

One thing we do, and we may do this subconsciously, is we put people in categories. When we see and hear people we form little categories in our minds and fit people into those categories. Just to mention a couple of them, Pam calls me a Mrs. Kravitz. In case you don't know who Mrs. Kravitz is, there was a TV show between 1964 and 1972 called "Bewitched," starring Elizabeth Montgomery, who played the witch, Samantha. She was married to a mortal, Darrin Stevens, and once they were married, strange things would happen in and about their house when she used her witchcraft.

Mrs. Kravitz was a next door neighbor who stood by the window with binoculars and every time something strange happened at the Stevens' house, she'd call her husband, Abner, and they would go over to the Stevens to find out what was going on, but of course whatever it was she saw would be gone, but she was aware of something going on.

I seem to have that tendency to want to know what's going on. For example about 6 weeks ago, I asked about a neighbor we hadn't seen since last fall. By now, he would have been out cutting his grass twice a week, trimming the bushes and mulching, but he's no where around. I asked another neighbor about him, and they agreed they hadn't seen him, so the wife said she'd find out what happened to him. As it turned out, last fall, he had knee replacement surgery, from that he developed a blood clot behind the knee, so they had to take out the knee and do whatever they do to remove a large blood clot, during that period, he caught an infection and up until about 3 weeks ago, was in Drake hospital, so sometimes it pays to be attentive to what's going on around you. So there is the Mrs. Kravitz group.

Another group, that I knew existed but couldn't put a name on it until I was talking with my son. This is a group that we all encounter in life and when we do, we just roll our eyes and gone on, letting the person go on and on.

Steve and I, were talking about his neighbor, whose mother was a member in my first church, and he grew up in the church. He now has his own family and lives 3 doors from Steve. We were talking about the new convertible he bought and Steve said you mean "one up." I said to him, what do you mean, "one up."

Steve said the neighbors call him "one up" because he is one of those people that if you've done anything, he's done it better. Such as driving a car at 70 miles an hour, he's driven one a hundred, he's always one up, if you jumped out a second story window, he's jumped out a third story, he's one up. So that is another category in which I think we place people and we compare them to others who are just the same, which brings me to the last group of people, I want to talk about.

This is a group we all have or are fairly close too, in fact, many times in our lives, we are in this group, and that is a group of people that is never satisfied. Many of us come and go through this group; but for others, no matter what you do for them, or whatever is done for them, it isn't enough.

Recently, the newspaper ran a Peanuts comic strip, which in the first frame had Snoopy and Charlie Brown sitting together, and Charlie Brown says, "I don't know what makes me happy." Snoopy replies in the second frame, "I'll throw the ball for you," as Charlie Brown just sits there. In the third frame with Charlie Brown and Snoopy still sitting there, Snoopy says, "It usually works for dogs!"

We cannot identify with Snoopy, but many times we can identify with Charlie Brown, and wonder what makes us happy, when are we satisfied to the fullest; sometimes we get no answer, and we go on complaining that we are unsatisfied. This is sounds exactly like the Hebrews, God's chosen people.

After ending up in Egypt through Joseph, the Hebrews had grown to such a large number that the Egyptians were afraid of being overrun by them. Hearing their cries of being in slavery for 400 hundred years, Yahweh sent Moses to gain their release from Pharaoh, and of course we all know the story of their escape from Egypt into the wilderness. It was not long after they were on their journey that they began to complain about the hardships they were going through. They complained when Moses was up on the mountain for 40 days and nights, about the food, and no water, and each time they complained; God reminded them what he had done in bringing them out of Egypt, then he would go one step further and gave them what they wanted.

In Numbers, we find the chosen people have arrived near the land of Canaan, but it was at this point their complaining went way too far. Spies had been sent into Canaan and going through the land they came back with a glowing report of a land flowing with milk and honey, a rich land that God was going to give to them; but the people were afraid of the Canaanites and complained to Moses and Aaron, asking if they had been brought into this land to die. Joshua and Caleb, who were among the spies, tore their clothes, and pleaded with them not to rebel against the Lord. But the people threatened to stone them and because of this Yahweh asked, how long will my people despise me? It was this complaining and not being satisfied, that caused God to state he would destroy the entire group because of their iniquities. Moses pleaded that he not destroy all the people; to which Yahweh agreed and instead of removing everyone, he would remove only those above the age of 20 who had complained and they would not enter the promised land. They would wander in the desert 40 more years, one year for each day the spies went through out the land of Canaan and the complainers would be removed.

After such a history of complaining that is found in the Old Testament, it isn't any wonder then we read these verses in Matthew, where we find they are still an unsatisfied group of people. To put verses 16-19 in perspective, Jesus has been off with his disciples teaching them and going out into surrounding cities preaching. John the Baptist is in prison and he sends some of his disciple to ask Jesus, if he is the Messiah, the one to expect. Jesus tells those sent by John to listen and watch and then to go back and tell John. Then he begins to talk about John, and John's ministry to those around him.

He says, to what shall I compare this generation. It is like children sitting in a marketplace playing, saying to one another, we played the flute, and you did not dance, we wailed and you did not mourn. John came neither eating or drinking and you say he has a demon; the Son of Man came drinking and you say, look a glutton and drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.

Jesus' analogy was that the children played the flute and no one danced, so they wailed and no one mourned, no one was satisfied with what the children were doing, which brought him to the comparison of himself with John. They had rejected John and very few turned to John, and now, they were on the verge of rejecting him. They wouldn't accept John for the way he presented himself, and now they wouldn't accept Jesus because of the way he was seen in their eyes. They never seemed to be satisfied with what God had done for them and was doing for them, but the truth is, we are not that much different than they were, we look around at ourselves and we seem to be very much like those who went before. And so I ask, what more could he have done?

I raise this question because it's true and we do so thinking we will be some day be full satisfied. In our personal lives it is a constant wanting of more and more of material possessions. We materially become a people who want all that we can get and we want it now. We want more today than we had yesterday and the day before and we strive to attain that for ourselves. We are like that in our secular materialistic life, but even more so in our spiritual lives and our relationship with God.

In reality we want more from God than he has already given to us through his Son. We have people who find it too difficult to follow in the footsteps of Christ, so we have to find an easier way to salvation than through the acceptance of Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.

In the last few years, we have taken what God has done for us in Christ and have made a mockery of the salvation he offers to us through Christ because we aren't satisfied with the way God has done things. People have come up with all types of belief systems and all types of practices to demonstrate you don't have to be satisfied with what we read in scripture. We don't need a Savior dying on the cross for us; Christ came into the world to make us feel good. God call us to change our ways, to turn from evil and repent of that which separates from us his love; but we don't want that, we want to be able to say our sins are not that bad, just mistakes or poor decisions, or someone else's fault, not ours; and we want an easy way to the father, and not strictly through Christ, who is the way the truth and the life. People want to believe that inside everyone is a little god that can be brought forth because we are not satisfied with what God has done for us, we want him to do more, so that our lives will be a bed of roses, and not one of loving the Lord our God with all our heart and all our souls, and loving our neighbor as ourselves, going that second mile, and that is hard for us to do. We want things different and made easier.

Proof of this can be seen in the way we communicate with God, and how we want more from God is found in many of our personal prayers. The Lord's prayer states, toward the end, "thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." When Jesus taught this to his disciples, he was instructing them, that their prayers should focus towards God's will, not their or ours; but how many of our own personal prayers end with the addition, "thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven?" Most of them do not, our prayers end, although maybe not spoken, "my will be done!!"

We pray selfishly asking God for what we want, not for God's will to be done and maybe what is best for those for whom we pray. We pray for healing, we pray for those hit by disasters, and so on and so on, because healing and overcoming disasters and so on, is something that we want and maybe that is not according to God's will. So our prayers are selfish because we want more from God. Granted our prayers reflect what we hope will occur, but we also have to remember that our prayers should be according to God's will, which may be different than ours.

In a world filled with wonders and marvels that God has given to us, it is strange then as a people who have so much and received so many blessings from our God, that we want more, but we do. It's reminiscent of a Christmas when I was a boy, image eight children two parents, sitting in a living room, we had gone through all the traditional Christmas presents unwrapping, the room was a mess, and one of my younger brothers looked around and said, "is this all there is?" My parents didn't say a word, just sat there and shook their heads.

We have in this life only one purpose, and that purpose is reflected in the first question in the Larger and Smaller catechism and that is: "What is the chief and end of Man?" Today we would say mankind, but the answer is: "Is to glorify God and enjoy him, forever." I Corinthians 10:31, Paul writes, "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God." That is our purpose in life, to glorify God and enjoy him forever, not to ask for that which we desire but to fulfill the will of God and in doing so, accept that which he has one for us through Jesus Christ our Lord because that is all there is, a life of joy and contentment when one claims Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior - because what more could he do then give to us the gift of his Son and eternal life in Him!!