

Time for a Fill Up

Devotional by Pastor Sharon Tidd

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Does anyone, like me, play the gas price game? I always want to fill up when the gas prices are at their lowest, and I'll hold out in the hopes that they will drop just a little bit more before I fill up. But it doesn't always work out too well. A little too often I find myself getting really close to 'empty'; and often when it's most inconvenient to fill up. A few times I have even run out! My Dad always used to tell me that it's cheaper to fill the top half of the tank. I never understood that counsel until I ran out of gas and had to call a tow truck! Ouch! My bank account didn't like that! I keep telling myself I'll never win at this game, but I keep on playing it. Clearly, I'm a slow learner in some areas of my life.

Well, just like gas tanks, our souls and spirits need regular fill-ups. Thankfully, unlike our gas tanks, the cost to fill up our souls never changes! It's free!! Isaiah 55:1-3 speaks of this truth:

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

*Give ear and come to me;
hear me, that your soul may live.
I will make an everlasting covenant with you; my faithful love promised to David.*

Our God is forever extending this invitation to Come. It is extended personally, to each one, individually. It can be refused. It can be ignored. Many in this world do ignore and reject it. But why would we do that? When we are thirsty, when we are spiritually hungry, we need to say "Yes" to God's invitation. We need to come believing that we will be welcomed into His presence, that His arms are opened wide for us, and that all that we need will be fully supplied there.

If we aren't going to God to be spiritually filled, where are we going? Only in God's presence can we be filled with what our hearts and souls need and desire – that for which we hunger and thirst: peace, love, joy, hope, mercy, grace, courage, forgiveness, purity. All of this is available from Him for free. No money down! No payment required! Why? Because Jesus Christ paid the full price when He gave His life on the cross for us. Everything our souls need to thrive is available *gratis* when we come to God.

In accepting His invitation and coming to Him, God then invites us to Listen. What does this mean? It means that our Creator invites us into conversation/dialogue with Him. He invites us to hear His truth and learn from Him. He encourages us to know and listen for His voice. As we do, He assures us that "our souls will live"! Everything that is needed to sustain our souls is found in Him and in His words. Knowing Him and communing with Him, brings life! His words, well heard, bring life! It's only as we listen to God's voice and hear His words that our soul can "delight in the richest of fare". Listen to God is as simple as reading and studying the Bible and prayerfully asking the Spirit of God to speak through it. His truth and wisdom is found in its pages; the great story of His love for us and His gift of salvation.

Are we coming for that fill-up every day? Are we finding the choice fare that He offers? And are we being made alive again as we do? This world offers a lot of alternative ways to fill up our souls, but none will satisfy. Only in coming to God and receiving the nourishment that His Word gives will we be filled. The result of coming and listening to Him, according to Isaiah 55:3, is that God's everlasting covenant of love will be ours to enjoy. As we spend time with Him and open our hearts and minds to Him, His love will fill us to overflowing; we will know what it means to be fully satisfied.

I hope you are coming. I hope you are listening. I hope you know that God's welcome is for you, just as it is for me. I hope you are choosing to get the fill-up that your soul needs from Him each and every day!