

43-19-02-Last Word #5-Suffering

Lent, Christ's humanity, suffering, hell, salvation, evangelism

John 19:28

Christ's thirst on the Cross is the fountain to quench human thirsting.

INTRODUCTION:

–[A small boy, just put to bed, called a few minutes later to his father, “**Da-ad...**” “*What?*” “**I’m thirsty. Can you bring me a glass of water?**” “*No. You had your chance. Lights out.*” . . . “**Da-ad...**” “**WHAT?**” “**I’m thirsty... Can I have a drink of water?**” “*I told you NO! If you ask again, I’ll spank you!*” . . . “**Da-ad...**” “**WHAT!**” “**When you come in to spank me, can you bring me a glass of water?**”]

–[A personal memory: spending a night at a child of 3 or 4, sick with a fever, half-awake, half-dreaming, but unable to call for my mom to come give me a drink from the glass of water she left on the dresser; it was a terrible kind of *suffering*, being unable to quench my thirst.]– **text: John 19:28**, *Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.”*

–*Thirst was the last part of Christ’s suffering= “everything had now been finished.”* He spoke of His thirst “so that Scripture would be fulfilled”– **Psa 22:15**, My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death. / **Psa 69:20-21**, Scorn has broken my heart and has left me helpless; I looked for sympathy, but there was none, for comforters, but I found none. They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst.

–This is the shortest of Christ’s last words from the Cross, and it reminds us of the shortest verse in the Bible: “Jesus wept.” It was part of His full identification with our human condition of *suffering*, but it was more.... **HOM.idea.** *This was....*

I. The Thirst of a True Human (Jesus had true *biological* thirst)

A. Water has a dynamic role in sustaining life: *it’s needed....*

1. to transport dissolved substances [nutrition / excretion]
2. ...to help regulate temperature [heat of evaporation]
3. ...for chlorophyl’s photosynthesis of sugar [from light, CO₂, and H₂O]

B. Thank God for thirst! (God’s built-in mechanism for health):

1. *Thirst* is the brain’s sense of water loss [a God-given survival reflex: it can be ignored through *preoccupation*, just as *spiritual thirst* often is.]
2. *Thirst* is dynamically connected with *perspiration, urination & blood loss* [Jesus’ last drink had been a *cup* that symbolized the thirst He would have from a sweating body losing blood. **HOM.idea.**]
3. *Thirst* has a psychological component [behind the “Got milk?” ads...]
4. *Thirst* can also be deceived [dysfunctional thirst from *diseases* like

hypokalemia or *addictions* like **alcoholism**] – [**song**: *Fill My Cup, Lord*-- “Like the woman at the well I was seeking / For things that could not satisfy; / And then I heard my Savior speaking: “Draw from My well that never shall run dry.”]. **Christ’s dying thirst can quench human thirsting.**

TRANS: Jesus had real human thirst *before* the Cross. He had asked the woman at the well for a drink. But *on* the Cross He experienced the sinner’s thirst as well, because *this was...*

II. The Thirst of a True Savior– **Heb 2:9** says Jesus specifically came that “*he might taste death for everyone*” – **He tasted a sinner’s death:**

A. Jesus experienced both sides of the spiritual coin:

1. Before the Cross He experienced sweet communion with His Father, Who sent Him to quench our spiritual thirst– **John 7:37-39**, On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.
2. On the Cross He felt the thirst sinners feel in their separation from God:
 - a. The Father’s felt presence seemed removed [*before the Cross*– **John 8:38a**, “I am telling you what I have seen in the Father’s presence...” / *on the Cross*– “*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*”]
 - b. The Father’s Word seemed silent now (*before*– **John 14:31a**, ...I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. / *now*– **Amos 8:11**, “The days are coming,” declares the Sovereign LORD, “when I will send a famine through the land-- not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the LORD.”) / [**School violence**: “*Why isn’t God speaking today?*” “We banned His voice by removing the *Bible* from the classroom, and we stopped up our ears by removing *prayer!*”– the sinner is cut off from God by a series of bad choices.]

B. Christ’s *thirst* shows how far His substitutionary death went:

1. “*Thirst*” was used in pagan writings to describe *hell* [**Tantalus** was a mythological king whose punishment for offending the gods was to be tied to a fruit tree up to his chin in water, both always out of reach. His torture of eternal thirst and hunger is where we get the word “tantalizing.”]
2. “*Thirst*” is also the biblical image (Jesus taught more about hell than about heaven)– [**parable of the rich man and Lazarus**-- **Luke 16:23-24**, In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far

away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’]

TRANS: “*I’m thirsty*” said the rich man in Hell. Because the Cross was the fountain to quench human thirsting, Jesus said, “*I am thirsty.*” **Satan** knew heaven but fell from it into *hell*; because God loved sinners, **He** became human to know hell and rescue us for heaven. *This is...*

III. The Thirst of the True God

- A. **God gave a promise in the OT**– **Isa 55:1**, “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. [the **free gift of salvation**]
- B. Remember the woman at the well... Jesus asked her for a drink, but His real thirst was to bring her lost soul to salvation– (as his disciples returned with food) **John 4:32-35**, ...he said to them, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.” Then his disciples said to each other, “Could someone have brought him food?” “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Do you not say, ‘Four months more and then the harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. (*God’s thirst* is to give lost souls new life in Christ.)
- C. “*I thirst*” is the cry of Jesus for a lost world that is perishing from spiritual thirst, because **His thirst from the Cross is the fountain to quench all human thirsting**. (His blood, streaming down from the Cross, caused Christ to *thirst*, but that holy stream became the fountain of living water for all who come to the Cross)– **Rev 22:17**, The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life. (The Church is the “bride,” the *Bride of Christ*, and that call to “come” is to be our call to a spiritually thirsty world.)

CONCLUSION:

–[**Parable of the Cracked Water Pot**: A pot’s crack leaked on its trip from the river to the home of its owner. It lamented its inadequacy, so on the next trip the water carrier pointed out the beautiful row of flowers along the trail where the water had leaked, while the side of the trail was dry and lifeless under the pot that had no leak.] –The world is spiritually dehydrated! I hope you’ve found in Jesus the living water that quenches *spiritual thirst*. But once we drink of the waters of salvation, we must let the message of living water leak out of our lives to those around us who are still dry and thirsty.