

Got Thirst - Part 3

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[0 : 00] Father, as we come to your word now, may you, oh, give us that living water. We need a big drink. So will you grant us that by your grace, that we may be refreshed in our souls.

May this entire service serve as your refreshment for us. For we have to enter back into the fight. And we don't need platitudes or self-help theories or just pats on the back. We need to hear your word. We need to hear from you. We need to worship. And we've sought to do that in singing to you in the sacrament and prayer and giving. And now in your word. Anoint your unworthy servant. To preach your word. In season and out of season.

For the glory of Christ alone. In Jesus' name. Amen. John chapter 7. Hope to finish this up today so we can move into chapter 8.

[1 : 15] A very familiar passage there. But chapter 7 still has something to tell us. So we're going to look at it again. On the last day of the feast.

The great day. Jesus stood up and cried out. If anyone thirsts. Let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me. As the scripture has said.

Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. Now this he said about the spirit. Whom those who believed in him were to receive. For as yet the spirit had not been given.

Because Jesus was not yet glorified. When they heard these words. Some of them. Some of the people said. This really is the prophet. Others said. This is the Christ. Some said.

Is the Christ to come from Galilee? Has not the scripture said. That the Christ comes from the offspring of David. And comes from Bethlehem. The village where David was.

[2 : 10] So there was a division among the people over him. Some of them wanted to arrest him. But no one laid hands on him. The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees.

Who said to them. Why did you not bring him? The officers said. No one ever spoke like this man. The Pharisees answered them.

Have you also been deceived? Have any of your authorities. Or the Pharisees believed in him? But this crowd. This crowd that does not know the law.

Is accursed. Nicodemus. Who had gone to him before. And who was one of them. Said to them. Does our law judge a man. Without first giving him a hearing.

And learning what he does. They replied. Are you from Galilee too? Search and see. That no prophet arises.

[3 : 05] From Galilee. That is the word of the Lord. You may be seated. Always have to laugh a little bit. When I read that.

Wow. Sad. Wow. Sad. Don't drink the water.

Don't drink the water. That was drilled into me. On a mission trip to Haiti. Don't.

You're going to say Mexico. Didn't you? Come on. Admit it. You're thinking Mexico. No. It was Haiti. They told us. Don't buy drinks from street vendors. Don't eat the fruit from street vendors.

Our missionary that we stayed with. Had a filtration system. In his home. So we could. Drink the water. But even then. They said. Go easy on the soup.

[4 : 05] Kev. Don't eat too much of the soup. I ate too much of the soup. It was good soup.

And on the way back on the plane. I began to have soupitis. Wasn't too bad. I didn't eat too much. But my stomach began to rebuke me.

For not listening. Andrew. You know what I mean bro? I know. You know I do it. He knows me. He knew I do it. You know the water doesn't bother Haitians. Because their bodies are used to the microbes.

And organisms that are in their water. You know sometimes our food. Bothers people who come here. Because they're not used to our stuff. But Haiti has a particular problem with clean water. Don't drink the water. Spiritually speaking. I think Jesus' water seems toxic to those who don't trust him. And so they too don't drink.

[5 : 09] Don't drink that water. From that church. From Jesus. Because people are afraid to turn their lives over to Jesus. So even as Christians.

We balk. We have a hard time sometimes. Turning our circumstances of our lives over to Jesus. Sometimes we get even afraid. To drink the water. You know we ask Jesus to take the wheel. In a crisis.

But when the crisis is over. We push him out of the driver's seat. And we want the wheel back. When you truly taste and see that the Lord is good.

You want to drink more and more. You become addicted to living water. Got thirst?

[6 : 11] I ended last time by asking a question. A couple questions. Well one big question. I gave. There were three answers. I only gave you two. The question was this. Why do we as Christians. After coming to Jesus.

Still drink the poison of our culture. And I just gave. I just run it off. Two thoughts. One. Because we truly don't think Jesus is enough. And see if he's not enough.

Then we need more of something else. And our culture tells us. You need more. More. More. More. And so we tend to buy into that. And sometimes. Even as Christians. We are afraid that Jesus just isn't enough.

He can't really. He's not. We need more than him. A lot more sometimes. I just mentioned that last time. The second thing I noticed is that. We're. Because of this. We're. Because.

We're not spending enough time. To get to know Jesus very well. You know. We kind of breeze through devotions. We breeze through. We want instant spirituality. We. We. We read as little.

[7 : 06] A scripture as we can. We pray as little as we can. And yet. We expect to stand against the forces of darkness. In our culture. It don't work that way. We just.

Not spending enough time. Because the only way to get to know someone. I. I know this is the. The. The internet age. And social. And the. You know. Social media. And. And.

Video chatting. But the only way to get to really know somebody. Is to spend time with them. That's still true. The person on the screen.

You think you know them. But there's a lot missing. And you don't really find out. Until you're face to face. And you're doing life together.

That's when you really find out. Who this person truly is. Because on the screen. Brothers and sisters. I look quite good on the screen. I mean. I can. I can. I can.

[8 : 04] I can. I can do the screen thing. You don't even know if I'm wearing pants. On the screen. That's how the screen. But when we get together.

You get to see my body language. You get to see how I do life. You get to see. How I deal with anger. How I deal with stress. How I deal with. You get to. Come on somebody. Just. You can say amen. Help me out.

I'm not against. Meeting your love of their life online. I'm just saying. You better spend some time together. Before you say I do. Jesus. We only get to know him.

When we spend. As we spend time. And spend time in his word. Spend time beholding him there. And watch this. Spend time applying the word. When you apply the word. You go up.

You really get to know Jesus a little bit more. Because now you find out. If he'll keep it. When you spend time. In fellowship with God's people. And you're growing.

[9 : 00] And we're learning together. And doing life together. You're getting to know Jesus better. Through his people. When you're serving. And giving of yourself. In the name of.

Your time. Town and treasure. Becomes Jesus. See. And it belongs to him. And you're. Usually. You're going to grow. In your knowledge of Jesus. You're going to get to know him better.

But here's the third thing. The third thing. And I. This is. Why do we. Drink the poison. I just call it. Causes.

Political causes. Social causes. Ministry causes. They become more important than him. Poison. Then they become poison. They may be okay by themselves. But now they become poison.

Because they become. Become more important than him. So Pastor Kevin. What. And you know it's true.

[10:01] Because we divide the church. Over those things. So they really become important. Who did you vote for? We just had midterm elections.

How could you be a Christian. And vote for that person. Are you out of your mind? That is not even a good question. Who you vote for does not determine.

If you're saved. Are you listening out there somewhere? Because they got it.

I wonder about you people. It doesn't determine. I listen to these talk shows. And Christian talk shows. And people will call them. How could. How could those people be Christians.

And vote for a Democrat. Or how could those people be Christians. And vote for a Republican. And I'm sitting there going. Oh say something. Defend the unity of the church.

[11:00] Defend the kingdom of God. That is greater. Than the kingdom of America. And who you voted for. And they don't. I never heard one do it yet.

Yeah. But why. Do we fall for causes. And. And. And. And. Social. Issues. That we're going to. Black lives matter. No they don't. Blue lives matter.

No they don't. Every life matters. No they don't. And. And you can't be a Christian. You're not. They become more important than Jesus.

You know why? Causes. Are easier to control. And follow. Than Jesus. Write that down somewhere. Tweet that.

Politics. Just listen to your favorite commentator. And. And only that side by the way. And get out and vote. That's all you got to do. Social. Help the poor.

[11:58] Tutor a kid. Give some money. Talk to the right people. Who have power. Get more funding. March and have rallies. Volunteer at a food bank. Or a school. That's much easier.

Than submitting your heart and life. To Jesus. That's much easier. Than repenting of your sin. And confessing it. That's more. That's a lot easier. Than admitting you were wrong.

Because you judge some person. Unjustly. It's easier. To pull a lever. It's easier.

To. To. To. To. To do something. Give some money somewhere. Than to deal with an ungodly habit in your heart. It's easier to do those things.

Than to say no to your will. Or to submit your will to Jesus. For your life. You see those things. It's much easier.

[12:58] Than following Jesus. Regularly. Drinking of the living water. That Jesus gives by faith. Purifies. Our spiritual system.

So we crave to be holy. That is be like him. In every. And morally speaking. And in our lifestyle. We want more of his word. In our lives. And we find strength.

To stand against the devil. As he tries to trick us. And get us off on tangents. And get us off on causes. And get us off on politics. And the whole time.

We're drinking poison. Just a thought. I tossed it out there. Take it for what it's worth. But here's another thing. Here's the big thing in this passage.

Besides what I just said about living water. Jesus life-giving water. Makes us life-giving. See that's. Whoever believes.

[13:53] To me. As the scripture has said. Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. And John says. He's talking about the Holy Spirit. See that's. This is where we go. When you're drinking living water.

John's editorial comment explains. That the streams of living water. Flowing. Flowing from our hearts. It flows. As we come to Jesus by faith.

And drink. And drink. And drink. And drink. We don't come once. We keep coming. And you got to understand. That no one drinks from Jesus. Unless they are drawn by the Holy Spirit.

You see that in chapter 6 verse 44. We saw that already. No one comes to me. That's the father who sent me draws him. So the Holy Spirit. Draws us.

To Jesus. In chapter 3. We saw Nicodemus. And how the spirit. He. You must be born again. And how the spirit of God. Flows. And we don't know where he comes.

[14:50] And how he goes. He just shows up. Because he's sovereign. He don't ask your permission. He shows up into a person's life. And. And. And. And makes them alive spiritually. And John tells us.

Then you can. Jesus said. You can then see the kingdom of God. Because you couldn't see it before. Now when the spirit makes you alive. You can see the kingdom. And. You enter the kingdom.

And that's all the work of the spirit. Drawing. He's always at work. But now Jesus is telling us. That the spirit doesn't leave us after that.

He takes up residence in us. And produces. Jesus. Paul's going to come along later. In Ephesians chapter 5. And. And remind us. That we need to be filled.

Continually. Be not drunk with wine. He says. But be filled. Be under the. Not under the influence of alcohol. Not under the influence of drugs. But under the influence of the spirit.

[15 : 48] Continually. As we. And. And that happens as we come to God. Crying out to Jesus. Help me. Use me. I am submitting ourselves to him. You know what I'm saying? I'm yours.

He won't fill you. If you're determined to do your will. He fills those who submit to his will. Why would he give you that kind of power?

So you can go and destroy folk. No. He fills you. Again and again with his spirit. That is taking greater power and presence. He's always with you.

Don't get me wrong. But Paul says we need to be continually filled. Continually letting the spirit have us. So we can do great things through us in his way.

In this way your heart. Which is the center of your being. Ah. Your mind. Your will. Your emotions. Your desires. Your ambitions. Ah. They will overflow with the spirit's influence.

[16 : 51] And then. And then as this. The spirit has this way. Of overflowing the banks. As it were. And Jesus says you will touch others.

He will touch others through you. Rick Phillips says there's a river of growth and fruitfulness.

As the spirit makes the word come alive in our hearts. We want more of his word. And that word is living, active, and produces. Isn't that what Psalm 1 is about?

Do you remember Psalm 1? First. Blessed is the man. Who walks not in the counsel of the wicked. No stands in the way of sinners. No sits in the seat of scoffers.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord. And on his law he meditates day and night. Watch this. He is like a tree planted by streams of water. That yields his fruit in his season.

[17 : 47] And his leaf does not wither. And all that he does he prospers. What's happening here? There's a river flowing.

That nourishes. The child of God. A river flowing. As that child of God trusts in the word of God. Not in his own wisdom.

Not in the wisdom of Twitter. Not in the wisdom of the culture. But trusts in the word of God. And banks his life on the word of God.

Stream. A stream from God nourishes him. Here's the thing. Jesus says the stream is in us now.

That stream that nourishes us. That helps us grow. And prosper. And deepen. In our faith. And are used more by God.

[18 : 47] That stream he's describing. Jesus says the stream is in you. Because the spirit is in you. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Streams of waters are refreshing and nourishing. And as you drink continually from that stream of faith in Christ and his word.

As you continue to drink and nourish and allow you and plant your life in that stream. What happens is you. He uses you.

To refresh and nourish those around you. Good works of service. Godly counsel flow from you.

Good friendship. Oh that we have friends who would tell us the truth in love. Prayer flows from you.

[19 : 49] So you are praying not just for yourself. That's good by the way. You're praying. You're interceding for the church and for the world. Your prayers are kingdom prayers.

You're not just focused on you. You're focused on the work of God. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done. Hallowed be thy name. You're praying for those things. You're praying for the big picture. And maybe even mentoring people.

Mentoring someone in the faith or a young person. See you're touching. Things are touching.

You're doing your work. You go to your job and you do it well. And you do it with professional.

Better than professionalism. You do it with righteousness. People are touched. But here's the thing.

I had just a priestess when I was in Crete to our missionaries. You can either be a stream or you can be a pond. You see streams have fresh water flowing all the time.

[20 : 51] The current then can remove all kinds of junk that gets in and washes it away. Now of course we know we still should treat the stream before you drink it.

Amen. Hallelujah. But you have an opportunity. Depending where the source is, you can drink it and it's refreshing and wonderful. But ponds are just stagnant pools of water and a depression in the ground.

Some can be pretty big, but rainwater just falls in ponds. Sometimes there's an underwater spring that might give it a little something, but it's still a pond.

It doesn't go anywhere. It doesn't flow. There's no real current. Algae forms in them and all kinds of living things are in there and a lot of things die in that pond.

And it's all there in the pond. Don't go nowhere. Don't drink the pond water. Kids, if you still don't drink the pond water without boiling it and straining it, of course.

[22 : 04] We can either, by the presence of Jesus in us, be a river of refreshment that satisfies spiritual thirst among those around us.

We're pointing them to a new source of significance, satisfaction, and safety. Right? Remember security. Because you have a constant flow of the spirit in your life, you are able to have the point of the people to that same source of life.

Or you can be a pond. Or you can be a pond. It's like damming up the water flow, as it were.

The spirit's in you because you're a Christian. But you're damming up the water flow. Rivers stay fresh. Ponds, not so much. Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit flowing as a stream through our lives.

If we are a pond, we merely soak up people's discontent. We wallow in our own discontent. And people get nothing from you that will lead them to Christ.

[23 : 22] Even when we help, the help we give is self-focused because we're a pond. It's unhealthy spiritually.

We need rivers. Jesus calls us to be rivers of living water. Rivers of significance and satisfaction and safety that flows from him.

From knowing him. From being his. For being accepted by him. For belonging to him. For being at his service. Because he is love. That's the mission.

That's what we need. The impurities are constantly being washed.

Brought to the surface and washed. Our mission statement of our church currently speaks of us being agents of grace, justice, and mercy. Ponds can't be agents of grace, justice, and mercy.

[24 : 20] Only streams. Only streams of living water can be this. Are we damning up?

Are some of us damning up? One of the results of COVID, which we are still thinking, this country, we got it. The world, the effects of COVID have been huge.

Even upon the church in so many ways. And then we had other issues of politics and race. All these things impacted the body of Christ. We're having what I call a pandemic.

Because we're all being tempted in this time to turn inward.

To turn inward on ourselves and our own hurts and pains. And they're real hurts and pains. I'm not saying they're not brothers and sisters. But if you turn inward, you become a pond.

[25 : 27] And there's no life giving coming from you. Because you're not really receiving life. We're focused on our hurts and dissatisfactions.

And even if we do outreach. Even if you're a pond and you're trying to do outreach. You're giving people your self-centeredness.

You're spreading your hurt. You're spreading your pain. I know you don't mean to. But that's what you're doing. If you're not allowing the refreshing spring that Jesus is to satisfy you.

We have to find ultimate satisfaction in him alone. Not even in his people. In him alone. And then, his people.

We come together to help each other. See, ponds destroy. They don't mean to, but they do.

[26 : 29] They're hurt. Ponds want to receive, but not give. Ponds are too busy, too tired, too hurt. But you're not too banged up for Jesus.

You're not too banged up for Jesus. He wants to refresh, refreshing you. He wants to freshen you up. I'm like, Lord, freshen me up.

I want the living water. Ponds think that no one else cares but me. Ponds think that I'm the only one who sees it. Ponds think I'm the only one who's hurting. See?

No, you're not. Living water, though, brings healing to ponds. It opens up the channels and the banks and gives a channel for the, and you can start flowing again.

And you can start dealing with the hurt, the pain, the anger, the discontent. And you find out that, you know something, you're actually part of the problem, too. Because we're all messed up.

[27 : 37] And we all need the same living water. And when we come together and seek the living water, revival takes place. Things happen when the people of God come together and seek the living water that Christ gives and start fighting each other.

And biting and devouring one another. We need to gulp down some Jesus together in kingdom prayer, crying out to him, not just for yourself, but for the body.

Refresh us. Fill us. I've got to finish this. I want to say, I'm going to say, end this real quick.

There's one last thing, and I'm going to say, I'm going to say it in three minutes or two. That living water that I taught you about, it also divides.

If you look down the rest of the passage, three groups of people get divided about it. You've got the crowd. You've got the officers sent to arrest Jesus and the ones who sent them.

[28 : 43] And then you've got the Pharisees and leaders themselves. They all get divided because of the living water. Jesus divides, y'all. But he divides those who don't believe.

He unifies those who do. He prays for it in John 17. He wants to unify his people around him and his kingdom and his purposes.

But notice, when you offer living water to people who don't believe, there's going to come division.

Some of them don't think they know Jesus.

He's a prophet like Moses. He's the Christ. But when they say he's the Christ, you get the impression they don't really think what Jesus is thinking. There, the Jewish mentality was, Messiah, Prince, war.

He's going to come and deliver us from the Romans. Remember, I said this many, many times. And that was their thinking. So when they say he's the Christ, they still didn't really know who he was.

The people, so they're divided.

[29 : 50] And then the soldiers, I love the soldiers, 45 and 49. The soldiers are overwhelmed by the presence of Jesus. They show up. They're supposed to arrest Jesus. And they're listening. And they're saying, whoa, boy.

They went to arrest Jesus. And he arrested them with his word. That's what happens when you give Jesus a listening. When you really start listening to Jesus, just stop shutting him out.

Stop writing him off. If you're listening and you don't know the Lord, listen. Just don't reserve judgment. Just go to the Gospel of John. Go to the Gospel. And just read.

And just say, hey, if you're real, when you give Jesus a fair listening, you go, no man ever spoke like that. No man, that guy, some kind of guy.

Wow. They come back to the priest and they are mad at them. Why didn't you bring him? What is the problem? We sent you to get him. And they're like, we couldn't touch him.

[30 : 52] He was amazing. That's, have you met that Jesus? Let me ask all of you. Have you met that Jesus? Have you met that Jesus where his word, where his person and his word amazes you and call and snatches you up and says, hold it.

I can't, I can't ignore him anymore. I can't ignore this anymore. Because he's speaking. Is that your Jesus? Because that's the Jesus of the Bible. The last thing, the last group were committed to their unbelief.

Committed to their ignorance. And that was the religious leaders were committed to hate Jesus. Even one of their own, Nicodemus says, point of order.

Mr. Moderator, point of order, Mr. Rabbi. Does our law condemn somebody before we hear them? In other words, isn't a man innocent and proving guilty? Doesn't he get to defend himself?

Doesn't he get to hear the charges against him? Doesn't he get to confront his accusers? That's what he's saying. And that's our law. That's our law on that kind of thinking. And they didn't want to hear it.

[32 : 00] They changed the subject. They got spiritual. Does any prophet, dum-dum, come from Galilee? Shut up, Nick. Sit down. You're out of order.

Jesus divides. But when we trust in him, he unifies us. Because the kingdom of God is made up of people who don't all think alike about life.

But they all think alike about Jesus. They don't think alike about politics. They don't think alike about racial issues. They don't think alike maybe about social issues. And where their kids should go to school.

And what's the best way to school your kids. They got all those other things. But those things are down here somewhere. They think alike about the kingdom. And that Jesus is reigning.

And that he's reigning over all things. And all of our life, every part of our lives belong to him. And we are family in Christ. And we belong to him. And we're drinking from the same river.

[33 : 04] That unites. Unites. So what are you drinking? I know you're thirsty. You're human.

But what are you drinking? If you haven't come to Jesus, then what you're drinking won't satisfy you. I know you think it will. It may for a moment, I want to tell you. But it won't in the end.

It can't. It can't satisfy you because you're a human being creating an image of God. You deserve more. You're made for more.

So the things of this materialism, material stuff, it won't satisfy you because you need more. You're made for more. You're only going to find that more in Jesus. Listen to him.

And to you people of God, my brothers and sisters, my mothers and fathers, our healing comes as we come together to drink from the same fountain who is Christ.

[34 : 01] We drink from the same river. We do it together. Matter of fact, we help each other get in the river. As it were. As it were. We help each other come to Christ.

We help each other. We point each other. We pray and point each other to that river and say, drink, my brother. Drink, my sister. That's how we heal.

That's how a new city will heal and prosper. Drinking together. Father, help us. There's so much trying to pull us apart.

Deliver us from it. Help us to repent where we need to. And help us to put our arms around one another. And seek first your kingdom and what you provide.

Your living water in your son. Refresh our souls. So we can stand against the enemy. We can stand against our own flesh.

[35 : 08] Help us, Lord. For Jesus' sake. Amen.