

29. The Gospel of John—4:9-15

“Living Water” Pt.2

(5/6/18)

There are certain drives that God has built into the human body to ensure its health and survival.

The strongest of these is the air drive, followed by the water drive which is then followed by the food drive, the sleep drive and the sex drive.

Now, just as God has given us physical drives to keep our bodies healthy, He has also given us emotional drives which need to be satisfied if we're going to remain emotionally and psychologically healthy.

First on the list is hope, followed by love, fellowship, happiness, purpose etc.

But without a doubt our greatest need isn't physical or emotional—its spiritual.

You see, there is a thirst deep in the soul of every person to know and connect with God.

The psalmist expressed this when he said—

Psalm 42:1-2 (NKJV)

¹ As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. ² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God...

So often people are thirsty in their souls for God but they try to satisfy that thirst with material things or relationships not even realizing that what they're really thirsting for is God and nothing else will satisfy them but Him.

Now, with that as background we come this morning to John chapter 4 and the story of a woman who came to a well to satisfy her physical thirst for water—only to be made aware of her deepest and most important thirst—her thirst for God.

I. A Thirsty Soul

John 4:1-8 (NKJV)

¹ Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John ² (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples), ³ He left Judea and departed again to Galilee. ⁴ But He needed to go through Samaria. ⁵ So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. ⁶ Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from *His* journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. ⁷ A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." ⁸ For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

As we have already pointed out—the name ‘Sychar’ refers to the ancient city of Shechem (Genesis 33).

The Jewish day began at 6am and so the sixth hour would have been noon—the hottest part of the day.

According to ancient tradition, **Jacob’s well** was about half a mile south of Sychar.

The fact that this woman came to draw water alone at noon tells us a few things about her.

A. She was an outcast

In that culture going to the well was an opportunity for women to socialize with each other.

They usually went to draw their water early in the morning while it was still cool.

The fact that this woman came to get water (a half mile walk) by herself at noon, during the hottest part of the day indicates that she was a social outcast—someone the other women didn't want to socialize with, and apparently, she felt the same way about them.

Why was she an outcast?

B. She was immoral

As we read the story we learn that she had been married and divorced five times and now was living with a man she was not married to.

She was probably the town flirt, the loose divorcee, who had broken up some other marriages in town and now none of the other women trusted her or wanted anything to do with her.

C. She was empty

Sure the way she was living was wrong but she was thirsty inside and she made the mistake, as so many women do that have that same thirst, that she could satisfy it with a man.

She was looking for love and happiness in the wrong places (even in marriage your spouse can't fill the emptiness that only God can satisfy).

Today we live in a culture that is empty and desperately trying to fill that emptiness with everything and everyone else it seems but God.

John 4:7-9 (NKJV)

⁷ A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." ⁸ For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. ⁹ **Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.**

As I said last week, the Jews had a deep-seated animosity towards the Samaritans and would have nothing to do with them.

They considered them defiled ‘half-breeds’ (caused by intermarriage and producing a mixture of Jew and gentile)—those who were cut off from the covenant God had made with Moses and the Jewish people. (check out last weeks study for the details)

John 4:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ **Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."**

The “**gift of God**” that Jesus refers to is Himself—

John 3:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (God’s Gift), that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

When He offers her “**living water**”—it is also a reference to Himself.

You might be thinking—“*What exactly does ‘living water’ mean?*”

From a practical standpoint—*living* water was what the Jewish people called *running* water as in a mountain stream or a fresh spring.

This was in contrast to pond water, or cistern water (I'll explain that in a minute)—or even well water (like Jacob's well) that percolated up from the ground into this well and then just sat there.

These kinds of water sources tended to become stagnant and full of algae, bugs, leaves and other debris—not to mention they didn't smell very good.

It was so much more preferable and appealing to have a running ('living') water source nearby to drink from.

However, Jesus is picking up on her physical thirst for water and the purer and more appealing *living* water to teach her about *spiritual* 'living water' and how it will quench the thirst in her soul.

John 4:11-12 (NKJV)

¹¹ The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? ¹² Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"

In her mind she's thinking that Jesus is offering her physical, literal water from Jacob's well.

She has no idea that Jesus has just shifted the conversation from physical water to spiritual water—just like Nicodemus in chapter 3 didn't understand when Jesus spoke of spiritual birth.

John 4:13 (NKJV)

¹³ Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again..."

Jesus' statement in verse 13 is an extremely powerful and profound statement spoken by the One who made you and knows how you work and what will satisfy you.

It is a statement that should be written over every desire and ambition you have in life—
"Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again"

In other words, the God of the universe, the One who made you, is telling you that nothing this world has to offer in the way of material possessions, accomplishments, successes or even human relationships will ever satisfy that deep longing in your soul—only a relationship with Jesus Christ can do that—

Isaiah 55:1-3 (NKJV)

¹ "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters [and drink]...² Why do you spend money for *what is* not bread, And your wages for *what* does not satisfy?...³ Incline your ear, and come to Me...

There is always going to be the “*when/then*” person—“*when I get that—then I’ll be happy, then I will be satisfied.*”

Jesus is here telling us that that is one of the biggest lies Satan has deceived us into believing—it’s what Paul the apostle called, “*the deceitfulness of riches.*” (Explain)

I. A Thirsty Soul

II. A Satisfying Savior

John 4:13-14 (NKJV)

¹³ ..."Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, ¹⁴ **but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."**

As I said earlier, the ‘living water’ that Jesus was offering her was—Himself.

Whoever drinks in Christ (receives Him into their heart by faith)—His Person (Holy Spirit), His Life, His fullness—will never thirst within again. (Give my testimony)

Not only do His blessings and benefits fill the heart—they overflow it as well! (Ps.23:5)

John 7:37-38 (NKJV)

³⁷ On the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." (Comment)

The expression “**springing up**” comes from the Greek word ‘hallomai’—the same word that was used of the man that had been lame from birth but then was healed by the Holy Spirit thru the apostle Peter—we read in Acts 3 that he entered the temple “*walking, leaping, and praising God*”.

John 4:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up **into everlasting life.**"

“**into everlasting life**” means that the blessings and benefits of the ‘water’ which Jesus gives are not limited to earth—but will go on forever.

It’s important to note something in the Greek that doesn’t come thru in the English.

When Jesus said in verse 13—“**Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again**”—the Greek means a ‘*continual, habitual drinking*’.

Whereas in verse 14 when Jesus said, “**But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst [again]**”—the Greek means to ‘*drink once*’.

In verse 13 the idea Jesus is communicating is that, just as a person can't take just one drink of water and never thirst or need to drink again—so it is with every other thing of the world that people try to use to satisfy the thirst in their soul.

They *keep drinking* but they're never satisfied and keep thirsting for more.

Whereas, in verse 14 Jesus is saying that “*whoever drinks once of the water that I give will never thirst again.*”

The context here is salvation—we only need to “*drink of Jesus*” once for salvation—

Isaiah 12:3 (NLT2)

³ With joy you will drink deeply from the fountain of salvation!

That doesn't mean that we don't need to ‘drink’ from Him everyday for fellowship—but only once for salvation.

Now getting back to this woman—she thought that Jesus was offering her fresh spring water (living water) instead of stagnant well water—a ‘magic’ water that would quench her thirst forever.

John 4:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."

Whatever this ‘magic living water’ was she wanted it if it made her life easier so that she wouldn't have to come everyday to this well, a half mile away, and draw water.

Many people are drawn to Jesus because they think He's offering them an easier or even a problem free life.

That is a grave misconception—Jesus never promised anyone it would be easy to follow Him—remember He told us to ‘count the cost’ first?

He never promised an easy life but He did promise to satisfy our souls—even as He wanted to do for this woman, and just like He is inviting everyone who is thirsty in their soul to come to Him and drink—

Revelation 21:6 (NLT2)

⁶ ...To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life.

Revelation 22:17 (NLT2)

¹⁷ ...Let anyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who desires drink freely from the water of life.

I. A Thirsty Soul

II. A Satisfying Savior

III. A Broken Cistern

Jeremiah 2:13 (NKJV)

¹³ "For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, *And* hewn themselves cisterns--broken cisterns that can hold no water.

As we have said, to the Jewish mind living water meant *running* water.

It was always more desirable to build your house near a pure water source—like a stream or a river or a spring.

If you couldn't find living water you'd be forced to carve out a cistern (explain).

Sometimes it took a year or more (depending on the size) to carve one of these cisterns out of the limestone.

Imagine spending a year or two carving your cistern (all done by hand) and finally the day comes when it's finished.

You then carve the channels that will channel the rain water into the opening of your cistern and when you're all done—you wait for it to rain.

Think of your excitement when the rain starts to fall and you see the water running into the opening of your cistern and you wake up the next morning and go out to your cistern to get yourself a drink—only to find it empty!

Then the sickening reality dawns on you that you've carved your cistern over a fine crack in the limestone—it's a broken cistern that can hold no water.

So what do you do?

Was all that work for nothing?

No, all your time and effort wasn't for nothing, you see—they would carve shelves into the sides of the broken cistern and use it for a tomb to bury their dead.

Your cistern couldn't sustain life (provide life-giving water to you and your family)—all it could do was hold death.

Of course, God wasn't speaking here in Jeremiah 2 about literal fountains and cisterns—He was using these things as metaphors for spiritual life that results when a person drinks in God's truth.

But also the spiritual death that results when a person rejects God's living water (His truth and ultimately His Son) and instead embraces the devil's lies.

A *broken cistern* in this context refers to any belief system you carve out for yourself that you believe holds ‘life’ for you apart from God—humanism, naturalism, hedonism, materialism, communism, spiritism etc.

People look to these things to explain life, to give meaning to their life—they try to drink from these broken philosophical and ideological ‘cisterns’—but they are empty and cannot impart life.

And the reason is because they are **broken cisterns** which can hold no water (life) only death—because they only contain ‘dead’ ideologies and belief systems.

So not only will they not bring you life—they will rob you of the living water God wants to give you (eternal life).

If a person doesn’t repent of these broken ideologies and belief systems and receive Jesus before they die—these ‘broken cisterns’ will launch them into a Christ-less eternity in hell (eternal death).

Now look, sometimes even Christians can feel dry.

The answer is not to go back to the old “watering holes”—it’s not to go back to the polluted wells of the world like the children of Israel wanted to go back to Egypt.

The answer is to dig deeper in your walk with Jesus, sink your roots deeper into the truths of the Word of God.

Sometimes God allows us to become dry as a prelude to a fresh outpouring of His Spirit upon our lives—“*I will pour My Spirit on him who is thirsty like water on the dry ground...*” (Isa.44:3)—the Lord is speaking about REVIVAL!