

If Anyone Is Thirsty

John 7:37-52

BI: Thirst is a gracious gift of God that exposes our need and begs that we quench it with living water.

Read John 7:37-52

Introduction:

This morning I want to talk to you about water. Yes, you heard me right. We'll talk about Jesus in a minute but first let's talk about water. Water is an amazing gift of God. And it appears that liquid water is a gift God has given exclusive to plan earth. As far as we know there are no other planets in our galaxy that have liquid water. And that's not a guess. In 2009 NASA launched the Kepler telescope—costing over half a billion dollars—to monitor 145,000 stars for evidence of orbiting planets.¹ What are they looking for? They're looking for planets with liquid water. Why? Because science understands that where there is life there must be water.

As of 2013 there has been confirmed nearly a thousand exoplanets in other solar systems of our galaxy. So far, however, none seem to have liquid water. Why? Because for a planet to have liquid water (rather than ice or steam) certain conditions need to be in play. For example, the planet needs to orbit its sun in what is known as a “habitable zone.” That is, it can't be too near or too far away from its sun. If it's too near, the water becomes steam. If it's too far away it turns to ice.

Second, for a planet to have water it has to have the right mass. If it's too small (like our moon) it doesn't have enough gravity to maintain an atmosphere. On the other hand, if it's too massive it will retain the wrong kind of atmosphere which makes it uninhabitable.

Third, the planet must have the right composition. For example, even if our moon had sufficient mass to retain an atmosphere it doesn't have many of the necessary elements (like iron) to make it happen. And these are just a few of the necessary conditions that make a planet suitable for water. And where there is no water, there is no life. So one of the fundamental reasons planet earth is a living planet is because it has liquid water – and lots of it.

Approx. 2/3 of earth's surface is covered by water. That's a lot of water! In fact, if the earth were completely smooth and there were no mountains or valleys, water would cover the entire globe at a depth of 8,000 feet... everywhere!²“Water is a very unique

¹ From Answers in Genesis website: article entitled *Just Right for Life* (December 15, 2013) viewed on June 6, 2014. <https://answersingenesis.org/astronomy/extrasolar-planets/just-right-for-life/>

² *Answers in Genesis* website: article entitled *Liquid Water and the Earth* (June 17, 2009) viewed on June 6, 2014. <https://answersingenesis.org/kids/science/liquid-water-and-the-earth/>

substance. Humans and animals need water to survive. Plants need water to grow. The water in the ocean affects our weather and provides a home to billions of sea creatures.”³ There is life on earth because there is water.

One author writes: “Most of us have heard lists of water’s many other astounding properties. For example it is the only known compound whose solid form (ice) floats above the liquid form, enabling fish and other life in rivers and lakes to survive the long winter without freezing solid. It is also the earth’s ‘universal dissolver,’ moving and recycling vital chemicals and nutrients, carrying them to the plants and animals that need them. Water even dissolves oxygen from the air and brings it to the creatures in the sea.⁴ So to say the least, water is a precious gift of God. But it’s not just a gift to our planet. Water is also essential to human life.

Up to 60 percent of an adult’s body weight and about 74 percent of a newborn’s body weight is water, making it the largest single substance in the human body.⁵ Here's what water does for you:

- It helps carry nutrients to all the cells in your body.
- It helps carry waste products from the cells.
- It is a part of essential reactions within the body.
- It helps regulate body temperature by absorbing heat generated by your metabolism and eliminating excess heat through sweating.
- It helps with digestion of food.
- It helps lubricate your joints and accomplishes many other things to enable us to live.⁶

What’s the point of all of this? Well, I want you to feel the magnitude how much we benefit from the gift of liquid water in order to help us see that God’s gift of spiritual water is exponentially superior! And you can only get it through Christ. Let’s read our text for this morning.

Read John 7:37-39

I. Water Is A Metaphor for Eternal Life:

³ Ibid

⁴ *Answers in Genesis* website: article entitled *Experiment: Water’s Life-Saving Secret*, by Heather Bruce (December 11, 2012) viewed on 06/06/2014. www.answersingenesis.org/physics/experiment-waters-life-saving-secret/

⁵ University of Rochester Medical Center website – Health Encyclopedia, *Why Your Body Needs Water*. Viewed 06/06/2014; www.urmc.rochester.edu/encyclopedia/content.aspx?ContentTypeID=1&ContentID=1499

⁶ Ibid

1. Just as every human being needs physical water to live in this world, so we all must drink spiritual water to live in the world to come.
2. The analogy of spiritual water for spiritual life is used throughout the Scriptures.
 - A. God said through Isaiah (12:3) that someday Israel will “joyously draw water from the springs of salvation.”
 - B. In another place (Isa. 55:1–3) God invites people to salvation by exclaiming: “Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters.”
 - C. Through the prophet Jeremiah God chides his people because (Jer. 2:13) “They have forsaken Me, The fountain of living waters, To hew for themselves cisterns, Broken cisterns That can hold no water.” (Notice that in this passage, God give Himself a name: The Fountain of living waters).
 - D. Likewise to the woman at the well (Jn. 4:13) Jesus said: “Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.”
3. So God frequently uses water as a metaphor for eternal life? Why? Because man has always known that there can be no life without water. So what better way to call sinners to pass out of death into life than to invite them to drink freely of God’s living waters.

II. Water is offered to All Who Are Thirsty:

1. (37) “If anyone is thirsty.” If water is the cure, thirst is the problem. When you think about it, thirst is a wonderful gift of God. How terrible would it have been if God had created us to need water for life but didn’t design a warning system in our bodies to tell us when we are running low. We would become imperceptibly dehydrated and suffer the consequence without warning.

Can you imagine what summertime in Texas would be like if God had not designed into humans a powerful sense of thirst? By the beginning of July we would see people falling to the ground all over the place! And that might be the first symptom that they weren’t drinking enough water.

2. But God in His mercy designed us with an internal warning system to let us know whenever our bodies start becoming deficient in life-sustaining water. And that warning system is called “Thirst.” We sense it first in our mouths. And then as we become more and more dehydrated we begin to experience other symptoms as well. It’s like a warning bell that gets louder and louder the longer we go without water.

Dehydration is dangerous condition. The University of Rochester Medical center reports that dehydration can influence your mental functioning, your heart rate, and your ability to regulate body temperature and blood pressure. If you lose even 1 percent of your body weight in water, your physical performance is affected and

you feel tired. If you lose 2 to 4 percent, your mental functioning is affected; a loss of more than 10 percent of your body weight is a medical emergency and if not reversed can lead to death.⁷

3. Again, this is a powerful metaphor for the sinner's predicament. All men need "living water" for spiritual life, so all men are thirsty. But, amazing as it may sound, this doesn't mean that everyone senses their thirst for God. In fact the Bible tells us repeatedly that sinful men do everything in their power to subdue that thirst – they "suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom. 1). This is why Jesus says, "IF anyone is thirsty." Not everyone senses their need for God.

4. So what do you do when you refuse to drink water? You simply drink something else and hope that it satisfies. Again, Paul says in Rom. 1 that sinners not only "suppress the truth in unrighteousness" but they also "exchange the glory of the incorruptible God for images (idols)." You see, your soul longs for God. Your spirit thirsts for the life-giving refreshment that only comes from God. But because of our guilt and sin we naturally flee from God. And the result of that is inevitable: "For the wages of sin is... death."

5. You see, to expand upon Jesus' metaphor, your soul cannot live without the life-giving water that only God can supply. And your soul thirsts for God. You may be trying to quench that thirst by drinking deeply of entertainment, or money, or possessions, or a particular relationship, or education, or sex, or alcohol, or food, or sports, or career, but none of those things can satisfy! None of those things can give you life! You must get life from God.

6. Perhaps this morning the HS is revealing to you that your deep desire for other things is merely a cover-up for the thing your soul truly thirst for. What do you do now? Where can you find this living water?

III. Jesus is the Fountain of Living Water:

1. Notice what Jesus says: "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink." It may not be intuitive to us, but in this statement Jesus was offering Himself as Israel's Messiah – the fountain of living water.

2. We need to be reminded now that Jesus offers this public invitation on the last day of the Feast of Booths. Dr. Constable helps us understand the importance of this when he writes:

Early, on each of the seven mornings of the feast, the high priest would lead a procession from the Pool of Siloam to the temple. Another priest would first fill a golden [vessel] with water from the pool. He would then carry it through the Water Gate, located on the south side of the temple and into the temple courtyard.

⁷ University of Rochester Medical Center website – Health Encyclopedia, Why Your Body Needs Water. Viewed 06/06/2014; www.urmc.rochester.edu/encyclopedia/content.aspx?ContentTypeID=1&ContentID=1499

There he would ceremoniously pour the water into a silver basin on the west side of the brazen altar, from which it would flow through a tube to the base of the altar. Many Jews would accompany the priests. Some of them would drink from the pool, while others would chant Isa. 55:1 and 12:3 “Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters. Joyously draw water from the springs of salvation.” This was such a happy occasion that the Mishnah stated, “He that never has seen the joy of the Water-drawing has never in his life seen joy!”...

The pouring out of water represented God’s provision of water in the [desert where Israel wandered 40 years], and His provision of refreshment and cleansing in the messianic age...The Jews considered God’s provision of water in the wilderness, and the rain in the [promised] land, as harbingers of His great blessing on the nation under Messiah’s reign⁸

3. You see, friends, when Jesus stood up and cried out on the last day of the feast “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink,” He was actually offering Himself as Israel’s Messiah. And His promise was that “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his inmost being will flow rivers of living water!’”
4. What did He mean by “From [your] inmost being will flow rivers of living water”? Read v. 39.
5. You see, to believe in Christ is to welcome the HS to take up residence within you. He is the life-giving, soul-refreshing water of God. To possess Him is to possess not only eternal life but everything you need for life and godliness in this life as well.
6. The only question left is, how will you respond to Jesus’ invitation? Not everyone responds well. (Read 40-44)
7. You see, just as is true today, the people in Jesus’ day (despite all the evidence that He was truly the Son of God) were unsettled, indecisive, and most were unbelieving. But what about you? Do you feel the thirst for God in your soul? Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the only thing in this life that can quench that thirst?
8. The eloquence of Charles Spurgeon is unmatched when he pleads:

If you, O man, have stolen in here this morning, discontented with the pleasures of the world, you are bid to come to Jesus for rest and satisfaction. If you are rich and increased in goods and yet are quite unable to enjoy your riches because your heart cannot be satisfied with the world, you are he to whom this incitation comes! If you are heavy with the burden of sin – if you would give your eyes to be rid of it. If you are despairing and ready to die because your struggles after better things have all been failures – you are he whom the Lord Jesus invites! With living tenderness He puts it to all of you who need everything but have no joy in [in] anything, ‘If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink.’ O man,

⁸ Thomas Constable, *Dr. Constable’s Notes on John*, (p. 140), on the *Sonic Light* website, viewed on June 7, 2014, www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/john.pdf

if you have any sort of spiritual desire, any kind of longing after that which is good and gracious, come at once to Jesus, and Jesus will joyfully receive you!⁹

9. Just as liquid water brings life to our planet and health to our bodies, so spiritual water – “living water” – brings eternal life to sinners and satisfies our souls. But it can only be found at the fountain of living water which is none other than the Person of Jesus Christ. Will you believe in Him? Will you entrust your all to Him?

⁹ Charles H. Spurgeon, *Spurgeon Gems and Other Treasures of God's Light* (website), Viewed on 06/06/14.
www.spurgeongems.org