



I'M THIRSTY

SECTION I. Introduction

- A. Do you know what percentage of the human body is water?
- B. About how long do you think humans can live without water?
- C. Can you think of a time in your life when you were very thirsty? How did you react?
- D. Do we have a spiritual thirst that is just as strong as our physical thirst?

SECTION II. Our bodies themselves are made up mostly of water, and we can live only a short time without it. Obviously it is very important, even basic, to physical life. The Bible often speaks of *water* in a spiritual sense as well. Read Psalm 42:1-2.

- A. How does the writer describe his desire for God?
- B. What do you think he means by *see God's face*?

- C. Do you know anyone who feels this strong *thirst* for God?

- D. When have you felt a thirst for God? Describe that time in your life. How did your thirst for God show itself?

SECTION III. In Old Testament times, before the birth of Jesus, many of God's people longed or thirsted for God. In Isaiah 55:1-3, Isaiah speaks about God's offer of spiritual refreshment. Read Isaiah 55:1-3.

- A. Who is invited to come?

- B. What is being offered?

- C. Do the people have to pay anything or do anything?

- D. What is the *promise* that God made to David? Read 2 Samuel 7:16.

SECTION IV. Many years after Isaiah wrote the words in Isaiah 55:1-3 Jesus came into the world to fulfill the promise God made to David. In the Gospel of John it says that Jesus talked about both thirst and water. Read John 7:37-38.

- A. When we experience a thirst in our lives, a desire for something more, where are some places we *look* to find a way to satisfy that thirst?

deeds we will receive repayment—the entry into heaven. God, however, says that eternal life is a free gift and He wants no payment.

We do many things that show we don't totally believe the gift of eternal life is free. We refuse to forgive others, hang on to our guilt, are self-righteous, do good deeds for the wrong reasons, etc.

B. According to this passage, if we are thirsty, where should we go?

C. How can we receive this *living water*?

SECTION V. Another time, Jesus spoke about water. Jesus was sitting at a well and asked a woman there to give Him a drink of water. The woman talked with Jesus about the water in that well. Jesus told her about another kind of water. Read John 4:13-14.

A. In this passage, which kinds of water are being talked about?

B. What will happen to those who drink the water from that earthly well?

C. What does Jesus say will happen to those who drink the water that Jesus gives us?

D. How can we tell the difference between earthly water and spiritual water? Which are you seeking?

SECTION VI. Since the time of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, God had promised a Savior. He had also promised David that his kingdom would never end. Isaiah talked about that promise to David. In the New Testament, we read again about that promise, the promise that Jesus fulfilled and the living water that He offers us. Read Romans 6:23.

A. What is the gift promised in Isaiah and given by God?

- B. What is the necessary payment?
- C. It seems as if it would be easy to receive gifts from others, doesn't it? Yet that is not always true.
1. What possible reactions do people have to gifts?
 2. Why is it sometimes hard for us to freely receive gifts from others? From God?
 3. What evidence is there in people's lives that we are not always willing to receive God's gift of living water and eternal life as really *free*?
 4. What kind of results will there be in our lives if we really do receive God's gift as a completely free gift?

free gift.

God made a promise to David, the second king of Israel, that his dynasty would never end. Through Jesus' resurrection, God fulfilled that promise.

SECTION IV.

John 7:37-38—Many people experience a thirst for something more in life, but do not understand that only God can quench that thirst. As a result, they look elsewhere and ignore God. Some look for the something in money or drugs. Some look for it in sex or pornography. Some seek it in their family or other close relationships. All are in danger of finding the thirst even greater when they are not satisfied and dying spiritually. Jesus clearly says He can and will quench our thirst and we only need to believe in Him to receive that *Living Water*.

SECTION V.

John 4:13-14 Briefly retell the story of Jesus asking the woman to give him some water. It may need to be pointed out that at this point in the story, Jesus and the woman are talking at odds. She was talking about the physical water from the well. Jesus was speaking of *spiritual water*, the same kind of water that was being offered in Isaiah 55:1-3.

Sometimes we are more concerned about the water from the well of physical, earthly blessings than we are about the spiritual water that Jesus offers. We often confuse them in our own minds. We need to ask ourselves often which of these we spend more time and effort seeking. God gives us both, but which is most important to us? If we say that the spiritual blessings are most important, is that reflected in our actions?

SECTION VI.

Many of us continue to struggle with the idea that no gift is free. (There is no free lunch—there are always strings attached.) A few people can receive freely and with joy. Most of us somehow think we must return the gift, sometimes giving even a larger gift in return. In the same way, we often believe that by doing good

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LEADERS'S NOTES**

SECTION I.

Physical thirst can be very uncomfortable, and dangerous. The human body is between 70 and 90 percent water and people will die if they are without water for more than three to six days. The lack of *living water* is equally dangerous to our souls. Most people can readily identify physical thirst and move to replenish their body's water. But spiritual thirst is sometimes not recognized for what it is. We do have spiritual thirst, because God created us to be in relationship with Him. Without Him we wither and die spiritually, just as we die physically without water.

SECTION II.

A deer's life depends upon having water, especially if it is being hunted or is in some sort of physical trouble. This Psalm describes the desire to be with God at His temple. The psalmist is being prevented from going to the temple where God dwells, and compares his desire to go there and *see God's face* with the deer's physical need for water. Jews believed that God was present in a special way in the temple and it was thus the center of their religious life.

SECTION III

A. Here God is inviting all people to the spiritual banquet—salvation. Note the importance of the idea of spiritual thirst—the longing for God. The offer of water is representative of spiritual refreshment. (Jesus also offers the woman at the well his “Living Water” in John 4.)

B. The water and the food are freely given. No payment is required. (In hard times in an arid environment payment might well have been demanded even for water.) Wine and milk here are symbols of abundance in life. Salvation is freely given because of what Jesus, the suffering servant, has done. However, note what people's part in this is: come to the waters, buy without money, listen carefully, eat what is good, enjoy the best foods, open their ears and come to God. These are in response to God's

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VOCABULARY**

Psalm 42:1-2

deer	a small to medium sized mammal with hooves and antlers, usually living in the forest or grassland areas, and eating vegetation
longs for	to want something very much
flowing	free movement like the movement of a liquid (such as water) from one place to another
thirst	a strong desire for water to drink
stream	small river
soul	spiritual nature of man, unseen part of a person that God gave only to humans

Isaiah 55:1-3

wine	an alcoholic drink often made from grapes or other fruit
nourish	to provide the necessary food and drink for growth and maintenance of a person's body and mind
wages	payment for the work done by the worker
satisfy	to fulfill a need or desire
everlasting	continuing for all time, not stopping

promise (noun) a statement that you will do something, giving of your word

blessings good things (either physical or spiritual) that God gives us

promise (verb) to say that you will do something

2 Samuel 7:16

royal something that belongs to a king

remain stay, not go away from

presence being with God

throne the special chair for a king

established to make David's kingdom secure or firm so it won't be destroyed

John 7:37-38

festival a celebration, in this case a religious celebration of the harvest and the fact that God had saved His people from trouble in the past

temple a building in Jerusalem where the Jewish people worshiped God-the center of Jewish religious life

courtyard open space in the center of a building or a space with walls all around it

Scripture the Bible, God's written Word

John 4:13-14

spring a place in the ground where water comes up naturally out of the surface of the earth

gushes up pushes up from, or out of, the ground etc.

eternal lasting for all time, never ending

Romans 6:23

reward something (money, a gift etc) given in return for a special service you have done for someone (like finding and returning a lost item)

sin a thought, word or action that is against God's will