

Sermon Outline  
Burton Memorial United Methodist Church  
“God thirsts...for us!!”  
(Sermon III in “Psalm 22 & the Crucifixion of Jesus”)  
March 23, 2025

Scripture

Psalm 22:15  
Psalm 42:1-2  
Mark 15:36  
John 19:28-29

Core Idea and purpose

**Core ideas from earlier sermons in the series:**

- (03/09/2025) Like Jesus, we can choose to identify with the suffering servant in Psalm 22 by standing up for love, righteousness, and justice.
- (03/16/2025) How Christlike we are is largely shown by how we react to the raging bulls, roaring lions, and wild dogs in our lives.

**Core Idea:** God thirsts to have a relationship with us.

**Purpose:** To provide hope for loved ones to come to know Jesus.

The Sermon

Water is vital for a healthy life. When we exercise, sweat, and use up the water in our bodies, we immediately feel the effects. First, our mouths become so dry our tongues stick to the top of our gums. Then our lips begin to wither and crack. Before we know it, we're inflicted with a severe lack of energy and incapacitated with a relentless headache. All our cells, to include brain cells, shrink as their fluids are forced out into the blood stream, causing blurred vision and hallucinations. After a while, our blood level decreases, forcing our hearts to beat faster to move a smaller volume of blood throughout the body. Finally, we lose consciousness and fade away onto death. Dehydration is a nasty way to die.

Therefore, it is critical to always remain thirsty. We should always want more water, and we should drink water whenever we have the opportunity. As a soldier, I've taken part in numerous combat training exercises under the scorching sun. I've completed 15-mile road marches, grueling physical fitness courses and tactical training exercises in 90+ degree temperatures and never fell victim to dehydration. I did this, not because I was tough, but because I always remained thirsty. The night before a training event, I would drink water. During a road march, I'd drink some water every 10 minutes. Throughout a tactical exercise, I'd drink some water every 20 minutes. I was constantly thirsting for more water and that kept the dehydration monster away. We must remain thirsty.

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Scripture tells us to remain thirsty for God and God’s righteousness. Psalm 42:1-2 states, “As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?” In Matthew 5:6, Jesus states, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.” We all have this thirst for God.

Many people realize they have a thirst, but they don’t understand that it is a thirst for God. So, they try to quench their thirst with the newest philosophy or latest craze. Some people believe family or political ideology will quench their thirst. For a while, these philosophies, ideologies, and family fellowship may quench the thirst, but only for a while. God is the only one who can quench our relentless thirst for God.

It makes sense that we should thirst for God and His righteousness. This is part of what it means for God to create us in God’s image. The One God who gives and sustains life created us to have a relationship with God. Just as we have a thirst for water so that we don’t become dehydrated, we all have a thirst for God so that we can have life and have it to the full.

Jesus tells us that only He can quench our thirst for God. He states, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” (John 4:13-14) He also states, “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.” (John 7:37-38)

Now, let’s sit back and use a little logic. Earlier, I stated that only God can quench our thirst for God. But Jesus claims that only He can quench our thirst for God. Along with being fully human, Jesus must also be fully God – God in the flesh. Hmm...we should listen to everything Jesus has to say.

As fully human and fully God (God in the flesh), Jesus is the way to the Father. He died on the cross to conquer death and pave the way for us to have a restored loving relationship with God. In this way, Jesus fulfills our thirst for God. Yet, according to the Gospel of John, while dying and hanging on the cross, Jesus cried out, “I thirst”. According to Mark’s version of the story, “Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink.” This makes the cross one of the most ironic events in history. The one who quenches our deepest thirst becomes thirsty himself.

Obviously, Jesus was thirsty for water. At this point in the story, Jesus was experiencing severe dehydration and a significant loss of blood. It reminds us of

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Psalm 22:15, “My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death.”

However, as God in the flesh, Jesus was also thirsting for something much, much deeper than water. He was thirsting for us! Just as we thirst for God, God thirsts for us. It was this thirst to have a relationship with us that drove Jesus to the cross. That’s the depth of God’s love for us!

God is constantly pursuing us to quench His thirst for a loving relationship with us. Before we even know we need God’s grace, the Lord pursues us – woos us, like a love-sick teen-ager.

Back in the early ‘90s, there was a sitcom called “Family Matters”. In this sitcom, this young socially challenged nerd named Steve Urkel had a colossal crush on the beautiful and popular Laura Winslow. Steve started to pursue Laura when he was about 13 years old. He constantly told her how much he cared for her, gave her flowers and invented outrageous gadgets for her. He was always ready to rush to her aid and defend her honor. Finally, after 8 years, Laura realized that she had fallen in love with Steve and agreed to marry him.

God is a lot like Steve. (Yes, we can imagine God as a nerd. Nerds are very smart, and God is the smartest being in all creation.) In the same way Steve wooed Laura, God is constantly wooing us, giving us the maximum opportunities to receive His forgiveness and have a loving relationship with God. We can always say ‘no’ to the Lord’s offer of an intimate, loving relationship with God, but the Lord makes sure that we can also say ‘yes’ to God.

I first said ‘yes’ to God’s love when I was 11 years old and confirmed in the United Methodist Church. Soon after, I drifted away from God. I stopped attending church, my prayer life fell by the wayside, and I became an arrogant teenager. I thought I had life all figured out. I pretty much ignored God and severed my relationship with God.

God, however, never gave up on me. God continued to love me and kept wooing me. I remember one time when I was a high school senior. I was in an empty parking lot when my dad’s truck wouldn’t crank up because the battery was dead. This stranger pulled up beside me and gave me a jump. Prior to leaving, he mentioned that Jesus loves me. The Lord used that man to say, “Come back David. My arms are open wide to receive you back.”

When I attended college at Virginia Military Institute (VMI), I felt a strong pull to attend church. I continued to party, get drunk and desire women but I also found myself attending church. I even became active with the local Baptist Student

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Union (There were lots of pretty girls there.) This strong pull to attend church was Jesus telling me, “Come back David. My arms are open wide to receive you back.”

As a soldier in Korea, I continued to feel the strong pull to attend worship services and Bible Studies. Jesus was continuing to tell me, “Come back David. My arms are open wide to receive you back.”

Finally, one Sunday night at a Praise service in Korea, I said to God, “YES !! I’m coming back into your arms.” I publicly declared that I was rededicating my life to Christ. That was the U-turn in my life. From that point on, I began to surrender my life to the loving authority of God and began a renewed, loving relationship with God.

God continues to woo us with new blessings every day. Any good thing that happens to you is a blessing from God. Any opportunity to help another person is a blessing from God. Any new thing that we can learn is a blessing from God. Moments of beauty, peace, and joy are blessings from God. The list can go on and on. God continues to bless us because God thirsts for a deeper relationship with us. That’s why Jesus said, “I thirst”.

When we respond to God’s grace with prayer, worship, Bible study, and joyful service, we quench God’s thirst for us. As we quench God’s thirst for us, God quenches our thirst for him.

The next time you are thirsty, and you take a drink of water, think about Jesus being thirsty on the cross. Remember, we worship a God who thirsts for us.

Let’s pray.

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Sermon Outline

I. Water is vital for a healthy life.

A. When we exercise, sweat and use up the water in our bodies, we immediately feel the effects.

- First, our mouths become so dry our tongues stick to the top of our gums.
- Then our lips begin to wither and crack.
- Before we know it, we're inflicted with a severe lack of energy and incapacitated with a relentless headache.
- All our cells, to include brain cells, shrink as their fluids are forced out into the blood stream, causing blurred vision and hallucinations.
- After a while, our blood level decreases, forcing our hearts to beat faster to move a smaller volume of blood throughout the body.
- Finally, we lose consciousness and fade away onto death.
- Dehydration is a nasty way to die.

B. Therefore, it is critical to always remain thirsty.

- We should always want more water, and we should drink water whenever we have the opportunity.
- As a soldier, I've taken part in numerous combat training exercises under the scorching sun.
  - I've completed 15-mile road marches, grueling physical fitness courses and tactical training exercises in 90+ degree temperatures and never fell victim to dehydration.
  - I did this, not because I was tough, but because I always remained thirsty.
    - The night before a training event, I would drink water.
    - During a road march, I'd drink some water every 10 minutes.

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- Throughout a training day, I’d drink some water every 20 minutes.
- I was constantly thirsting for more water and that kept the dehydration monster away.
- We must remain thirsty.

II. Scripture tells us to remain thirsty for God and God’s righteousness.

- A. Psalm 42:1-2 states, “As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?”
- B. In Matthew 5:6, Jesus states, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”

III. We all have this thirst for God.

- A. Many people realize they have a thirst, but they don’t understand that it is a thirst for God.

- So, they try to quench their thirst with the newest philosophy or latest craze.
  - Some people believe family or political ideology will quench their thirst.
  - For a while, these philosophies, ideologies, and family fellowship may quench the thirst, but only for a while.
  - God is the only one who can quench our relentless thirst for God.

- B. It makes sense that we should thirst for God and His righteousness.

- This is part of what it means for God to create us in God’s image.
- The One God who gives and sustains life created us to have a relationship with God.
- Just as we have a thirst for water so that we don’t become dehydrated, we all have a thirst for God so that we can have life and have it to the full.

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IV. Jesus tells us that only He can quench our thirst for God.

- A. He states, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."  
(John 4:13-14)
- B. He also states, "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." (John 7:37-38)
- C. Now, let's sit back and use a little logic.
  - Earlier, I stated that only God can quench our thirst for God.
  - But Jesus claims that only He can quench our thirst for God.
  - Along with being fully human, Jesus must also be fully God – God in the flesh.
  - Hmm...we should listen to everything Jesus has to say.

V. We thirst for Jesus, but Jesus also thirsts for us

- A. As fully human and fully God (God in the flesh), Jesus is the way to the Father.
  - He died on the cross to conquer death and pave the way for us to have a restored loving relationship with God.
  - In this way, Jesus fulfills our thirst for God.
- B. Yet, according to the Gospel of John, while dying and hanging on the cross, Jesus cried out, "I thirst".
  - According to Mark's version of the story, "Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink."
  - This makes the cross one of the most ironic events in history.
    - The one who quenches our deepest thirst becomes thirsty himself.
- C. Obviously, Jesus was thirsty for water.

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- It reminds us of Psalm 22:15, “My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death.”

D. However, as God in the flesh, Jesus was also thirsting for something much, much deeper than water.

- He was thirsting for us!
- Just as we thirst for God, God thirsts for us.
- It was this thirst to have a relationship with us that drove Jesus to the cross.
- That’s the depth of God’s love for us!

E. God is constantly pursuing us to quench His thirst for a loving relationship with us.

- Before we even know we need God’s grace, the Lord pursues us – woos us, like a love-sick teen-ager.

VI. Back in the early ‘90s, there was a sitcom called “Family Matters”.

A. In this sitcom there was this young socially challenged nerd named Steve Urkel had a colossal crush on the beautiful and popular Laura Winslow.

- Steve started to pursue Laura when he was about 13 years old.
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  - We can always say ‘no’ to the Lord’s offer of an intimate, loving relationship with God, but the Lord makes sure that we can also say ‘yes’ to God.

VII. How God kept wooing me

A. I first said ‘yes’ to God’s love when I was 11 years old and confirmed in the United Methodist Church.

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- I stopped attending church, my prayer life fell by the wayside, and I became an arrogant teenager.
- I thought I had life all figured out.
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B. God, however, never gave up on me.

- God continued to love me and kept wooing me.
- I remember one time when I was a high school senior.
  - I was in an empty parking lot when my dad’s truck wouldn’t crank up because the battery was dead.
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  - From that point on, I began to surrender my life to the loving authority of God and began a renewed, loving relationship with God.

VIII. God continues to woo us with new blessings every day.

- A. Any good thing that happens to you is a blessing from God.
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- C. Any new thing that we can learn is a blessing from God.
- D. Moments of beauty, peace, and joy are blessings from God.
- E. The list can go on and on.
- F. God continues to bless us because God thirsts for a deeper relationship with us.
- G. That’s why Jesus said, “I thirst”.

IX. When we respond to God’s grace with prayer, worship, Bible study, and joyful service, we quench God’s thirst for us.

- A. As we quench God’s thirst for us, God quenches our thirst for him.
- B. The next time you are thirsty, and you take a drink of water, think about Jesus being thirsty on the cross.
- C. Remember, we worship a God who thirsts for us. Let’s pray.

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863 398 4431 Lanita battles

1. Email coming
2. Ask for judicial warrant signed by a local judge (search or arrest warrant) if arrest warrant it needs particular individuals name. This is different from an administrative warrant.

205 521 8389 – Law Office

205 218 5038 – Keith Covington

Athanas, Bill – 205 532 3006