

SATISFIED

Learning to Find Fullness in
Christ Instead of Food

An Online Course by Health Coach Jaci Wightman

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“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst”

(John 6:35)

#1: What If There's Something Better?

Notes from the Video:

Scripture Review:

Let's take another look at the verses we studied. Make some notes and look up cross-references if you'd like:

John 6:35

Psalms 107:9

Isaiah 55:1-2

Self Evaluation Questions:

- Take some time to evaluate what your own soul hunger and thirst feels like. In what ways does it show up in your life? Do you find yourself feeling empty? Hopeless? Restless? Unsettled? Or overwhelmed? What specific words or sensations would you use to describe what you experience when your soul is in need?
- Assess how you usually deal with this inner hunger and thirst. What are the different coping mechanisms you've turned to over the years? In what ways does your relationship with food fit into that paradigm?
- Can you see any connection between your favorite comfort foods and the "mud pies" C.S. Lewis mentioned in his quote? In what ways could these things be a distraction from the "holiday at the sea" rather than a true comfort?
- In the past, how have you let the Lord address your inner hunger? What gospel nourishment have you tasted thus far in your life? Has it ever occurred to you that He might have more blessings waiting for you to experience?

Self Evaluation Questions:

- What do you think Christ is talking about when He speaks in Isaiah 55 of letting our soul delight in “fatness”? In what ways have you already feasted on this fatness? In what ways do you look for nourishment somewhere else?
- Glance one more time at the key scripture for our series in John 6:35, then compare it with John 4:13-14. How does your experience with the gospel compare with Christ’s promise in these verses? Has your soul hunger been filled in the way He described? If not, why do you think that’s the case?

Final Thoughts & Impressions:

#2: Deliver Me: Trying to Fill The Empty Cup

Notes from the Video:

Scripture Review:

Let's take another look at the verses we studied. Make some notes and look up cross-references if you'd like:

Isaiah 44:13-20

Self Evaluation Questions:

- Can you think of any specific examples in your life where you've resembled the carpenter in Isaiah 44? In what ways have you asked food (or anything else) to "deliver" you?
- Look up Jeremiah 2:13. In this verse, the Lord says His people have forsaken Him and reached instead for broken cisterns to try to fill their need. In what ways could your favorite comfort food be seen as one of these marred vessels? What could be the side effects of trying to fill your soul thirst in this way?
- Like Kyle Idleman said, do you ever treat your troubled soul as if it were a growling stomach? Why do you think this is such a tempting practice? How has it worked (or not worked) in your own life?
- Have you ever thought of food as a false god? What were your initial impressions as we discussed this connection? In what ways does your relationship with food fit the description given by Timothy Keller on idolatry?

Self Evaluation Questions:

- In 1 Corinthians 10:7, what is the specific type of idolatry mentioned? Next, look up Ezekiel 16:49 and notice how it echoes this same description. In what ways do you think our current society manifests this type of idolatry? In what ways do you manifest it in your own personal life?
- The scriptures often speak of the “lusts” of our flesh. (Remember that the word “lust” can refer to any type of fleshly craving or physical appetite.) Look up the following verses and ponder what we’re taught about this subject:

Romans 13:14

Titus 2:11-12

1 Peter 2:11

How do you think your relationship with food ties in to these references?

Self Evaluation Questions:

Final Thoughts & Impressions:

#3: Complete and Relentless Self-Honesty

Notes from the Video:

Scripture Review:

Let's take another look at the verses we studied. Make some notes and look up cross-references if you'd like:

John 5:1-9

Mark 10:46-52

Psalms 139:1-12, 23-24

Self Evaluation Questions:

- How do you feel about the phrase “complete and relentless self-honesty”? Is it difficult to take such an honest look at what’s going on deep inside your heart? If so, why? What could be holding you back from baring your soul with that kind of openness and authenticity (even if it’s only to the Lord and yourself)?
- In what ways has food become an “old friend” to you like Colleen Harrison said? Does it ever feel “more familiar than trusting in God”? How so?
- Imagine Christ asking you the same questions He asked Bartimaeus and the lame man. How would you answer Him? What do you really want Him to do for you when it comes to satisfying the deep hungering of your soul?
- Has the adversary been tempting you to rationalize the idolatry of turning to food for comfort? How can relentless self-honesty help you deal with the temptation to remain in denial?

Self Evaluation Questions:

- How are you reacting to the thought of leaving behind your comfort zone and moving to a new place in your relationship with food? What are your biggest concerns? How do you think the Lord can help you with any resistance you may be feeling?

Final Thoughts & Impressions:

#4: A New Focus & A New Power

Notes from the Video:

Scripture Review:

Let's take another look at the verses we studied. Make some notes and look up cross-references if you'd like:

Isaiah chapter 58

1 Thessalonians 1:5

Psalms 36:7-9

Mark 5:25-34

Matthew 13:44

Galatians 5:16, 22-23

Self Evaluation Questions:

- Has your soul ever felt like it's in drought like Isaiah 58 talked about? How does this concept tie in with the idea of soul hunger? What do you think it would feel like to be a watered garden "whose waters fail not" (v. 11)? How would that impact your everyday life?
- If such a thing is really possible, what would you give in order to receive it? Like Matthew 13:44, what would you be willing to sacrifice? How do you think that applies to your relationship with food?
- What has your personal experience been with fasting? Have you ever fasted from anything other than food (social media, using your credit card, etc.)? How do you feel about the idea of fasting from using food as your comfort?
- When it comes to self-control, how have you sought to obtain it in the past? How successful have you been at maintaining it? Have you ever thought about self-control as a gift from the Lord or a fruit of the Spirit? How does that idea change the way you approach your issues with food?

Self Evaluation Questions:

- Look up 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. What does this passage teach us about our weakness and Christ's power? What does Paul say about his weakness in v. 10? How do you think that applies to your personal battle with food? How can we learn to rejoice in our weak moments as Paul did?
- Can you relate your food failures to the woman in Mark 5:26 who "spent all that she had" on a problem she just couldn't fix on her own? Are you willing to offer the same persistence that she did in reaching for the Lord's help? Deep down, do you truly believe He has the power to help you?

Final Thoughts & Impressions:

#5: The Food & Drink That Fills

Notes from the Video:

Scripture Review:

Let's take another look at the verses we studied. Make some notes and look up cross-references if you'd like:

All of John chapter 6

John 15:1-5

Galatians 2:20

Colossians 1:27

Self Evaluation Questions:

- Take a few minutes to compare just “doing religious things” with the idea of abiding in Christ and having a personal relationship with Him. What has your experience with this been in the past? Has your spiritual To-Do list truly brought you closer to the Lord? Why or why not?
- As we ponder Christ’s admonition to eat His flesh and drink His blood, in what ways have you already begun to do this? How have you sought to become one with your Savior? In what ways do you still feel separated or distant from Him?
- In The Message translation of John 6:54, we’re encouraged to bring a “hearty appetite to this eating and drinking.” How can you apply this idea to your efforts to truly come unto Christ and abide in Him?
- In Jeremiah 17:5-8, the Lord uses an analogy that’s similar to John 15. Read through and compare these two passages. How do you think the concept of abiding includes trusting in the Lord like Jeremiah said? How well do you think you trust the Lord in your life right now? In what ways do you think you could trust Him more?

Self Evaluation Questions:

- Continuing with Jeremiah 17, which tree would you say better describes your life? For instance, notice what happened to the tree in verse 8 when adversity hit. What affect did the changing circumstances have on its fruitfulness? Like these trees, how has your connection to the living water (or lack thereof) affected your own sense of abundance in the midst of life's many difficulties?

- For more study on what it means to abide in Christ, here are some additional verses from John:

1 John 2:27-28

1 John 3:24

1 John 4:4, 12-16

Also, go back to John 6 and look specifically at v. 56.

- At this point in our journey, what does the phrase “abide in me” mean to you? How can we truly “dwell” in Christ on a daily basis? (We'll talk a lot more about this in the next 3 sessions.)

Self Evaluation Questions:

Final Thoughts & Impressions:

#6: Abiding in Christ, Part 1

Notes from the Video:

Scripture Review:

Let's take another look at the verses we studied. Make some notes and look up cross-references if you'd like:

Matthew 7:21-23

Ephesians 5:31-32

Self Evaluation Questions:

- In the past, what has your self-management system looked like? How have you used it to meet your emotional needs? What are the different parts of your personal system? Has it involved pleasing your physical senses in various ways?
- How do you feel about the idea of letting go of all self-management and turning your emotional needs over to the Lord? If this idea is uncomfortable, what thoughts and feelings are holding you back?
- What were your impressions about Ephesians 5:31-32? Have you ever thought of your relationship with the Lord being as united and close as a marriage? See Isaiah 62:5, Ezekiel chapter 16, and Revelation 21:2, 9 for more on this symbolism in scripture.
- With regard to Matthew 7, has your life ever resembled the people Jesus described in that passage? For instance, can you honestly say that you *know* Him? Or have you mainly just focused on doing things *for* Him? What needs to change in your life so you can truly abide in Christ in a more personal way?

Self Evaluation Questions:

- In what ways have you already begun to abide in Christ? How do you currently seek Him personally throughout the day? How have you drawn nourishment from Him in moments of need?

Final Thoughts & Impressions:

#7: Abiding in Christ, Part 2

Notes from the Video:

Scripture Review:

Let's take another look at the verses we studied. Make some notes and look up cross-references if you'd like:

Mark 11:24

2 Peter 3:18

Self Evaluation Questions:

- After working through both sessions on abiding in Christ, how is your perspective of this beautiful doctrine changing? In what ways is your soul beginning to hunger for His lasting fullness instead of the temporary fullness of food?
- How did your heart respond to the idea of speaking to Christ directly? How do you think talking to Him specifically will build your relationship with Him? How could it change the moments when you're overtaken by food cravings?
- Evaluate how well you really listen for the Lord's voice rather than just coming to Him with your latest "shopping list." How could you devote more energy to listening for His counsel, guidance, and direction?
- Do any negative emotions like fear, shame, or anxiety arise when you think of having a more personal relationship with the Lord? Why could it be that you feel this way? Do you believe you have to be "good enough" before you can seek Him? How could He calm those feelings in you so you feel free to trust Him more?

Self Evaluation Questions:

- What impressions came to mind as we talked about practicing the Lord's presence? Have you noticed yourself putting limits on when and where He can be with you? What can you do to eradicate those limits and making abiding a continual habit in your life?

Let's review the process of asking in faith for our needs to be met through Christ instead of food. Here's a breakdown of the exercise we talked about in this session. Try it the next time you're driven to eat for reasons other than hunger:

- Stop and just breathe for a minute. See if you can figure out what deep soul need you're trying to satisfy with food. Try to identify what's actually driving your craving.
- Quiet your mind and seek the Lord's presence. Seek to feel Him near you. Ask Him to help you understand what your soul is hungering for.
- Then ask Him to meet the need that's crying out for fulfillment, and ask for the ability to be patient until that answer comes. Then watch in expectation for Him to keep His promise to fill you.

Jot down your experience as you begin to practice this exercise:

Self Evaluation Questions:

If you have additional time in these moments, there are countless other things you can do. (I know these things fall in the category of “doing,” but remember how we said that will still be a part of abiding?) Just make sure whatever you do is for the specific intent of coming to know Christ in a deeper and more personal way:

- Search for verses where the Lord promises to meet your specific inner needs (i.e. for joy, comfort, patience, strength, love, self-control, etc.) Then post these verses where you can be reminded of those promises (maybe on the refrigerator or pantry door?).
- Find other things that help you feel connected to Christ (perhaps through music or spending time meditating or enjoying nature – whatever resonates with you).
- Journal about the unmet needs that continue to show up as soul hunger in your heart. Probe deeper into the circumstances and/or thoughts and feelings that may be creating that particular need. Pray about any additional changes you can make that will help you experience the Lord’s promise of “fatness.”
- Talk to a family member or friend about your transition from relying on food to relying on the Lord. Share the ups and downs you experience as you continue to learn this powerful new way of living.
- Add any other things that work well for you here:

Self Evaluation Questions:

Final Thoughts & Impressions:

#8: Filled With All the Fulness of God

Notes from the Video:

Scripture Review:

Let's take another look at the verses we studied. Make some notes and look up cross-references if you'd like:

Ephesians 3:14-19

1 Corinthians 13:8

Romans 8:35-39

John 15:9-11

Self Evaluation Questions:

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- How would you describe the “extravagant dimensions of Christ’s love”? In what ways has He displayed His love for you in your life?
 - Have you experienced the truth from Romans 8 that nothing in the world can separate you from the Lord’s love? How has this proven true, especially through your deepest trials? If you haven’t felt that, why do you think that is?
 - To see how Christ’s love can address different kinds of soul hunger, let’s look at some promises in scripture. As you ponder each question and look up the verses listed, you can also search for additional references which show how the Lord really can fill you with everything your hungry, thirsty heart could ever need:

Do you need to learn to love the Lord & know His love in return?

- (1 John chapter 4, 2 Thessalonians 3:5)

Do you need to experience more joy and happiness?

- (Psalms 86:4, John 15:11 and 16:24)

Do you need patience to help you endure something hard?

- (Galatians 5:22, Colossians 1:11)

Do you need supernatural strength to tackle a difficult task?

- (Psalms 31:24 and 73:26, 2 Corinthians 12:9)

Self Evaluation Questions:

Do you need guidance to navigate a complicated situation?

- (Psalms 143:8, Job 12:13, Colossians 1:9)

Do you need courage to face something frightening?

- (Romans 8:37-39, 1 John 4:18, 2 Timothy 1:7, Psalm 27:14)

Do you need rest from a heavy load of sorrow?

- (Psalms 43:5 and 116:8-9, Hebrews chapter 4, Revelation 21:4)

Do you need self-control to calm your physical appetite?

- (Galatians 5:16, 1 Thessalonians 1:5, 2 Peter 1:3-8)

Do you need faith to believe Him for a personal miracle?

- (Luke 17:5-6, Hebrews chapter 11)

Do you need peace when the winds seem to be whirling hard around you?

- (Romans 14:17, Philippians 4:6-7)

Self Evaluation Questions:

Or do you simply need to feel more alive and more vibrant and more full of passion for life?

- (Psalms 16:11; 22:26; John 4:13-14; 8:12; 10:10)

To add to that, here are some general references that offer further inspiration:

- Psalm 34; 37:3-5; 63; 71; 84:11-12; 103
- Romans 15:13
- 1 Corinthians 2:9
- 2 Corinthians 9:8
- Ephesians 1:15-23; 3:20-21
- Philippians 2:13; 4:13 and 19
- Hebrews 4:16

With all of these verses in mind, how do you now feel about Paul's phrase "filled with all the fulness of God" (Ephesians 3:19)? How do you think that ties in with your daily experience of your Savior's unfailing love?

Self Evaluation Questions:

- At the close of this course, how have you been changed by the truths presented in these sessions? How can you continue to apply the lessons you've learned? In what ways have you drawn closer to Jesus Christ? How can you continue the process of experiencing His fullness and His love? Take time to really ponder and perhaps even journal your answers to each of these questions.

Thank you so much for joining me in this class. I pray the days ahead will be filled with faith, power, joy, healing, and truckloads of His precious, life-changing love. Abide in Him, and I promise you'll see miracles both big and small, not only when it comes to food, but every single area of your life.

Final Thoughts & Impressions:

“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst”

(John 6:35)