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The God Who Satisfies

Psalm 104

*When you open your hand,
they are satisfied with good things.*

PSALM 104:28

What is there about nature that allures and soothes so completely? Aching inside, I drive along a trafficked street and come upon a park that autumn has turned into a fairyland: reds, oranges and tree-fields smothered in burnished gold. My mood lifts, comforted at such beauty from the hand of a God who cares.

The desire of the Creator is to give his people soul satisfaction. How full of desires we are! How those desires can plague us when they are unfulfilled! As T. S. Eliot said, "Desire itself is movement, not in itself desirable" (*Four Quartets*). Yet we live constantly thirsty for love, for things, for answers, for "more." **GROUP DISCUSSION.** What do you particularly enjoy in nature, and why?

PERSONAL REFLECTION. What kinds of incidents or situations sometimes cause you to feel the need for something more?

God is the ultimate source of thirst quenching. The more we focus on him, the more satisfaction we will experience. In Psalm 104 David meditates on nature to learn more about God. The result is praise. *Read Psalm 104.*

1. What themes do you see in this psalm?

Which of these do you particularly resonate with?

2. In verses 1-4 David soars in a poetic description of God's greatness. What everyday images does David use to help us begin to understand God's splendor and power?

3. What do you learn about God from verses 5-9?

4. How has God shown his power or his benevolent control in your life? (Think of help that seemed providential, answers to prayer, provision in an intense time of need and so on.)

5. Remembering that the Psalms are poems and almost always have more than one meaning, what universal needs do the following verses show God meets?
Verses 10-16:

Verses 17-18:

Verses 19-26:

6. Psalm 104 shows that the creation is dependent on God. Why do you think it is difficult for us to remember our own dependence on God?

7. Verses 27-30 form a key passage in Psalm 104. It contains summaries and conclusions of what has come before. What is God doing for humanity as part of his creation?

8. What does it mean to be satisfied?

9. Reread verses 31-35. How would you like to trust God for provision or satisfaction in your life right now? Express what you are most in need of today: security, order, variety, renewal, hope, something more basic.

With a sense of expectation, offer your specific needs to God in prayer.

Now or Later

Responding with Praise. Read or sing the following hymn.

As the Deer

*As the deer panteth for the water, so my soul longeth after Thee.
You alone are my heart's desire, and I long to worship Thee.*

*You alone are my strength, my shield;
To You alone may my spirit yield.*

You alone are my heart's desire, and I long to worship Thee.

*I want You more than gold or silver, only You can satisfy.
You alone are the real joy giver and the apple of my eye.*

*You alone are my strength, my shield;
To You alone may my spirit yield.*

You alone are my heart's desire, and I long to worship Thee.

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Worship Journal. In a separate notebook begin a worship journal for deeper meditation. To probe the spiritual meanings of Psalm 104's allusions to water, read the passage on living water in John 4:7-13. Record thoughts and questions. If you enjoy working with images, draw or tape a picture of an abundant source of water, for example a waterfall or a spring, beneath your meditations.