is to proactively purse and be satisfied with the real thing

II. Other substitutes we are tempted to go to when we lose our satisfaction with Jesus

A. Hollow and deceptive philosophy (v. 8)

1. When we lose our sense of wonder with Biblical truth we tend to piece together other philosophies/spiritualities that seem more exciting to us

2. But nothing can compare to the fullness of Christ who is God in the flesh (v. 9-10). I him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (v. 3)

B. Self-imposed discipline and legalism (v. 16, 20-23)

1. When our spiritual lives become stale, one temptation is to try to discipline ourselves back into spiritual renewal, thinking that in our own efforts we can muster up the spirituality we desire

2. But human commands and rules are merely a shadow of the reality which is found in Christ (v. 17)

C. “Spiritual” experiences (v. 18)

1. When our spiritual lives become stale, another temptation is to look for a personal, private, mystical or emotional or spiritual encounter that will bring back a freshness. Many people go from conference to conference or service to service trying to get their spiritual “fix.”

2. But true connection is found not in searching out these mystical experiences, but in simply staying connected to Christ, who is the head and who causes the whole body to grow (v. 19)

D. What do you tend to go towards when your heart is hungry or restless?

Examples: perfectionism, people pleasing, achievement, material purchase, vies, entertainment and distraction, withdrawal

III. How do we continue to find satisfaction in Christ?

 A. Gratitude is one practical way to “feed on Christ” and find satisfaction in hin.

 1. “Overflowing with thankfulness” (v. 7)

2. When we are grateful we even say, “My heart is full.” When we are grateful, we experience ourselves as full, as not lacking or needy.

3. Gratitude is a great offense that is the best defense from many of our temptations (it’s hard to feel anger, anxiety, jealousy, pride, etc. when you are full of gratitude)

 4. The Bible so regularly commands us to be grateful

5. Gratitude is a discipline/practice we need to cultivate (consider Dave’s example on the 55 freeway)

B. How can you practice gratitude this week?

1. Start your day with gratitude. “I saw more clearly than ever, that the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was, to have my soul happy in the Lord. The first thing to be concerned about was not how much I might serve the Lord, or how I might glorify the Lord; but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man may be nourished by God.”—George Mueller

2. End your day with gratitude.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Consider the question posed on Sunday: “How satisfied are you with Jesus?” How would you answer that question at this time in your life, and how do you even feel about that question?

2. Consider some of the things we tend to go to in order to fill ourselves when we are not satisfied in Jesus. Which of those do you most connect with and why? How do you see that playing out in your life?

3. Consider the role that gratitude currently plays in your life. What do you find? As you consider gratitude, what are some of the barriers to gratitude or issues with gratitude that you have?

4. Is there any specific discipline of gratitude you’d like to practice this week?