

Never Thirst Again

John 4:10-15

As we continue our worship by focusing our minds on the word of God, I would invite you to open your Bible with me to John 4 for this message entitled, “Never Thirst Again” Our text for today is John 4:10-15 and we’re picking up where we paused last time in this interaction between Jesus and a woman of Samaria. Last time we focused on the grace of Jesus seen in the simple fact that he, a Jew, spoke to her, who is not only a woman of Samaria, but also an outcast in her own community. Today, as we move forward in the conversation, we will see that he speaks to her greatest need. Her greatest need, just as it is for you and me, is to receive *life* as only God can give it.

Follow along as I read starting in vs. 5. This is John 4:5-15. . . .

There are very few experiences as desperate and motivating as thirst. By God’s design our bodies are made of about 60% water. Water is a basic biological building material, essential in sustaining life, and it needs to be replenished daily from outside of us. Water regulates internal body temperature, metabolizes nutrients and transports them and oxygen throughout the body, it flushes waste, it’s a shock absorber for the brain and spinal cord, it lubricates our joints, and it serves many other essential purposes.

As a rule of thumb, you can only live three days without adding water into your body. Should you find yourself unable to eat or drink for an extended period of time, you will soon experience significant problems. Fatigue, dizziness, and confusion at first.

Exercise or being out on a hot day can lead heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Over time kidney stones develop. Seizures can happen when there’s not enough water to properly pass electrical signals. Eventually your body won’t produce enough blood to keep your blood pressure up and supply oxygen to the body. These are serious and potentially lethal conditions.

This is why when most patients get admitted to the hospital, they stick an IV in you and get fluids going. Whatever else is going on, they want to make sure you’re hydrated so your body can properly handle the other treatments they provide.

God has so designed our bodies that when we don't have sufficient water, we will look for it before we feel any actual discomfort. But for those in the middle of the desert or in a situation where there is no water, people get very desperate very quickly. The more desperate you are, the more willing you are to accept even the most polluted water.

What is true of the body is true of the soul. If the body is designed by require an abundance of two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen to survive and thrive, what does the soul require?

Keep your finger here in John 4 and turn to Jeremiah 2. Jeremiah was a prophet before and after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. He delivered messages to the king and the people of Judah of severe judgment from the Lord due to the idolatry of the nation. He wept at the destruction of the city and the exile of the people. And he proclaimed the promise of restoration and the new covenant.

But here at the beginning of his prophetic ministry the focus is on Judah's departure from the true worship of Yahweh. Follow along as I read Jeremiah 2:1-13. . . .

The people of Israel committed two evils, Yahweh says. They forsook him—they left him, they deserted him, they abandoned him—and in forsaking him they attempted to meet their needs their own way.

They thought they could do better for themselves than what God provided. They thought they could find a more satisfying, more fulfilling, more sustaining source of life than their Creator. This is evil. This is not just evil, it's irrational. It's insane.

Imagine a man who after days of survival in the desert finally makes it to an oasis with abundant fruit trees and water. And yet as desperate as he is, rather than plunging himself into the pool of water, he falls down next it and starts digging thinking he can find a better source of water than what is right in front of him. If you were there you would grab hold of that man and say, "What are you doing? Are you crazy? There's water right there!" And as he kept digging you would conclude that he was delirious, maybe even deaf and blind.

But what the Lord says here is even worse than that scenario. Follow this train of thought with me. Israel's very existence is by God's grace. In Ezekiel 16 the Lord uses a graphic metaphor to describe the birth of the nation. He says, "Your origin and your

birth are of the land of the Canaanites; your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. And as for your birth, on the day you were born your cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water to cleanse you, nor rubbed with salt, nor wrapped in swaddling cloths. No eye pitied you, to do any of these things to you out of compassion for you, but you were cast out on the open field, for you were abhorred, on the day that you were born. And when I passed by you and saw you wallowing in your blood, I said to you in your blood, 'Live!' I said to you in your blood, 'Live!'" And you know what happens when God commands you to live? You live!

That graphic language speaks of when the family of Jacob became the nation of Israel in the land of Egypt and were abhorred and mistreated by the Egyptians. Less graphic but just as humbling the Lord says in Deuteronomy 7:7-8, "It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."

Israel's existence as a nation independent from Egypt was due solely to the Lord's covenant-keeping love. Beyond being redeemed from Egypt through unprecedented displays of divine power, the people of Israel experienced endless acts of life-sustaining provision from God. For 40 years he provided for them in the desert such that they never lacked food or water. For 40 years as they wandered in the harsh wilderness neither their clothes nor their sandals wore out.

The Lord himself, manifested in the pillar of cloud lead them by day and the pillar of fire by night. They saw the Lord deliver them from one enemy after another. They saw him divide the Red Sea and 40 years later he did the same to the Jordan. As they entered the Promised Land they fought, yes, but it was obvious to all that the Lord fought for them.

They saw his power on display time and time again. He provided houses and cities and fields for them and for as long as they drank from the fountain as it were and followed his ways, he provided for all their needs and protected them from their enemies.

In that ancient time the universal worldview was that a nation's god was shown to be strong or weak based on battle victories or defeat, as well as the prosperity of the

nation. By that standard, Yahweh proved to be stronger and more powerful than all the gods of the nations. He didn't just edge out the other gods, they were *powerless* to stop Yahweh.

It's in light of this worldview that Jeremiah says in 2:10-11a. . . . There was no record of a nation changing gods, even when their own gods were defeated. When Yahweh defeated all the gods of the Egyptians, they didn't become Yahweh worshippers. When Yahweh defeated the gods of the Amorites and the Hittites and the Canaanites, they didn't become Yahweh worshippers. As logical as that would be, it just didn't happen. People refused to give up on their gods no matter how powerless they proved to be.

What's shocking, what's appalling, what's outrageous is what Jeremiah says next. . . .

Israel's God, Yahweh, was the victor. He was the provider, the protector, the giver and sustainer of life. He defeated Baal. He defeated Chemosh. He defeated Molech and Milcom, and Ashtoreth. Yahweh never asked his people to cut themselves like the demons behind Baal did. Yahweh never asked his people to sacrifice their children to him like the demons behind Molech did. No, Yahweh hates those things. They are an abomination to him.

The worship of Yahweh is joyful and celebratory and life-giving, not destructive and life-taking. The people of Israel left the time of sacrificing to Yahweh with stomachs full of food, with songs of joy in their hearts, and circled by playing children. The people of Canaan left the time of sacrificing to their gods with echoes of vain repetition in their minds, hurting bodies, empty stomachs, and having just murdered their child. And yet, for inexplicable reasons, Israel decided to forsake Yahweh and instead worship Baal and Chemosh and Molech and Milcom and Ashtoreth.

They gave up strength for weakness, joy for sorrow, and life for death. This is evil. It is evil to forsake the one true and living God who is the very fountain of life. It is evil to hew out cisterns for yourself that cannot provide an ounce of pure water but at best give polluted drops that can't satisfy. This is evil because it violates the image of God in us that was designed to thrive under the glory of God. It is rebellion against God, and it vainly worships created things that have no ability to grant life and satisfy our souls.

God is not just the ultimate source of life, he is the only source of life. God is not the *best* source of life—the best reviewed, the highest rated, the most effective, the most potent—he is the only source of life.

Israel experienced the life and power of God not just for a moment, but for days and weeks and months and years and decades. But after all the life they received from God, after all his displays of power and glory and supremacy, they turned from him and worshipped powerless rocks and trees.

What did they gain from that decision? Century after century of failed efforts to find satisfaction. Rather than growing stronger and healthier and more mature, over time they devolved from one level of depravity to another. Their hearts became calloused, their minds became slow, their eyes became dim, and their ears were stopped.

Like Nebuchadnezzar who went from the heights of power and glory to the depths of madness living like a wild animal, Israel descended from the most feared nation to a beleaguered and forlorn people who didn't have the will or strength to put up a fight.

Why am I saying all this when we're supposed to be studying John 4? Because all that I've just said about Israel stands as a vivid illustration of the universal human condition. The only explanation for why Israel turned away from the Lord, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out broken cisterns for themselves by worshipping powerless imaginary gods is because that is what we humans do in our fallen condition.

God made us, supplied us with everything needed for a joy-filled, body and soul-satisfying life. But our first parents, who stood as our representatives, rejected the Lord and thought they could do better for themselves. Lest you be tempted to distance yourself from them and declare Adam and Eve weren't *your* parents and you wouldn't have made the same decision, you and I make that very same decision all the time.

Just as it was at the beginning, so it is today. The Lord offers life and freedom and joy and satisfaction and fulfillment—not by offering stuff, but by offering himself to us. He has revealed himself in creation and he has revealed himself supremely in the person of Jesus Christ, and he has provided his sufficient word, the Bible, through which he declares life to us.

Listen to what the Lord said as Israel prepared to enter the Promised Land.

Deuteronomy 30, “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you today, by loving the Lord your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess.”

This mirrors what we heard in the Garden of Eden, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” Israel followed the example of Adam and Eve by choosing the path of death. And so it is with all people.

Psalm 14, which is quoted on Romans 3, says this, “The Lord looks down from heaven on the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one.”

Whether people bow down to statues or figurines, or they give themselves over to the worship of nature or possessions or people or power or health or lifestyle, humanity has rejected the fountain of living waters and has sought life and satisfaction in other things. What the Lord said about Israel in Jeremiah 13 is true of all people, “This evil people, who refuse to hear my words, who stubbornly follow their own heart and have gone after other gods to serve them and worship them, shall be like [a shredded] loincloth, which is good for nothing.”

In the words of Romans 1, because mankind has suppressed the truth about God and not honored or given thanks to him; because we have exchanged his glory for that which lacks glory, he has given us over to the desires of our hearts and to dishonorable passions and to a depraved mind.

And what do we gain from the sources of life we choose? Misery, sorrow, pain, grief. At best, sipping from the muddy waters of broken cisterns gives us brief and momentary relief; perhaps even a measure of pleasure. But it disappears like a mist and you're back to clawing with your fingers. Money, drugs, alcohol, sex, new technology, social media,

we dig and scratch and claw to find happiness, and just when we think we found it, it's gone and we're back to searching.

This world is full of people who on the outside look happy, healthy, and thriving. But the truth is, they are parched, starving, and dying of thirst. They feel it when they put their head on the pillow at night. They feel it when they get up in the morning. They feel it in the quiet moments of the day. Maybe some of you are in that condition.

What we all need is what Jesus offers to this Samaritan woman. Let's turn back to John 4 now with all that lingering in our minds.

As Jesus begins to interact with this woman, he gives two revelations that, when embraced, cause you to never thirst again. First, in vs. 10 Jesus reveals that he is the divine giver of life. Second, in vs. 14 Jesus reveals his divine gift of life.

1. Jesus reveals that he is the divine giver of life (v. 7-10)

LOOK at vs. 7-10. . . .

Here Jesus shows his messianic glory as he sets aside all cultural norms and initiates a conversation with a woman who is an outcast of society. As a Samaritan she would be rejected by most Jews, and as a woman who has had five husbands and is now living with a man not her husband, she would be rejected even by her own people. She is untouchable, morally compromised, and spiritually blind.

She is the kind of person you teach your kids to keep away from. She is the kind of person we tend to avoid eye-contact with. She is the kind of person people use as a reason to stay on the narrow path lest you end up like her. This is why she was at the well by herself at the time of day when she would be sure no one else would be around.

Speaking of the time, last time I emphasized that the sixth hour meant noon and its significance. But I was reminded this week that it may be helpful to talk about that a little bit because there are some who believe the sixth hour is actually 6pm. In fact, many of you have a MacArthur Study Bible, and if you look at the note on vs. 6 it says, "John used Roman time, which started reckoning from 12:00 p.m., so the time would be about 6:00 p.m."

Interestingly, in both his commentary and his last sermon on this passage which were done after the study Bible notes, he affirms that it was noon, not 6pm. So over the years he changed his mind on the matter. But others still hold to it, so let me take just a moment to explain what's going on.

In John 19 when John records the events that led up to the crucifixion, he said that it was about the sixth hour when Pilate presented the scourged Jesus to the crowds. But Mark, in his Gospel says, "it was the third hour when the crucified him." That would appear to be a contradiction, so as people have searched for answer, one proposed solution is that Mark used the Jewish accounting of time which starts at sunrise, but John uses the Roman accounting of time which starts at midnight and then restarts at noon, just like we do today. When the Study Bible was published, it seems John MacArthur embraced this solution.

The challenge is this solution lacks supporting historical evidence. The evidence—as scant as it is—shows that the Romans had multiple ways of keeping track of time. For example, they had their "civil day"—what we might call a calendar day—which went from midnight to midnight. A person's date of birth was determined in this way.

However, their daily timekeeping was based on the sunrise, just like the Jews and the Greeks. This is proven by some of the timekeeping artifacts that have been found. This means that the solution for the discrepancy between John and Mark is found elsewhere, and we'll go through that when we get to John 19.

So it's noon, it's hot, Jesus is tired from walking for several hours, the woman is likely tired having herself just walked a good distance from town to draw water. Were Jesus a regular Jew he would not engage this woman. He wouldn't make eye-contact with her, he wouldn't talk with her, and he certainly wouldn't ask to share a drinking vessel with her.

But Jesus is no ordinary Jew. He is the Messiah. And as the gentle and lowly Messiah, in love and compassion he enters her world by opening a dialogue with her focusing not on her and all that he knows about her, but on his weak condition. He asks for a drink.

This stuns her. She doesn't know who Jesus is. In shock she doesn't respond to his request directly, she responds to the fact that he, a Jew, said anything to her at all,

especially proposing that he drink from her vessel. This opens the door for Jesus to begin to open her mind to his true identity

LOOK again at vs. 10. . . .

She looked at Jesus and came to the conclusion that he was a Jewish man. But Jesus declares that he is so much more. “If you knew the gift of God and who it is who is saying to you.” Jesus is not referring to himself as the gift of God. Jesus is saying, “If you knew what God offers and that I am God, you would ask me...”

We’ll come back to the gift of God when we consider what he says to her in vs. 14, but for now let’s focus on how he identifies himself.

This is about as indirect as one can get. He doesn’t come out and say, “I am God,” and more than that, he uses language that she doesn’t understand—at least not in the way he’s using it. You see, she would not know Jeremiah 2:13 even if she knew her Scriptures. Why?

Because the Samaritans, like the Sadducees, only embraced the five books of Moses as Scripture. They certainly did not accept the prophets. So she’s never heard the language of Jeremiah 2:13. But Jesus uses this language because it’s both fitting for the occasion as they are by the well, and also because he wants to draw her in. He wants to gently move her from thinking about her physical need to her spiritual need. He reveals himself in a way that shows he is the solution to her greatest need. This whole experience of speaking to him is a disturbing moment for her, so the Lord is kind and gentle.

So he says, “If you knew who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.” There’s only one person who can give living water. After all we walked through earlier, you know who that is, don’t you? Who is it? God. Jesus is declaring to her that he is God and if she knew that, and if she knew what he had to offer her, she would be the one asking for water.

But Jesus’ meaning is lost on her. Not only because she doesn’t know how God revealed himself through the prophets as the fountain of living waters, but also because the words “living water” have a more immediate, literal meaning. “Living water” refers to

water that is fresh and moving, such as a river or a spring bubbling up from the earth. Living water was the best water because it didn't stagnate and get stale.

In her ignorance she assumes this is what Jesus means. LOOK at vs. 11. . . . first she can't believe he's talking to her, now she's trying to figure out what he's saying. She's completely confused. And then she goes on in vs. 12. . . .

Think about what she's saying. If Jacob dug this well 2,000 years ago, and he used it, and it's been in use for 2,000 years, and it's still going strong today, are you able to give a better source of water? Are you able to provide for us something that no one since Jacob has been able to improve upon? This well was no small effort—it was over 100 feet deep, not an easy task for people who didn't have hydraulic machinery.

If Jesus could provide something more substantial, with easier access, and more enduring, that would make him greater than Jacob—the father of the twelve tribes of Israel!

But of course that's not at all what Jesus means. He is indeed greater than Jacob—he's Jacob's maker. But rather than responding to her question directly by comparing himself to Jacob, he answers it indirectly by comparing the water he provides to the water Jacob provided. This is the second revelation. First Jesus revealed that he is the divine giver of life, here he reveals his divine gift of life.

Notice Jesus doesn't argue with her or try to get her to understand and embrace his first revelation. He moves the conversation forward knowing that he'll need to keep leading her down the path of truth because she's not ready to have her eyes opened.

2. Jesus reveals his divine gift of life (vs. 11-15)

LOOK at vs. 13-15. . . .

Jesus expands here on the gift of God that he referred to in vs. 10. The gift of God is the living water that God offers, and the nature of this living water is such that those who drink it will never be thirsty again.

It's a fact of life that no matter how much water you drink, you will get thirsty again. You can't drink more water today and expect to need less water tomorrow. Your body is

only designed to absorb a limited amount of water, it uses what it can absorb and expels what it can't use right away. Unlike camels, we can't store water for the future.

This Samaritan woman would be amazed to learn that you and I have an endless supply of fresh water through our faucets. She might be tempted to think we're greater than Jacob! But even when there's a convenient and abundant source of water, you still need to drink it day in and day out. It does you no good if it sits in the pipes. There's no fundamental difference between the water from Jacob's well which you can still draw today, 4,000 years later, and the water you get from your faucet. Drink a bucket of both today and tomorrow you'll be thirsty again.

"But," Jesus says, "whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again." Literally, "never be thirsty *forever*." The water Jesus provides is altogether different. It's not made of two parts hydrogen, one part oxygen. It is of a radically different quality. It's not just a higher quality; it's an entirely different kind of substance.

When someone drinks this living water, it enters them and permeates them and transforms them in such a way that the life-long thirst is quenched. It seeps into the cracks and crevices of the soul that nothing has ever been able to fill. Unlike normal water, this feeling of satisfaction doesn't go away. The living water doesn't get used up and expelled and need to be replenished. No, the living water Jesus provides endures, it sustains, it holds fast.

But it's even better. Notice what Jesus says at the end of vs. 14. . . . By enduring in the soul, this living water doesn't stagnate and get stale—the opposite is true. Jesus calls it living water not because it's fresh but because it's alive and multiplying. The living water Jesus provides doesn't merely sustain life, it creates life. It is self-regenerating. The ESV here says it becomes "a spring of water welling up to eternal life." But don't think of welling up as a slow, gradual increase.

The word actually has the idea of springing up or leaping up. It's used in Acts 3 of a lame man to whom Peter said, "Rise up and walk," and it says, "leaping up, he stood and began to walk." In Acts 13 Paul encounters a man crippled from birth and says to him, "Stand upright on your feet." And it says, "he sprang up and began walking." These men who had non-functioning legs from birth, who had never been able to use their leg muscles were immediately and fully healed such that they could leap and spring up from the sitting position.

So this living water that Jesus provides is not like medicine that takes days and weeks to be able to see results. The moment this living water enters the soul it brings energy and life eternal—a vibrant knowledge of and relationship with God who is life.

So what is this living water? Where does it come from? Jeremiah 2:13 is the clearest answer. God himself is the fountain of living waters. Not only there, but also in Jeremiah 17:13 we read, “[Judah has] forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living water.” In Isaiah 55:1 the Lord says, “Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters.” The Lord is the fountain of living waters. God is the source of life. He is the giver and sustainer who satisfies our thirsty souls not just for the moment but forever.

If God is the fountain of living water, how are we to drink from this fountain? The Lord continues there in Isaiah, “Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live.” We are to incline our ears to hear. And in hearing the call of God we are to come to him believing what he says.

Jesus teaches this as well. Turn with me a few pages over to chapter 7. Jesus had gone to Jerusalem for the Feast of Booths, and what he says in John 4 to the Samaritan woman he says in John 7 to a crowd in Jerusalem. LOOK at vs. 37. . . .

To come to the waters is to believe in Jesus. And when we believe in Jesus, John tells us, the rivers of living waters produced in us refers to the life-generating Holy Spirit who is given to all who believe in Christ.

During the life of Jesus the coming of the Holy Spirit was a future promise. But at Pentecost in Acts 2 the Spirit come upon the believers. And from that time whenever a person believes in Jesus, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in their soul. And it is the Holy Spirit who gives life to the soul enabling the word of God to be received and absorbed such that it produces vitality and health.

As regular water is received through the mouth, living water is received through the ear. As regular water gives strength as it is absorbed into the tissues and spread throughout the body, living water gives life and strength as it permeates the soul—the mind, affections, and will.

Think of it this way: believing in God, we drink the living waters of the Lord by taking in his word through the hearing with our ears or reading with our eyes. And the Spirit

enables us to take it into our minds and process what we hear, incorporating it in our thoughts and allow it to transform our beliefs and convictions. The Spirit then uses it to shape our desires and priorities and values and expectations. And then the Spirit empowers us to align our will and words and actions to the truth.

To believe in Christ is to answer the call to come to God who is the fountain of living waters. And when we come, he doesn't give us something outside of himself; he gives us himself through his Spirit. *And once you have the almighty, eternal source of life dwelling with you, you will never be thirsty again.* God is not a substance that we can have more or less of, he is an ever-present person. You will find in him all that you need.

Now I know what some of you are thinking. *If God is ever-present in my life, if he is all-satisfying, if I'm supposed to never thirst again, why do I sometimes still feel thirst? Why do I not feel that all-encompassing satisfaction? Why do I sometimes feel like he's not around? Why does it seem like he doesn't listen to me? Why does he feel so far away?*

You're not alone in asking such questions. You can find similar questions throughout the book of psalms. Because of our fallen condition and the brokenness of this world it's difficult to experience all God has for us. But at the bottom of it all, the problem is in our thinking. We sometimes think and talk and pray as if he's withheld himself from us. And when we think like this we're implying that the problem is in God and not in us. We think and feel and speak as if God is stingy and miserly in giving himself to us.

But the truth is God is the fountain of living waters. God is the giver of every good and perfect gift. He is the generous king who does not withhold any good thing from those who love him. The problem is not in him, it's in us. The problem is not that God stops being satisfying, the problem is that in our sinful condition we stop being satisfied in him.

When we feel he's far away, when he's not satisfying to our soul, when we feel he's not listening to us, it's because we haven't drunk as freely from his fountain as he offers us. We've not allowed his life to permeate our souls in that we've not let his truth flow to every area of our life.

We're still holding on to certain beliefs or desires or expectations and we've not submitted ourselves to be shaped by his truth and his desires and his promises.

This is not to say that being fully satisfied in the Lord means that we will never experience anything other than joyful satisfaction. This world is too full of trouble to make such a claim. But it is to say that when our soul is disturbed by the storms of life, we need to drink again from the fountain of living waters and allow who he is and what he tells us to anchor our souls to him.

Put another way, when he feels distant, when we feel unsatisfied, he doesn't need to come to us, we need to go to him. We shouldn't call him down from heaven—he's already here—he is with us and in us. We need to call ourselves to draw near to him. Hebrews 4:16 says, "Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

The Lord offers us himself. He has revealed himself to us in his word. He has given himself in the person of Jesus Christ who came into this world to rescue us. He lived a sinless life and died on the cross to pay the penalty of our sin. He rose again on the third day and ascended into heaven where he sits at the Father's right hand working on our behalf as our mediator and advocate. He's sent his Holy Spirit so that he is personally present and active in the hearts and lives of his people.

God has given himself to us. The work of the Spirit gives us life in Christ, illumines our hearts to understand the Scripture, and empowers us to walk in obedience. The living water of the Spirit of God causes the living and active word of God to do its necessary work in our lives.

So when life is hard and we feel empty and lost, rather than rejecting the fountain of living waters we need to go to him. We need to be like Asaph in Psalm 73 who was suffering and confused and tempted to give up on the Lord. Until, that is, he went into the sanctuary of God. And being reminded of the truth he could then say, "Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."

God himself is the living water Jesus offers. Once we drink of it the first time by believing in him, we need to let the living waters permeate our lives. Never thirsting again doesn't mean we don't feel the life-evaporating air around us, but it does mean that when we feel the heat, we keep ourselves soaked in the waters of the life of God by his Spirit and through his word.

Well, to wrap up, come back to John 4. Jesus has just revealed this remarkable truth to this woman in summary fashion. But she does not yet understand. She still thinks he's talking about H₂O. So she says in vs. 15. . . .

She likes what she hears, but she's thinking about it all wrong. She's still fixated on her daily need for physical water and she doesn't yet see that Jesus is able to satisfy the greater need in her soul. So Jesus then turns the conversation and gets personal to help her realize she has a greater need than water. That's where we'll pause and pick it up next time.

Have you drunk from the waters of life? Have you believed in Jesus? Have you believed in Jesus but you've been trying to find satisfaction in other things? Come. All who are thirsty, come. Come to the waters that flow from the throne room of God. Drink of the goodness of God as he has poured out himself to you. Find in God all that you need for this life and forever.

Discussion Questions

1. Was there anything from the message that ministered to your soul?
2. Were there any questions you had from the passage or message?
3. Read Jeremiah 2:13. How does this provide a helpful background to John 4?
4. What is so special about the water Jesus provides?
5. What intrigued the woman about living water?
6. How do we drink the living water that God provides? What does that mean?
7. How can we know that we have living water?
8. What should we do with living water once we have it?