A Thirst only God can Satisfy

Psalm 42:1-4, 84:1-4, 119:131

6-26-2019

INTRODUCTION: Matthew 5:6

ILLUS: Signs along the highway in South Dakota about free spring water at Wall Drug.

It has been said that man is the only creature that drinks when he is not thirsty - when he has no need to drink.

He drinks to socialize; to have a "good time."

In Job 15:16, man is referred to as one who "drinketh iniquity (sin) like water."

The world is thirsty for that which ultimately gratifies self: the flesh. What were your desires in 1989?

In a world that:
is apathetic toward spiritual matters;
has many distractions from spiritual matters;
offers many substitutes for spiritual matters. . .

We need God to make us thirsty!

As Pastor, I need God to do for us what I cannot.

I can preach about God, but I cannot give you an appetite for Him.

I can teach the Word, but I cannot make you hungry for it.

I can encourage you to come to church, Bible Institute, etc, but I cannot cause you to take in, digest, and utilize the food you get here.

"You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink." He, like you, will only drink if he is thirsty.

***May God put within us a real and lasting spiritual thirst!**

What is a spiritual thirst?

I. A THIRST FOR GOD'S PRESENCE (Psalm 42:1-4; 63:1)

A. A thirst that preoccupies our thoughts (v. 1)

Ps. 42:1

The imagery is of a hart (hind or deer) longing for a stream of water to satisfy its thirst during a time of drought.

A deer (or most any animal) cannot hide its thirst. It pants (meaning breathes quickly, with its mouth open and tongue hanging out, as the animal seeks water).

Neither could the Psalmist hide his thirst (NOTE: Others saw his yearning for god but did not share the same desire - v. 3b).

A thirst develops out of a need.

The human body is amazing, how it tells you when your body liquids are low (your mouth gets dry).

--A physical thirst exists when a person realizes he has a need for water (when this need is realized, all the person can think about is "water")

--A spiritual thirst exists when a person realizes he has a desperate need for God.

My "soul" = the spiritual (inner) aspect of the psalmist.

Ps. 63:1-2 - "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary."

David's whole being is deeply restless and unsatisfied without God (Kidner, p. 225).

The psalmist is far from home (Jerusalem and the Temple, where he met with God). He is up north in the Mount Hermon mountain range (v. 6), either in exile, or occupied by a military campaign.

While he is miles from the Temple, he misses the worship he once experienced.

He was consumed with the thought: "I need God; I long to be close to Him; I yearn for His fellowship!"

This week was God in all your thoughts? Was He in your thoughts at all?

God desires that we know Him more than we desire to know Him.

God does not want to remain separated from you! James 4:8. A one-sided relationship is no relationship.

God said that He desired man to have a knowledge of Him, more than He desired burnt offerings (Hos. 6:6).

B. A thirst for <u>something real</u> (v. 2a)

One who is genuinely thirsty for God will not settle for less.

"For the <u>living</u> God" - no substitute will do.

The psalmist yearns to have the "real think" - fellowship with the true and living God.

Many today are satisfied to have a religion; many are satisfied to have artificial Christianity. It has the sounds, sights, and reputation of being real, but it is not.

Many times people, like the Pharisees, are self-deceived into thinking they are full. However, it's only a temporary satisfaction. Jesus said, "Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger." (Lk. 6:25)

Why do not more people thirst after God?

--They have been told (by Satan) other substitute thirst quenchers, cheap alternatives, pacifiers.

Man has an empty spot that he tries to fill with drugs, alcohol, illicit sex, materialism, food, social acquaintances, religion, etc.

--What were we made for?
To know God

--What should be our aim in life?
To know God

--Why did Jesus save us? That we might have a real, intimate, personal knowledge of God.

We need <u>more</u> than a superficial knowledge about God, a shallow awareness of God, a hollow theological conception of God.

God needs to be our closest companion, dearest helper, and best friend!

"Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And besides thee, I desire nothing on earth." (Ps. 73:25).

C. A thirst that will <u>not be quenched</u> by God's adversaries (v. 3)

While the world sits back and mocks ("Where is your God?"), we must keep our confidence firm in Him and our heart fixed on Him.

When it seems like God is far away, disinterested or impotent, will your thirst be quenched?

When the atheists, agnostics, evolutionists, and skeptics cry out via the media, public school system, etc., "Where is your God?" will they quench your thirst for Him?

Attitudes about God characteristic of the Last Days:

1. A cold love for God (Mt. 24:12)

2. Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God (II Tim. 3:4)

3. Blasphemy (II Tim. 3:2)

4. Scoffing about the Lord's return (II Pet. 3:3, 4 - "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.")

D. A thirst to <u>meet with God</u> (v. 2b, 4)

V. 2b

"When shall I come and appear before God?"

In the O.T., a believer met with God at a central location - the Temple. (Deut. 12:5ff)

The Temple was the place God chose to meet with man. It was the place to bring sacrifices, offerings, have fellowship meals with God, a place to pray, and to rejoice!

Today, however, we are not restricted to a place to meet with God (Jn. 4:21-24), yet with the blessings of being able to meet with God anywhere, do you take advantage?

We need to set apart a time and times to meet with God. To do nothing, but talk with Him and meditate on Him.

V. 4

Why don't many professed believers have a thirst for a closeness to God? ANSWER: They don't know what they are missing because they never had it before. You don't miss what you never had or knew before.

The psalmist remembers how sweet His fellowship was
(v. 4)

NOTE: The tremendous joy the psalmist remembered having when he had gone to the House of God. It was not a bore, not drudgery, because his heart was in it.

II. A THIRST FOR "GOD'S HOUSE" (Psalm 84:1-4, 10; I Timothy 3:15)

READ v. 1-4, 10 - the focus in this chapter is on a Son of Korah's desire to be in the house of the LORD - the Temple.

Today the house of God is not the Temple, but is the House or assembly of believers. I Timothy 3:15 - "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how they oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

Peter said it this way, when he described believers as "living stones, that are built up into spiritual houses." (I Pet. 2:5).

"How amiable are thy tabernacles" = how lovely (dear, beloved) is your dwelling place. The Christian equivalent of this is "love of the brethren" (Kidner, p. 303).

While the dwelling place of God is not a building today, the Lord is dwelling in believers: "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost..." (I Cor. 6:19). "You are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." (II Cor. 6:16)

"Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt. 18:20)

God dwells in and with His people today!

V. 2

To a godly O.T. Jew, having a thirst for God and His house are synonymous.

"The courts of the LORD" = the various sections of God's Temple

"My heart and my flesh" = the inner man and outer man.

It was spiritually and physically refreshing for the psalmist to be with the living God.

"...for the living God" - the true object of the psalmist's longing is not an attachment to a place, however hallowed, but to God Himself (Kidner, p. 303).

V. 3

The psalmist considers the birds privileged to build a nest or lay their young on the Temple grounds (In NY, pigeons tend to occupy our roof tops).

READ v. 4 & 10

Contrast this attitude with Amos 8:5, where the people are saying: "When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? And the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat..."

Like many today who say, "When will this service be over so that I can go home and watch football?"

Cp. the early church's excitement about gathering together -Acts 2:42, 46-47.

When someone is right with God, you can't keep him away from God's household of believers! It's the greatest time of the week!

If there was ever a year when it will be important to assemble, it is now -- the day of the Lord's return is near! (Heb. 10:24-25 - "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.")

III. A THIRST FOR GOD'S WORD (Psalm 119:131; I Peter 2:2)

A thirst for God, and a thirst for His Word are inseparable. If you have one, you will have the other ("With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments." Ps. 119:10).

NOTE: David's attitude toward God's Word in Ps. 119 -

--God's Word was something he rejoiced in (v. 14), meditated on (v. 15), and delighted in (v. 16, 24, 92).

--To David, God's Word was a longing (v. 20, 40) and a love (v. 47, 97).

--It was better "than thousands of gold and silver" (v. 72), something he could not get out of his mind (v. 16, 83, 93); something sweeter than honey to his mouth (v. 103; cp. Ps. 19:10).

--God's Word was the rejoicing of his heart (v. 111), and it was wonderful (v. 129), so wonderful that David rejoiced in God's Word like someone who had just found great spoil (a million dollars) (v. 162).

Do you love God's Word like you love receiving letters in the mail?

What is the comparison between the time you spend reading the Word and the time spent reading the newspaper, "Readers' Digest," "Sports Illustrated," or "TV Guide?"

Why don't people love reading their Bibles?
ANSWER: They don't love the Author!

1. Maybe you don't know Him (unsaved) (you don't love to hear from someone you don't know -- I would be bored to death reading a letter from someone I did not know).

2. Maybe you are "on the outs" with Him (saved but backslidden) (not on talking terms because of sin in your life).

SEE I Peter 2:1-3.

Before you will desire God's Word:

1. There are some things that must be laid aside (v. 1)

2. There must have been a time in your life when you tasted (fully experienced) the grace of God (v. 3)

Your spiritual thirst can be quenched <u>at no charge</u> (Is. 55:1ff; Rev. 22:17).

Your spiritual thirst can be quenched only <u>by Jesus Christ</u>.

Jesus can satisfy your spiritual thirst.

EX: <u>Woman at the well</u> - Jn. 4:13-14 - "Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever 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 be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

EX: <u>The multitude</u> who ate of the 5 loaves and 2 fish -
Jn. 6:35 - "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

EX: <u>Jews at the Feast of Tabernacles</u> - Jn. 7:37-38 - "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

Mt. 5:6 - ". . . they shall be filled."

Is. 44:3a - "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." Cp. Isaiah 41:17, 18

CONCLUSION:

We need:

a thirst for God's Presence

a thirst for God's House

a thirst for God's Word

This week will God be a distant stranger to you or a close personal Friend?

Will God's house (of believers) be something you anticipate each week with rejoicing?

Will God's Word be the sustenance that nourishes you and strengthens you this week?

As God to:

1) Forgive you for your lack of love (desire, appetite) for spiritual things.

2) Give you a thirst to know Him more intimately than ever before.

3) Give others a thirst for God and His righteousness

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