



# A Satisfactory Life

By Rebecca Mulvaney

She died satisfied. She had lived a long, full life. She grew up in a poor family, one of a dozen siblings raised to love God and work hard. And work hard, she did. As a child and young woman, she worked side-by-side with her mother to care for the big family. She cooked, she sewed, and she cleaned.

Then she met her man. With an invincible love and deep-seated work ethic, they began a life together. They took their children to church and Sunday school; they taught them Christian values through the week. Together they raised gentle and kind, responsible and caring children. Their daughters married gentle men. Their sons married kind women.

With the children grown the larger part of life loomed before her. Family responsibilities, of course, were not over. There were grandchildren to cuddle and rock. There were aging parents to care for. Her many siblings had needs and expectations. She gardened and baked, sharing her goods with neighbors, church bazaars, and county fairs. She spent hours at the sewing machine, creating curtains and quilts and baby-doll clothes. Her husband loved her and encouraged her. Together they read the Bible every day and prayed for their family.

After nearly sixty years of marriage, her husband died, leaving her to face this world alone. In deepest sorrow, she continued to read her Bible and uttered daily prayers for her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. She read devotional books and listened to inspirational tapes. She went to church every Sunday.

Throughout her life she was known for her dedication to her husband and family. Neighbors appreciated her for all the kindnesses she'd extended over the years. Church members revered her for all

the serving she had done. As an old woman she mentally patted herself on the back for living such a good life.

Certainly, she had fulfilled every definition of the Christian woman. Or had she? She had never prayed, "Lord, how do you want to change me?" She had never pleaded with God, "Break my stubborn will, Lord. Make me the woman You want me to be." Change and brokenness were for those who sinned. And she was doing everything right.

She had always avoided small group Bible studies; those women were always getting too personal!

She never answered the application questions at the end of a Bible lesson or devotional; those must be for women who needed to grow spiritually.

She never let anyone know she had any problems.

And as for struggling with her attitudes or thoughts, well she just didn't.

She had so much to be proud about that she found it hard to be humble. Underlying her oft-used humble-sounding phrases, her attitude was self-righteous and judgmental of others. She never saw her own sinful selfishness. She never bowed her knee.

*That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:10-11*

### **Reflect & Respond:**

- 1) Do you tend to wrestle with the hard application questions at the end of a Bible lesson or devotional (like this one), or do you skip over them?
- 2) God calls us to more than a life of good actions; He calls us to unrestrained intimacy and involvement with Himself. In light of His furious longing for your heart, what is your response?
- 3) If Jesus were to ask you, right now—*How do you want me to heal you, change you, grow you?* What would you say? Seriously, what would your answer be?



Rebecca (Bekah) Mulvaney finds a deep level of satisfaction in encouraging women, teaching and writing, jogging with friends, and appreciating God's creation from her "perch" overlooking Beaver Lake. She derives further satisfaction in serving the Rogers community alongside her husband, witnessing the faithful lives her adult children are living, and spending time with her six grandchildren. But through it all, she realizes that there is no true fulfillment outside of Jesus Christ, and that He is most satisfied with her when she finds her ultimate satisfaction *in Him*. She is author of [Quiet Moments for Busy Moms](#). Bekah can be reached at [rmulvaney@cox.net](mailto:rmulvaney@cox.net).