

The Thirst Quencher

ill. Do you remember that song from the 90's—"Travel the world and the 7 Seas; everybody's lookin' for something."

There's a **true to life insight in that song**—every human person—deep in their soul—is looking for something to satisfy the thirst they feel in their soul.

ill. Christmas is an **amazing illustration** of this. Because we have these **presents**. Some of you are so thirsty for presents right now, you can **barely contain** yourselves. Presents are like the **next great thing in your life** at this moment.....oh to get to the presents!!

I remember **being a boy** and completely **unable to get to sleep** on Christmas Eve because I was so anticipating Christmas morning. I remember waking up and being so frustrated about the fact that it was only 2am, 3am.....and then my parents insisted on **eating breakfast** before opening presents. Who needs breakfast, when presents are in store?

Just a moment ago, Rick read the account from Luke 2 of a man named Simeon. Simeon, like us, was a man **looking for something**. He was **looking for the right thing**. He was looking for **God's Promised Rescuer**. When Simeon laid his eyes on the baby Jesus, he knew that the long awaited, promised Rescuer had come. And he was unspeakably happy.

And in our text this morning we have **someone else**—this time a **woman** ---who was **looking** for the promised Rescuer.

John 4.25: "[25] The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things."

That word Messiah; Christ—those are the **titles of this Promised One**.

She **did not realize** it then, but she was **waiting for Christmas**. She was looking for the newborn king named Jesus.

Here's the deal—**all of us are looking for something**.

You and I are also **thirsty**, and we also are looking for something. Something to **quench our soul thirst**.

For you it may be.....**a person** (some relationships that will make everything good in your life)
**a place** (oh, if you could just get out of VA; out of your high school)
**a thing** (some job, some car, or piece of technology)
**a new you** (if only your body was different, you were funnier)

This morning, I want **to tell you the story of a woman** who had been **searching for a long time** in the wrong place, and about the **thirst quenching Savior** that came to give her what she needed.

1. Everyone is Thirsty

Let's **notice first how the Samaritan Woman** was seeking to quench the thirst she felt in her soul.

Read John 4:6-18

Basically, here is what happens:

Jesus sits down on a well to get a drink of water. A woman is there, and they get into a **conversation**. The woman thinks they are talking about **H2O**; but Jesus is talking about **"living water"—which is the Holy Spirit**.

She thinks they are talking about thirst (in the mouth), but Jesus is talking about the thirst of the soul, in the heart.

In verse 13-14 Jesus **offers her the living water**. In verse 15 **she asks for it**.

And then in verse 16 **Jesus exposes how she has been trying to satisfy her soul all of her life**. Did you see that, beginning in verse 16:

Read 16-18.

Why does he jump from the offer of living water; the offer of eternal life, to this woman's **marital situation?**

Why does he do that?

Here's why: because **in order for a person to be able to drink the living water**; in order to find soul nourishment, one has to **spit out the water** they have been drinking.

Becoming a Christian is **not only a matter of believing** in Jesus. Becoming a Christian is a matter of **moving away from sin** (repentance, idolatry) and to Jesus (faith, worship).

- So Jesus say, "Hey, I'll give you Living Water."
- She says, "ok, I want it."
- And in essence he says—well, ok, then quit with the adultery and sleeping around.

I'm **not saying you have to clean yourself all up** before you can come to Jesus. I'm not saying that. I'm saying that you have to **recognize that you are dirty**, and come to **Christ, looking for cleansing**.

Now, a little **parenthetical thought** here.

Sometimes you hear people say, "**yeah I know that everybody's a sinner**, but why do Christians have to be **throwing it in their face** all the time?" Now, I'm not saying Christians should be mean or judgmental, BUT people have to agree with God about their sin **before they can come to Christ**. You have to see that you have been **worshipping something INSTEAD of Christ, and you have to repent of that**.

And so **lovingly, and yet very straightforwardly**, Jesus throws her sin in her face. He wants her to **leave what she has been looking to quench her thirst**.

Now, for her it was **men**. She thought they would make her happy.

For most of you its **probably something else**.

And so, I want to **ask each of you** a question. **Maybe you're a Christian**; maybe not. Maybe you're a **kid; a teen; an adult**. Does not matter. The question is for each of us:

what or who are you looking to, in order to:

- make you **happy**?
- quench** your thirst?
- satisfy** your soul?
- make your **life good**?

Maybe it's a **relationship**; maybe its **money**; maybe its **popularity**; maybe its **safety and security**; a **guaranteed future**; maybe it's a **perfect family**; maybe its **power and respect**.

How's **that working out?**

See you, **everything that humans look to** in order to satisfy them will **let them down**. Everything, **except jesus Christ**—the **promised One of Christmas**.

ill. I just finished reading the story of WW2 veteran **Louie Zamperini**. He spent 2.5 **torturous years in Japan** as a prisoner of war. When he gained his freedom at the end of the war, he returned home; the scars of his suffering held deep inside; **looking for something to erase that pain**, and **make life worth living**.

He had been an Olympic level **athlete before the war**—a long distance runner. And so the first thing he did to get his good life back was **begin to train**. But the injuries from war prohibited that. He would never return to his old form.

Soon after this disappointment, he married with high hopes that **marriage was his way out of the pain**. But his **marriage quickly dissolved** into one steady conflict, and after his wife caught him dangerously shaking their only daughter, she left him.

He **turned to alcohol** to numb the pain he held. We all know what a recipe for disaster that is.

In order to solve his alcohol addiction, he decided that **planning the murder** of the Japanese prison guard who most tormented him would bring purpose back to his life.

But **none of these things worked**: freedom, athletics, marriage, alcohol, revenge.

They all **left him broken**. His life was falling apart.

And then the book **took a turn I was absolutely not expecting**. Its **not a “Christian”** book. Though he was separated from his wife, she convinced him to start attending **Evangelistic Crusades** in LA led by Bill Graham in 1949. He insisted on sitting in the **back row, and leaving as soon** as Billy Graham began the invitation after the sermon. Now I’m quoting:

“**Louie shone with sweat**. He felt accused, cornered, pressed by a frantic urge to flee. As Graham asked for heads to bow and eyes to close, Louie stood abruptly and rushed for the street, towing Cynthia [his wife] behind him. “Nobody leaving,” said Graham. “You can leave while I’m preaching but not now. Everybody is still and quiet. Every head bowed, every eye closed.” He asked the faithful to come forward. Louie pushed past the congregants in his row, charging for the exit. His mind was tumbling. He felt enraged, violent, on the edge of explosion. He wanted to hit someone. As he reached the aisle, he stopped.....[he has a flashback from the war....the last flashback he’d ever experience].....Louie let go of Cynthia and turned toward Graham. He felt supremely alive. He began walking.

“This is it,” said Graham. “God has spoken to you. You come on.””

That night **Jesus Christ came and found Louie**. He **brought Louie to the well**.

Louie went home that night, and **threw out all of his alcohol**. In subsequent months he would **fully forgive his captors**—he traveled to Japan to forgive them in person from their prison cells. He pleaded with them to become Christians. He was **reconciled to his wife and daughter**.

Now, I’m not saying that being a Christian will **solve all your problems**. I’m saying that **drinking from the well** that Christ offers....enjoying his living water....makes you a **deeply content person**.

Listen to the author, as far as I know, **not a Christian herself**, describe Louie as an old man: “**He remained** infectiously, incorrigibly cheerful. He once told a friend that the last time he could remember being angry was some forty years before. His conviction that everything happened for a reason, and would come to good, gave him a laughing equanimity even in hard times.”

Your thing may not **be men like the Samaritan** Woman. It **might not be any of the things** that Louis Zamperini tried. But its **something**. Its **Jesus or nothing**.

Today—come drink the living water Jesus Christ offers to you.

2. Jesus Has Come to You

At the beginning, I quoted that song—“**everybody’s lookin’ for something.**” And indeed we are. And throughout the course of **human history** we have been doing that—**looking** for something. People have been looking for something **outside of themselves** to give their life **purpose, meaning**, to **solve the mess** they know they are in.

Well, what you are looking for—Christmas gives you. It gives you God.

Ultimately, Christmas is about God coming down and showing us what he is like.

Xtianity is not a **mystical path to enlightenment**. Its **not a moral code** about how to be good. It is a **relationship** with God; a God that **makes himself known in the person of Christ**.

More than anything, that is what Christmas is—here is God—here’s what he’s like. He’s like Jesus.

And the **promise of that person** is that **if you know him**—he will **fill up your soul with His Spirit**.....not with the passing fancy of **holiday cheer**, but with.....

..... the deep, abiding, peace giving, confidence creating, joy of being in his true family.

So Jesus **strides into the pages** of human history saying that that **he will give Living Water** to all who will drink. That is **really good news** to thirsty people....**if its true**.

Throughout his life Jesus made some absolutely **astounding claims**.

- He claimed that he **was God**.
- He claimed that he decided people’s **eternal destiny**.
- He claimed that he had **existed forever**.
- He accepted worship....just think about that for a moment....he **accepted worship**.

Now, **if he is who he says he is**, all of those things are perfectly normal.

But if that **was just say....you**....making those claims....well that would be a **different matter**.

Now, notice that to this Samaritan woman, he makes **some awfully bold claims**:

- **Read Verse 10**—what does that verse mean? Even though the **woman does not understand** Jesus, John our author (our reporter if you will) wants you to understand. **Jesus is saying**, “if you realized that God is right now offering you God (the living water there is the Holy Spirit) than you would have asked me for a drink. Jesus is saying that **he is God**, and that **he “dispenses” God**.
- Read Verses **11-14**. Jesus actually makes 3 more staggering claims in those verses:
 - Verse 13—essentially, **yes, I’m better than Jacob**. I have better water than him. Jacob is one of the **great heroes of the OT**. You know how in America we have founding father...guys that wrote the constitution....guys that **end up on dollar bills**. Ok, well Jacob was like a founding father of the Jewish religion. And **Jesus, very casually, implies that**, yes, he’s better than Jacob. Stout claim.
 - Verse 14—Jesus says that he **grants eternal life**.
 - Verse 14—Jesus says that he has **water** to offer your soul that will **make you happy forever**.

Now, lest these things just wash over you, **without noticing how staggering** they are, let me give you an example.

ill. Let’s say I stand up here on this stage and start telling you what a **great basketball player I am**.

I can take you to the hole and stuff the rim.

I can drain long jumpers all day.

I’m so quick and nimble on defense that you’re never going to get around me.

I control the court when the ball is in my hands.

Ok, that’s well and good, right. Maybe its true.

But then, let’s say we walk around to that gym right there, and we pick teams, and we play. **My claims are tested** in that moment aren’t they? And the **truth would come out**. I can dribble with my head up, but that about extinguishes the description of my talent.

Now, let’s go back to the **guy on the stage talking trash**. What **do you say about his character?**

He’s a liar.

Now, let's take that **back to Jesus**. Jesus makes some **wild claims**. If they are true, than he is the **Son of God**; he is the **Lord of the Universe**. He will **save you** if you come to him, and he will **judge you forever if you don't**.

But if they are not true....than he's a **fake. A liar. A sham**.

But here's the **one thing that is not possible**: Its not possible that he's just a **generally good guy**; a **good teacher**....someone that might be able to **give you good advice**, but who you **don't have call Savior and Lord and King** fo your life.

Jesus did not just have moral lessons; and wise sayings. He's says that he is God. He is the meaning to life.

Here's where I'm going with this: what are YOU doing with Jesus?

Because, you see, Christmas is about God coming. Not just in the general sense of coming into the world. But also in the very specific sense of coming to you. Like he came to this Samaritan woman.

In the case of the Samaritan woman he came to her, and would not let go until she believed.

Jesus **comes and says to you**—having the **perfect body image** will not save you. The **right guy** will not fix you. Getting at that **number in your 401k** will not secure everything for you. Getting into that **crowd at school** will not give you contentment and peace. **Accomplishing that; gaining this**....those things will not quench your thirst.

Jesus says that **only he will**. Now—**either that is true, or it's a lie**. But its **not just good advice** that you can take or leave; or say, "well, go for it, if it works for you."

What do you believe it is?

Come to this well. Maybe for the first time. Maybe for the 100th time. **Leave off from the well** you are drinking from. Come to the **true fountain**.

Last thing: I want you to notice that **its to broken people** that Jesus comes offering this living water.

Just **consider this woman**.

- She's been divorced **five times**.
- She sounds like the kind of person that **slept around before** ever getting married.
- She's currently **sleeping with a man** who is not her husband.

We have **ugly names** for the kind of person that she is.

Because of this **no one but the person that she is sleeping with tolerates her**. We know that this is probably the case because she gets **water alone from an out of town well in the hottest part of the day**.

Normally women would go to get water in **town in groups**. She goes **outside of town, alone, to a second rate** well. Why? Probably because **people can't stand her**.

But it is **to this woman** that Jesus comes offering eternal life, and joy.

I wonder today—is your life **broken enough that you know how much you need Jesus**? It's **not a matter of being poor, or promiscuous, or rejected by society like the woman at the well**. It **may be** those things. But maybe respectable things like family and career have left you thirsty. To ALL who are thirsty, Jesus says:

**"Come, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;**

and he who has no money,
come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.

[2] Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?

(Isaiah 55:1-2a)

You may **not be a Christian** this morning. If not, **come today**. **Repent of how you've been trying to fill up your life. Trust in the one** who gives Living Water. He died to take **your punishment**. Then he **rose**. If you believe, He will give you his **Spirit**. You can be his today.

Maybe you have **already been born again**. This message is **still for you**. The **living water that Jesus gives is the Holy Spirit**. And he's **in you**. But its **only as your experience** His **Fullness** that you find **joy** day in and day out.

In verse 14 Jesus says, "but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again." When he says that he **does not mean—one drink from my fountain**, and you'll never thirst again.

What he means is: **once you begin drinking from my fountain—day after day after day**—you will won't have to keep going back to the idolatrous wells of money and relationships and success. You won't be thirsty for those things again.

But Christian—**you may have left off of Jesus well** and gone back to these wells that don't satisfy...

If you've been **quenching the Holy Spirit by drinking from other wells than you repent** of that. **Come back** to your Lord. He'll take you.

Did you notice how the Samaritan Woman tried to **skirt around her sleeping arrangements?**

Read 16-17a.

And did you notice how **Jesus drives right through that?**

Read 17b-18.

Same for you and I. Jesus knows what well you are drinking from.

And He **has come to deliver** from those things. To **set you free** from that. To give you the **free offer of Living Water**.

Come to the well.