

Living Lent | Day 28

Are You Thirsty?

On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

When they heard these words, some in the crowd said, "This is really the prophet." Others said, "This is the Messiah." But some asked, "Surely the Messiah does not come from Galilee, does he? Has not the scripture said that the Messiah is descended from David and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?" So there was a division in the crowd because of him. Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

Then the temple police went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why did you not arrest him?" The police answered, "Never has anyone spoken like this!" Then the Pharisees replied, "Surely you have not been deceived too, have you? Has any one of the authorities or of the Pharisees believed in him? But this crowd, which does not know the law—they are accursed." Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus before, and who was one of them, asked, "Our law does not judge people without first giving them a hearing to find out what they are doing, does it?" They replied, "Surely you are not also from Galilee, are you? Search and you will see that no prophet is to arise from Galilee."

John 7:37–52 RSV

Encouragement for the Lenten Journey:

Sometimes I wonder if my kids have ever really been thirsty. They carry water bottles around all the time! Gone are the days of playing on a hot summer day for hours until you realize you are THIRSTY! When I was a kid, we didn't carry water bottles with us. You know what we would do? Why we would just go up to any house

—didn't matter if we knew them or not—and turn on their water hose to get a nice long drink!

In John 7, it is the last day of the festival of Tabernacles. There was this belief that when the messiah would come, water would flow from the temple, bringing salvation to all. During this feast, on the eighth and final day, water would be ceremoniously brought into the temple and poured out, as a sign of the hope that one day God's living water would come again as it had come from the rock in the wilderness in Moses' day.

Can you picture Jesus amid the crowd of worshippers, right at that moment when water was being brought in or being poured out, crying aloud, "Is anyone here thirsty? Come to me!"

I'm glad to fill up my kids' water bottles each morning as they pack up to go to school, because I know it's important to stay hydrated. I'll bet you have given money to help make sure that people in other lands have access to clean water. We know we cannot survive without it. Thirsty people need water. We all need water.

Jesus invites the thirsty to come to him. But are you thirsty? The religious authorities did not think they were thirsty. The guards on the other hand? They walked away saying, "We have never heard anyone talk like this!" Did Jesus awaken in them a thirst that they didn't even know was there?

Are you thirsty? Are you taking the time to have a long, cool, refreshing drink from Christ who is our Living Water? Perhaps you may have been going so long in your own steam that you are totally unaware of how dehydrated your soul is.

When you're really thirsty, you aren't afraid to ask for a glass of water, or even to borrow a garden hose. What if Jesus really does have Living Water for your dry soul? He invites you to come and have a drink.

Contributor and Contributing Body of Christ

Reverend Tom Carruth lives in Perry, Georgia with his wife Shelly and their four children. They worship and serve at Perry United Methodist Church where Tom is the Senior Pastor. Perry UMC is a vibrant church that is shining the light of Christ in the heart of beautiful downtown Perry, across middle Georgia, and around the world. Morningstar opened a new Counseling Center in Perry in December of 2020 and provides counseling to children in five counties from the Perry location.

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