

How Soul Thirst Is Satisfied

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John 4:4-26, 28-30:

"And He [speaking of our Lord Jesus Christ] must needs pass through Samaria. So He cometh to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph: and Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. For his disciples were gone away into the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman therefore saith unto Him, How is it that Thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a Samaritan woman? (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto Him, Sir, Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: whence then hast Thou that living water? Art Thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his sons, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life. The woman saith unto Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come all the way hither to draw. Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said unto Him, I have no husband. Jesus saith unto her, Thou saidst well, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: this hast thou said truly. The woman saith unto Him, Sir, I perceive that Thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and Ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father. Ye worship that which ye know not: we worship that which we know; for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be His worshippers. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. The woman saith unto Him, I know that Messiah cometh (He that is called Christ): when He is come, He will declare unto us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am He.... So the woman left her waterpot, and went away into the city, and saith to the people, Come, see a man, who told me all things that ever I did: can this be the Christ? They went out of the city, and were coming to Him."

From this story, which is one of the most familiar when anyone begins to get some acquaintance with the Gospel history, the record of the life and ministry of our Lord Jesus, I wish to speak to you tonight on this very basic subject, one that is very much apart of every one of us, namely, how soul thirst is satisfied. And the heart of our study will be the words of our Lord Jesus in verses 13 and 14: "Jesus answered and

said unto her, Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life." Here in these words, our Lord gives one of the most sweeping, one of the most comprehensive statements concerning the great issue of how soul thirst is truly satisfied. And these words come to us in a setting in which our Lord has encountered a woman with great unmet soul thirst. This woman is not just alone. She is a picture of every man, every woman, every fellow, every girl who has not drunk of the water of life--thirsty; coming to a fountain that could never quench that thirst, but coming again and again. And in that situation, the Lord Jesus speaks and tells her how her deepest soul thirst can be fully and eternally met. And the Scriptures make very clear that every single human being by nature is possessed of this unmet soul thirst. For we were made for the living God. We were made to know Him. We were made to have fellowship with Him. And though sin has, as it were, caused God to vacate His place of rightful dwelling, there is that sense of unfulfillment that gnaws like a terrible cancer at the hearts of men. Men do not by nature hunger after God. That concept is explicitly denied in Scripture. "There is none that seeketh after God." But they do hunger to have that emptiness filled. The problem is that they seek to fill it with everything but the only thing that can fill it. Hence the famous words of Saint Augustine: "Thou hast made us for Thyself. And our souls are restless till they rest in Thee." This why the prophet Isaiah said, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." There can be no peace; there is that unmet soul thirst. And it will be unmet until that person comes in living contact with the only One who can impart living water. And so as we look at the passage, we are not interested only in discovering how the Lord Jesus meets the soul thirst of this woman, but we are seeking to discover how He met her need in order that we may see the basic pattern by which He always meets the deepest soul thirst of all who come unto God by Him.

Now, as we think our way through, particularly verses 13 and 14--and then we'll be ranging back and forward in the general context--consider in the first place our Lord's statement concerning the water which cannot satisfy. Verse 13: ""Jesus answered and said unto her, Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again." In that immediate context, He was pointing, of course, to Jacob's well. He was pointing to a literal supply of literal water, water that no doubt probably was a lot purer than this, but nonetheless, essentially H₂O. And when He said, "Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again," He was referring, of course, to that particular well and the water it contained. But He was not in anyway limiting the meaning His words to that, for remember, He's dealing with water here in a double meaning continually. And He's speaking of water as the supply which meets the deepest thirst, not of the mouth and of the tongue, but the deepest thirst of the soul. And just as that literal well of Jacob had no ability to bring permanent satisfaction, but this woman had to come day by day to fill her water pots. So that wearying task of coming to a well to take water that could never fully satisfy is a very graphic picture of every single well at which men seek to satisfy the deepest thirst of the soul. And Jesus Christ this night stands by every single well at which you here tonight seek to satisfy soul thirst, and He says to you, "Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again." That's the sign that Jesus Christ has painted with His own hand and placed over every single well at which men seeks to gratify this sense of gnawing emptiness and thirst that has been left by a vacated God. For that's the root of man's restlessness; that's the root of man's unfulfillment. It's the gnawing ache of a vacated God. And Jesus says of everything to which men come, "Drink of this water and you will thirst again."

Now let us break that down in a few areas. What are some of the wells to which men and women come in our day, to which men and women came in this day, to which men and women will continue to come until Christ returns--that water which can never satisfy? Well, in the case of this woman, she was trying to satisfy soul thirst by coming to the well of immorality and sensual pleasure. Jesus said, "Thou saidst well, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: this hast thou said truly." Here is a woman--and I say it, I trust with discretion--as it were, being driven from one marriage bed and one illicit relationship bed to another, thinking that somehow her soul thirst will be satisfied in some earthly, carnal, sensual relationship. But Jesus said to this woman, "Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again." She had been coming to that well of immorality and sensual pleasure for years only to have her soul thirst unmet.

What was true then is true in our own day. We have prophets who are telling us that the well of life is the well of titillation of your sensual appetites and pleasures. Come to this well and you'll never thirst again. Jesus Christ has beat them to that well. And He stands saying above their hollow voices, "Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again." And this woman was an eloquent testimony that sensual delights and pleasures can never satisfy deepest soul thirst. Sure there is pleasure in sin for a season. But she had to go back again and again trying various wells of sensual pleasure only to have only to have her need unmet. And I say particularly to the young people amongst us tonight, hear the words of Christ. Hear them couched in the context of this woman. She tried that well and she found it left her thirsty. And some of you now with everything in you are longing to find that well. If only you could break off the traces of the restraints of Mom and Dad and society. And you have secret, scheming plans what you're going to do to drink deeply of the well of sensual pleasure. I'm talking to some of you young men and women who can't wait until you can abandon yourselves to the lust of the flesh. O, my dear young friend, listen to the words of Christ, "Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again."

In our own generation, some of us have lived to witness those who have made no apology that at this well they have, as it were, pitched their tent. And at this well they have drunk day and night only to end their lives in misery, as the sex symbol of the 50s, Marilyn Monroe, did. At age 36, taking that overdose of sleeping pills, saying what? "I drank of this well and it left me empty." And she ends it all. And some of you in the folly of your sins and the lies of the devil, who could never have one thousandth the measure a woman like that knew of drinking at that well, think that you'll be satisfied. "Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again."

Then in the second place, there is the well of what I'm calling diversion in aesthetic delights. People say soul thirst can be fulfilled if we can have all the recreation that we need, all or the involvement in sports and music and arts, the beautiful things. We have a mood in our own generation that says, "If only we can get back to the earth. If we can move out of the city and the smoke and the den of subways and buses and all of this mad craze of suburban life and inner city life and go back to the earth; get our fingers in the dirt and get the dirt under our fingernails." And so you have people moving out in communes to live off the earth--the simple life. Why? They say here's where soul thirst will be met. Others say soul thirst will be met by a retreat into the abiding things: music and the arts, the things that transcend each generation and abide. Soul thirst will be met here. But Jesus Christ stands by the well of diversion and aesthetic delights, innocent in themselves, and He says, "Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again."

And I may be speaking to some tonight, it's not your particular bent to move to the realm of sensual pleasure. You say, "No, fulfillment will come to me in these other areas, the things that are not evil in themselves." Maybe I'm speaking to some young people who feel, "If I could only make my mark in sports, I'll feel that sense of satisfaction." Listen, it's the emptiest, hallowest thing in all the world. You think, "Ah, if I could know something of a thousand or ten thousand or hundred thousand pairs of eyes were looking upon me performing and then looking upon me as someone who has attained, then there will be fulfillment." No, there isn't. Jesus Christ has written over that well "Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again."

Then there's the well of material possessions. The Scripture says God has given us all things to richly to enjoy. But those things were never given to meet soul thirst. What would you think if you were driving down the road one of these days and you passed a park where people play tennis (not prostituting the Lord's Day, but on another day when it's alright to play tennis), and you saw a man there with his lips parched, as you see mine are sometimes when I preach. And you see the man going around distracted saying, "I'm so thirsty! I'm so thirsty! I've got to satisfy my thirst." And he turns around and starts chewing on his tennis racket. You say, "Sir, what are you doing?" He says, "I'm going to quench my thirst." You say, "By doing what?" He says, "By chewing on my tennis racket." You'd say the man was either trying to be funny, or he had gotten so thirsty he had lost his head. You'd say, "That's ridiculous. Chewing on your tennis racket to quench your thirst? Impossible!" Ah, listen, it's just as impossible to fill the thirst of the soul with things as it is to quench physical thirst by chewing on a tennis racket. God never made us so that His gifts could fill the place reserved for Himself, the giver. God never made us so that soul thirst could be satisfied with things. Things were given to us, and in pursuit of the will of God, they were to be our servants as God had His rightful place in the heart and in the spirit. But God has been vacated, and there's the empty, gnawing realization of unmet soul thirst. And people try to fill it with things, but it simply cannot be done. And so there is the craze for things in our day. "If I can have this thing and that thing, then the restlessness will cease and the soul thirst will be satisfied. No, no, Jesus says, "Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again." Now, why let your life be wrecked and ruin simply to prove the truth of Christ's words when He's already said it? Why be a monument to this generation and to a seceding generation that soul thirst cannot be filled at that well?

Then there are others--perhaps the well to which they come is not the well of sensual pleasure, diversion, and aesthetic things. Perhaps it isn't the well of material possessions. But it's the well of intellectual attainment. They say the reason there's this sense of soul thirst is because we haven't exercised our minds. And if we can understand our world better and understand ourselves better, if we can penetrate within with psychology and examine and penetrate without with astronomy and nuclear physics and all the rest, and we can master our world and all the rest, then soul thirst will be met. No, no, whoever comes to the well of intellectual attainment shall thirst again. Listen to the statement of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:21: "For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe" The world by its wisdom knew not God. Again, the needs of the soul cannot be satisfied by cramming the head with knowledge anymore than stuffing a breadbox with rocks fills your stomach. Again, you'd say that would be stupid. If you see a man who's hungry and he's putting rocks in a breadbox, and you say, "What in the world are you doing?" He says, "I'm satisfying my hunger." You'd say, "That's not the way.

You've got to put bread in your stomach, not rocks in a breadbox." O, we're so smart when it comes to filling our stomachs with bread, but such fools when it comes to filling our souls with the only thing that can fill them. Whoever drinks of this water of intellectual attainment shall thirst again. Here we are the so-called most educated generation we've ever known, and yet the most frustrated, confused, blind, staggering generation. Why? "Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again." Let our universities intensify their courses. Let them double their demands. Let them augment their programs and turn out PhDs like General Motors turns out Chevrolets. Jesus' words will stand: "Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again." Soul thirst cannot be met by intellectual attainment.

Ah, but someone goes a little bit higher and says, "Soul thirst has got to be met with religion. You've got to have religion." And so we have a great wave of religiosity. We've got the religion of drugs--and it's a religion. Fulfillment comes when you retreat from this world of sense by virtue of your great savior, LSD or some other form of drug. And it's a form of religion. You've got what I read in Sunday school this morning. You've got the importations of the religions of the East telling us to look within. There must be the meaning in the nonmaterial word. We find God within. In the mind, in the spirit, there must be this religious element. Ah, listen, "Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again." God never made religion to meet soul thirst. And no matter what the well is, Christ has written over it, "Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again."

So much, then, for that water which cannot satisfy. That's the negative, but now let's consider in verse 14, the water which fully satisfies. For Christ, beginning with the negative, then moving into the positive, having said, "Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but [here's the contrast] whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life." Here is the water which fully satisfies, the water that is guaranteed to have permanence--shall never thirst, never languish, never thirst for anything new. There will be thirst for more and more of the living God, but never thirsty in the sense that I've got to find a different well.

Look at the aspect of this water that satisfies. First of all, what is its source? Where does this water come from? And Jesus is careful to direct us as He did this woman to Himself and Himself alone as the source. Look at His words: "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life." What is the source of the water that satisfies soul thirst? It is Jesus Christ Himself. Look back to verse 10: "Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." O, how can words be more clear, and how can I state it more simply? Listen to me tonight. Children, young people, adults, visitors, friends, members of this assembly, the water that satisfies has as its exclusive source the person of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Anything that God gives of Himself in a way of satisfying soul thirst, He gives exclusively in and through Jesus Christ as revealed in the Scriptures. He doesn't give it through a ritual. He doesn't give it through a form. He doesn't give it through a church. He doesn't give it even through doctrine detached to Him. But He gives it to us in a living, glorified, omnipotent, gracious Christ. And the Scripture says in Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." We read in 1 Corinthians 1:30: "But of him are ye in

Christ Jesus, who was made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption." Jesus Himself was conscious of this, for He said in this very same Gospel record, chapter 14 and verse 6, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by Me." But it's not the Christ that men think Him to be. It's the Christ that He is, the Christ described in the first chapter of this very Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him; and without Him was not anything made that hath been made." Verse 14: "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." Who is this source of living water? Is He just a nice exalted, augmented, elevated religious figure? No, He is the eternal Word, He is God Himself, He is God made flesh. He is as John describes Him in verse 29 of the first chapter: "Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!" He is the Christ who is God in the flesh, the Christ who died, who rose, who went back to the right hand of the Father. It is the Christ of Christian theology who is the source of living water, the One who said in John 11, "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." And I say to every one of you here as simply as I know how, if you do not have firsthand, genuine dealings with Jesus Christ Himself, you'll never have your soul thirst satisfied. And you can be so close to Him and miss Him. You can be in the midst of His people, in the midst of His church, in the hearing of His Word, and miss Him. There is no saving virtue in anything other than direct living contact with the living Christ. He's the source of that living water.

Now, in the second place, as we analyze the water that satisfies, how is that water given? Having seen its source, Jesus Christ in His person and work, how is it given? Verse 10 and 14 tell us: "Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." Verse 14: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life." Four times in two verses that water is described as a gift. Now, see how people have perverted this. Here's how certain religions would write it: "If thou knewest the reward, thou wouldst have taken the sacraments, done penance, gone to confession, and had the last rites, and you might have after a thousand years of purgatory eternal life." What a perversion of the words of Jesus. If that's the truth of how you get to heaven, why didn't Jesus tell her? He said, "If thou knewest the gift...." Free, gracious gift--no works, no merit, no penance, no sacraments--gift to be given. But there are others who would say, "If thou knewest the reward of being baptized, keeping the ten commandments, particularly the fourth, or particularly some other commandment, and if you do this and this and that, then God might graciously confer eternal life upon you." That isn't what Jesus said. His words are simple. Only a person determined to pervert them can do so. "If thou knewest the gift, you would have asked, He would have given." How does this water of life come to us? That which alone can satisfy soul thirst comes as pure, gracious gift from God--no other way. "For the wages of sin is death." That's what you get by merit--death, hell, judgment. "But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." "For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

Now, why is it so hard for men to come to the recognition that this which satisfies soul thirst can only come as pure gift? I'll tell you why. Because the crowning sin of the human heart is pride. And to be brought to the place where we confess, "Nothing in my hands I bring; simply to Thy cross I cling," if I'm saved by pure gift, then all the

credit for my salvation must be laid at the feet of another. I'll have to confess that if I got what I deserved, I'd be in hell with the worst of men. And if I ever have eternal life and find favor with God, it is purely because of factors external to me. And that's what old Adam doesn't want to acknowledge. Hence, every form of unbiblical religion, even though it may quote the Bible, has this at its heart in common: you have got to do something to commend yourself to God. I don't care if it's all the way from Romanism to the cults, when you lay it bare, though it may use the terms grace, forgiveness, gift, and all the rest, it has this in common: you contribute to something that coerces God to open up that fountain of life for you. And the genius of the religion of the Bible is that it is grace from beginning to the end--pure grace, pure gift. ("If thou knewest the gift of God...") And I think it one of the most telling questions to ask any person and asked in this order is this: Do you believe you're an heir of eternal life? "Yes." Do you believe your soul thirst is met? "Yes." Then ask the second question: On what basis is it met? If they start talking about, "Well, I this and I that," then you know they've missed it. But if they immediately begin--and I say it reverently--as an old friend of mine used to say, they begin to brag on Jesus, and they begin to talk about what He is and what He's done and is doing, then you know they're on the right track. What is the source of this water that satisfies? It is Christ Himself. He said, "If you would have ask of Me, I would have given." How is it given? As pure gift.

Now in the third place, let's ask the question, to whom is it given? And this question is answered right here in the passage. It is given in the first place to those whom God reveals His Son by spiritual illumination. Verse 10: "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him...." You see what He's saying? He's saying,

"If when you looked upon me, woman, you saw something more than just a tired, traveled, weary Jew--and that's all you've seen, and because you've seen that, you say, 'You're asking Me for water. How come You, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan? You're not supposed to have dealings with us.' But there's much more to your eyes than a tired, traveled, weary Jew. The Son of God is before your eyes, and you don't see Him. If you knew who was talking to you, instead of you questioning Me about why I'm asking you for water, you'd be at my feet in worship and penitence pleading with Me for the gift of life. If you knew, you would have asked."

Then the Lord wonderfully leads her on until--notice in verses 25 and 26, the woman says, "I know that Messiah cometh [I have a hope that Messiah's coming.] (He that is called Christ): when He is come, He will declare unto us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am He." And the next time we find the woman, where is she? Running back into the village saying, "I've found Him. I've seen Him"--spiritual illumination.

Who receives this water of life? To whom is it given as pure gift? It is given only to those whom God reveals His Son by a work of spiritual illumination. The Scripture tells us, "No man can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost." Paul says in 2 Corinthians 4, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving.... Seeing it is God, that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." When I say spiritual illumination, what am I talking about? Visions? No, if you've been saved by a vision or think you are, you better get on different ground, my friend. God doesn't save by visions. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the

Word of God." "We are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God." "Of His own will begat He us by the Word of truth [not visions]." So when I speak of spiritual illumination, I'm not talking of visions; I'm not talking of revelations and lights and bells and the flutter of angels' wings. I'm talking about God taking away the scales from the eyes of your heart so that the Christ you've heard about, whose name perhaps has been on your lips as a very curse word. You are given spiritual eyes to see that the Christ of Scripture is indeed God, the only Savior of sinners, infinitely worthy of your trust, your homage, your love, and your obedience. And you give yourself over to Him. A Christian is someone who has seen Christ and has never been the same since.

To whom is this water given? In the first place, to those whom God reveals His Son by spiritual illumination. But secondly, it is given to those who are ready to be honest about their sin. "Woman, you want this water? Call your husband." As we saw this morning, there's no meeting of soul thirst without facing head on the ugly reality of our sin. "Woman, if you want your soul thirst met, you've got to face the ugly reality of your sin. I'm not talking about sin in general, woman. I'm talking about your sin in particular. Call your husband. Whatever cloaks you've thrown over your murky past, tear them off. They're naked before My eyes. I want you to own up to the reality of your sin." Let me say by way of application, the water of life will not be given to you as pure gift except it's given to you in a way in which by the same Spirit, who reveals Christ to your heart, you're brought face to face to own up to your sins. You'll never know the water of life until you're ready to be honest about the sin of your life, of your relationships, of your attitudes, the sin in your deeds, the sin in your heart. And I'd be a liar to say that you can have the water of life without facing the reality of your sin. Let me say by a little aside, because we do have a number of you in Bible school and seminary, don't you ever preach a Gospel that tells men they can have the gift of the water of life without facing the reality of their sin in deep and thorough repentance. You'll tell them a lie and send them to hell clinging to the promises they were never prepared to receive. And so this water is given to those whom God reveals His son; secondly, to those who are ready to face their sin.

Thirdly, this water is given to those who lay hold of it, to those who appropriate it, to use the words of Jesus, to those who drink it. Look at verse 14: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." God doesn't drink for you. You've got to drink. What is drinking? Drinking is an appropriating act. And it's quite appropriate that I should illustrate it right now because I'm thirsty, and I need a drink. What is drinking for me right now? It is the appropriating act by which the water that is sufficient for my need but is presently found within the confines of that pretty glass is taken out of the glass into my system, and the water becomes a part of me. It's an appropriating activity. And it's many times used as a description of faith. Faith is coming to Christ, faith is trusting in Christ, faith is casting ourselves upon Christ, faith is following, faith is drinking, faith is eating. Faith is all of these various activities. And so this water comes not only to those who are brought to see who is (Christ is Son of God, Son of man, Savior of the world), who are not only brought to own up to their sin, but who actually appropriate Him to themselves as He is offered in the Gospel.

Have you drunk of Christ? Have you not only looked upon Him as He is--and I say it reverently--encased in the Gospel, as He is contained in the Gospel as this water is contained in the glass? It's not enough to look at Him in the Gospel and say, "I believe He is sufficient. I believe He is adequate for my soul thirst." You must drink of Him. And what is preaching? It is putting Christ to your lips and saying, "Drink, drink,

drink! You must drink! God warrants you to drink as He sets Him before you in the Gospel.

Well, then, in the last place, what are the results when men drink of this water of life? Having looked at its source (the Lord Jesus), having looked at how it comes to us (pure gift), having considered to whom it is given, what are the results when this water is drunk? Look at verse 14: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life." Look at the results. They are threefold.

Number one: present satisfaction. Here it is: whoever drinks this water shall never thirst. From the moment he begins drinking of Christ, there is soul satisfaction. And though there is a paradox--he is ever satisfied but yet ever dissatisfied--the dissatisfaction is not with the source but with the measure to which he is drinking of the source. He doesn't look for another source. He's found the one source, and his only satisfaction is that he doesn't drink more deeply of Christ. Isn't that true of you, Christian? Having drunk of Him, you're not in the well hunting business anymore. Some of you wore out your shoe leather well hunting. You tried this well; you tried that well--thirsty, thirsty, thirsty! But God brought this well into your life. And having drunk of Him, you're not well hunting anymore. Your only pain is you don't take more out of the well that you've found. And that's the part that Christ is emphasizing here. "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst," that is, have that deep gnawing unmet thirst. He'll have the wholesome thirst after righteousness, which alone is the mark of a true believer.

The second thing: it's not only present satisfaction to never thirst, but it's inward satisfaction. "The water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life." What a marvelous thing--and I say it reverently--that the source of satisfaction takes up His residence in your own bosom. "Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own." And where the Holy Spirit is, Christ is. Hence, the Scripture says, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." "That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith." So it's not only present satisfaction; it is inward satisfaction. As the Psalmist says, "All my springs are in Thee."

But thank God, there is a third facet of it. The third result is eternal satisfaction. He now has a well of water springing up from within unto eternal life. Once we drink of that water, it's as though there's a transplanted well that will bubble up into eternity--one of the most beautiful descriptions of the Biblical doctrine of the preservation of the saints to be found anywhere in Scripture. Once we've drunk, the issue of that drinking is eternal life ("a well of water springing up). No disappointment causing me to try another source, no frustration that somehow this will all peter out and come to naught. All that I know now, the Scripture says, is but an earnest, a little down payment, a little foretaste of what I shall know in the world to come.

How is soul thirst met? Jesus tells us in this passage. Negatively, soul thirst is never met by going to the world's wells. And again, I plead with you children and young people. Will you not take Christ at His word? And as the devil sets before you a whole, as it were, shopping center full of wells, and he adorns them with neon signs and attractive posters and says, "Come to this well and it will satisfy--the well of pleasure, the well of education, the well of aesthetic beauty, the well of the arts, the well of this and that." O, that God will bring to your remembrance what you have

heard tonight, that Jesus stands above those wells, and one sign is over all of them: "Whoever drinks of any of these wells shall thirst again." They cannot satisfy. Thank God, there is soul satisfaction to be found. Where? Not in religion, not in church, not in form, not in ritual! It's to be found in Christ. "Whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give"--and how is it given? As a gift ("If you knew the gift of God"). To whom is it given? To those who see Christ for what He is as He is revealed in the Scriptures, to those who are willing to be honest about their sin, to those who drink of Him, take Him to themselves.

You say, "But O, what a messed up life I've had. I've got to get fixed first." Who was Jesus talking to? Was He talking to some sweet little girl who had come out of a sheltered environment? He was talking to a woman with a pretty messed up life, and He said, "Woman, you can drink." I don't care what your life is. I don't care to know the murky details of it, because the God who knows it in its entirety says, "If you knew the gift, you would ask; He would give even to you." "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." You say, "Ah, but you don't know..." I don't care to know. God knows the worst about you, and He tells you to drink. Shouldn't that be the end of the controversy? If you talked to me for ten hours and told me all the details of your rotten past, you'd only be telling me one part of what God knows about it. And the God who knows the whole business says, "Whoever drinks of this water shall never thirst again." O, may you drink, may you drink; may you have direct dealings with Christ, and with Christ in His living power through the grace of the Holy Spirit. How is soul thirst satisfied? This is how, and there's no other way. May God grant that the Holy Spirit will make this word effectual to cause some of us to drink for the first time of the water that is found in Christ, and in Christ alone.

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