



“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink!”

Parched

IT HAS BEEN DRY. After a pleasantly wet spring, our early summer has settled into an uneasy pattern of dry weather, interrupted only infrequently by brief splatters of rain. The few passing clouds have been reluctant to release their storehouse of moisture.

Unlike those dwelling in the big city—those in houses stacked closely up against each other—our concern is not for the color of the lawn. Just as we pay little mind to crab grass and dandelions, it is of small consequence to us if our three acres of grass fade from their more luxuriant springtime green. In fact dry, slow-growing grass may be considered a Godsend, as time and money is saved by not having to mow.

Our concern, instead, is for the vegetable garden and the young trees just planted this year. When the weather is dry—especially during these early, formative days—it becomes necessary for us to water the living things via our “water wagon”—a trailer outfitted with large tank, hose, and electric pump.

Early this morning, at dawn, my first task of the day was to haul out to the garden the filled sixty-five gallon water tank, and distribute its load over the peas, tomatoes, beans, potatoes, onions, garlic, carrots, beets, zucchini, pumpkins, lettuce and radishes. Household

water is never as profitable as a good, soaking rain from the clouds, but it sustains the plants until something better comes along.

And as the water bubbled from the end of the hose, the parched soil soaked it up like a thirsty sponge.

Living Water

Jesus knew about water.

He left Judea and went away again into Galilee. And He had to pass through Samaria. So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph; and Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give Me a drink.”

John 4:3-7

The human body requires water to live. From 50 to 90 percent of the weight of all living organisms is water, and absent a regular intake

of the stuff, humans die. Nothing is more essential to the survival of the human body than water.

Even the body of Jesus.

Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

John 4:9-10

Living water. From Jacob's well the Samaritan woman could give Jesus his fill of water that would quench His physical thirst and sustain His life. But Jesus could give her living water. He was in possession of water that need not be externally replenished.

Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

John 4:13-14

Later, while teaching at the Jerusalem temple during the Feast of Tabernacles, commemorating the desert wandering of the Jews during the exodus from Egypt, Jesus made an even more dramatic declaration about the living water He offered.

Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'"

John 7:37-38

The apostle John clarifies for us what Jesus meant by "living water."

But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

John 7:39

God-space

Whether they realize it or not, people everywhere are dying of thirst. From the drought and politically induced starvation in Sudan, to the war-torn streets of the Middle East, to even the well-appointed

penthouses on New York's Park Avenue, those who do not yet know Christ are dying from a lack of that most essential element: living water—meaning, the Holy Spirit.

By contrast, those who *do* know Christ as Lord not only are filled to the extent that they never again will know thirst, but their cup overflows with "rivers of living water."

The "cup" holding this living water is our God-space. Every person has a God-space—a place within him perfectly sized and shaped to hold the Holy Spirit. Every person is born with a God-space—but it begins empty. It is an apartment perfectly suited for the Spirit, but the apartment is vacant. God does not intrude where He is not invited,

and we must *ask* the Spirit to be at home in us.

Since Creation, only two human beings have automatically had their God-space filled for them: Adam and Eve. But they opened the door and evicted its tenant. As a result, from then on every human being would be born with an empty God-space—room for a God not yet in residence.

When a person believes in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, trusting that He alone can save them from the consequence of sin, the Spirit immediately and permanently takes up residence in that person's God-space.

Instantly the ancient communion that Adam and Eve enjoyed but rejected is restored. Instantly God is in direct and intimate contact with the individual believer.

And he is filled to overflowing with the living water of the Spirit.

Quenched

Those who are physically parched understand that their body is dehydrating, and they are desperately seeking something to drink. Those who are spiritually parched—and know it—are desperately seeking something with which to fill their God-space.

This morning when I watered the garden, the plants gratefully drank in the water I offered. It restored their vigor; it left them feeling healthy and strong. But in a very short while, perhaps as soon as this evening, they will again feel the need for more. It is a never-ending cycle of famine and feast.

Many who are spiritually parched drink from more-fashionable soda pop and Kool-Aid, but these drinks quench their thirst only for a short while. Soon the sugary sweetness of this world's refreshment leaves them panting for more. And more. And even more. And their thirst is never satisfied.

But along comes the Spirit, and He asks, "May I come in and quench your thirst once and for all?" And those who say yes throw wide the door to their God-space, and He takes up permanent residence.

And they never thirst again. 

