

Nick Freestone Thirst?

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Preacher: Sam Low

[0 : 00] My question for you after a passage like that is, have you ever been thirsty? Like seriously, seriously, dangerously, you're feeling it, you're sick, thirsty.

Why don't you stand up, give yourself 20 seconds, turn to the person you've come with or people that you know around you, stand up and just share that story, share that time where you've really, really felt it right now.

So drinking is actually really important. I'm one of the pastors here, my name is Nick, I'm used to playing the guitar at the front and leading and doing a bit of stuff behind the scenes.

I'm not used to being at the front, whenever I get up in front of people my voice just dries up, it's like a desert and I need to drink, so I'm actually really nervous and thirsty right now. But we really need water, don't we?

It's actually something that gets painful pretty quick and we're dead in two or three days if we don't get it. We're completely in need and we can go without sleep or food or light, like when you go to Katoomba and go on kick.

[1 : 13] You can even go without human contact for weeks on end, but you can't go without water. After we breathe, we need to drink and everyone knows that thirst.

Our thirst for water is mirrored in us in heaps of different ways, other desires in our life. And I'm sure you know a kind of thirst for other things, for practical needs and extravagant desires.

Under the surface, these desires that are in us, under the surface of those, we're all chasing satisfaction. We long to be satisfied.

If we can't get no satisfaction, then we're discontent. Now I know discontent and you know it too. Our discontentedness demands action.

It says get happy and quick and it looks like a whole bunch of things. It can be, I think for me, it's tiredness and hunger and apathy. It's lots of things.

[2 : 14] We want to fill our lives with things. When I get tired and anxious, I raid the fridge and I put a TV show on and entertain myself.

I escape. Those things I think I know won't satisfy me, but they're good distractions for my thirstiness. What does your discontent look like?

Finish the sentence, I'd be satisfied if only I had. I'd be satisfied if only I was or looked like.

What do you pursue to remove that discontentedness that you feel, that thirst in you?

And may I suggest today, and this is actually really exciting, that there is an end available to our thirst. Somewhere to run to for water that can fill us up.

[3 : 19] A source to go to where we are satisfied forever, to return to ongoing, into eternity, and free for absolutely everyone. That's a pretty big talk.

But the exciting thing is that we get to come to a pretty big God. So I need to hear about what this water is as much as you guys. And we're all among the thirsty today. You guys stood up and talked pretty loudly.

So I assume you know what I'm talking about. So let's pray for God's help to hear him over what I say today. Let's pray. Lord God, we come to you as thirsty people with longing in us.

We long to be satisfied, God, and I pray today that you would do that by your spirit, by the truth of your gospel. Amen. Guys, our yearning and our satisfaction, our thirst, is actually a really good thing.

It's created in us. It's not an accident. It's given to us by God. And he didn't leave it as an unhelpful little burden that we have to carry.

[4 : 30] We thirst for God because he satisfies. If we only knew our creator completely, we would not have yearnings.

We would not need endlessly. We would not thirst our way through this life. But naturally, humans thirst for everything but God.

And we chase after the wrong things. We've got to somehow come back to God and get satisfied again. We're only ever going to be satisfied in God. And this matters.

God did not come to tell us to ignore the desires in us for satisfaction. He wants our discontent quenched. He came to turn us around from our sin, to bring us back to the source that we were made to come to and provide us satisfaction and joy that's going to last.

In the beginning, it was Adam and Eve. They had full access to God and full satisfaction in Him. That was a wonderful relationship where they had complete access to God.

[5 : 44] They thirsted for nothing. They worshipped with their whole lives. They were enamored by God's creation, His perfection and His presence. They were satisfied in Him. But ever since Adam and Eve chose to find their satisfaction elsewhere, we have followed them.

Our sin cost us that access to God and we lost our satisfaction. Jesus knew this. He knew that we were without access to God and the satisfaction that that brings.

Look at Jesus' prayer for us in Matthew 11. It's going to be on the screen. There it is. No one knows the Son except the Father and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him.

Every one of us take our first breath of life into that situation. We're born without access to God.

And with the discontentedness and thirst that comes from that, nobody knew Jesus when He came and only Jesus knew the Father. It's going to take God for us to know God.

[7 : 02] It's a bit confusing, but honestly, we're out of that loop. We're all undeserving. It's going to take an act of grace for us to ever know God.

Unless God acts, we go on thirsting. Unless He meets our needs, we're going to stay in need.

Unless God has a way for me to be satisfied beyond my abilities to do so, I'm going to stay anxious and weak.

Unless God is your way to satisfaction, every underlying thirst and need in you is going to go unmet. So let's come together as thirsty people and see what God is going to offer us.

John 4. If you don't have your Bible out or a screen on a phone or something in front of you, get it. Put your hand up. Someone will find you a Bible if you don't have it. I'm going to be jumping around in John 4.

The situation is two people meeting near a well in Samaria. One of those was a woman getting water.

[8 : 05] The other was Jesus. The woman was a local Samaritan. Here's what we know about her. She had been in and out of marriages more than most people.

She struggled with life and that wearisome daily trek to go get water. And she worried if she really knew who God was.

She thirsted for much more than the water in her jar. She was discontent. She's just like us. Guys, today, right now, put yourself in her place.

Because like her, we get tired of everything. We struggle with sin. And we're reaching out for God in some way. We're thirsty like her.

We are her. But because God is gracious and for no merited reason, Jesus chose this woman on that day to be offered complete, lasting, eternal satisfaction.

[9 : 11] The first to be offered that. He starts the conversation. Will you give me a drink? It's astonishing that Jesus would do this.

It is crazy culturally for him to step out and start that conversation. A Jew would never address a Samaritan.

Wouldn't speak to them. They would never drink from a Samaritan's cup when they'd made or touched or even been seen near. A Jewish man would never address a woman in public.

And in verse 27, his disciples were astonished that he'd been talking to her. But Jesus saw her. He saw and validated her need. He shows us that we're all in her place. Not just culturally, but actually without him.

[10 : 16] He came for us all. Now, when Jesus says, will he give me a drink? Do you think he's just asking for water?

Honestly, I think he was actually thirsty for a drink. It's hot in that part of the world. Like, desert hot.

Like, hotter than Sydney in the humidity in February. Hot. It is crazy hot there. And I bet Jesus knew a real human thirst. But he didn't thirst for God like we do.

He knew God and was satisfied. He was drinking and eating like us while completely satisfied. In God.

Jesus proved to this woman, 17 and 18, that's on the screen. He proved that he had access to God because he knows secrets about this woman that only God could know.

[11:16] Hidden things about her relationships. And we see later that that's proof for her. She says later, he told me everything about everything I'd ever done.

He didn't. He gave her a short list of things that proved to her that he knew God. He is not thirsty like we are. But he is full of grace and mercy and compassion.

He started the conversation that she could not start and that we can't. To show us that he offers us satisfaction.

I've always been amazed at Jesus' ability with fasting and food. I can barely even make lunch for my kids with a full fridge of food.

I'm useless when it comes to doing the simplest things like that. But Jesus can make food for 5,000 people. Bam! It's there. That's incredible. And he can go for weeks without eating.

[12:17] I can't go for more than about an hour and I feel like I'm going to die. But Jesus went weeks in the desert without food. It amazes me what physical needs Jesus could put aside while satisfied with God.

He talks about it in verse 32. He says he has food that we don't understand. He is completely satisfied in God.

But, and this is incredible. And if you're really tired, just catch this today because it's so incredible. He didn't hold on to that satisfaction.

He actually gave it up so that we could have it. Look with me at John 19. It's going to be on the screen. Stay in John 4 on your tablet or your Bible.

Look up here. Later, knowing this is Jesus on the cross. Later, knowing that everything had now been finished and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, I am thirsty.

[13:38] The God who was satisfied beyond needing anything at all, stooped down to identify with our needs and become a man and on the cross took on our thirst for God.

I don't think he's saying, as he gasps for breath and bleeds out on the cross, I don't think he's saying, I'd really like a glass of cold water, guys.

This sucks. He is putting his satisfaction in God aside as the Father turns his face away from him on the cross because he's wearing a sin.

So we would never have to be thirsty and without God ever again. That is amazing.

Jesus became thirsty for us so that he can offer us this drink that we hear about in John 4.

[14:44] Let's see what he's offering us exactly. John 4 verse 10. Have a look with me. If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.

Jump to verse 13. Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of living water welling up to eternal life.

Jesus was promising to quench this woman's thirst forever. What did he mean? It's clear in the story that the woman thought she knew what he meant.

She asks for this mysterious water so she'd no longer have to go out every day and get water for herself. That's exactly what we would do. We would take our understanding of God and then demand it of him.

Give me a drink, Jesus. She's thinking like Spielberg in Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade. You know, the chase for the Holy Grail, the cup of Christ.

[16:04] Assuming that drinking from a cup that Jesus offered would keep us young and alive on earth. But Jesus is promising us so much more than something so silly as that.

He's actually promising access to the living God, not just a long-term hydration solution, but a longer-than-life-long satisfaction.

So how do I get this living water if it's not from a cup that Jesus offers? Not a literal cup. Look again at verse 10.

Look at how it starts. It begins, if you knew. It seems that knowing God is the way to get this drink.

The woman caught the cue about knowing God. When I read this passage, I didn't. I got really confused as to what this woman asked Jesus.

[17:08] If someone comes up to you, tells you all your hidden secrets of your life, and then kind of leaves the conversation open, you can ask them anything.

What would you ask for? What answers to life would you demand from that person? And I'd probably say, how do I, you know, get more money?

Or can you help me with all the stuff that I do wrong? Or can you help me? I've got a list of like a zillion practical things that I could think of.

I want this, I want that, I want a guitar, I want my kids to be healthy, I want to be secure for life. But she gets this cue, she wants to know if she really knows God.

She asks a religion question. I always found that really weird, but she gets this cue about knowing God. She was convinced about Jesus' connection. Why not see if she knows God like he does?

[18:17] So she asked him if Samaria's way of knowing God, their religious practices were correct. Because if they were right, then she'd already have access to this water, right? Right?

Often people think that religion is about having our lives in order already to get us access to God. Surely Jesus will just tell us here who is right and who really knows him so we can all get on board with that one religion and then move on, right?

No. He says it's no longer about how you get access to God, but who is your access to God. Not a list of things to do to know God.

He is how we know God. He is our access to God and it's by his grace, not by what we do. He is offering to meet our greatest need in him.

So let's look at Jesus' answer to our discontentedness. How will Jesus do for us what we need?

[19:25] And the answer is in two words, spirit and truth. Look at verse 21 with me. It's going to be on the screen as well. Woman, Jesus replied, believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

You Samaritans worship what you do not know. We worship what we do know for salvation comes from the Jews. Yet, a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in the spirit and in truth.

for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit and his worshippers must worship in the spirit and in truth. In the spirit and in truth is Jesus' mysterious answer.

It is how we can know God through him. So it's really important. These are the two things that we need to get satisfaction in God.

So first, the spirit. God inflames our hearts to faith by the Holy Spirit. He confirms we're saved by the Holy Spirit's dwelling in us.

[20:43] He speaks through his word in the Bible by his spirit. And the spirit is a Christian's connection to God. The spirit does not let go.

The Holy Spirit is like the hand that takes hold of ours and leads us to God. It is our constant comfort and assurance that we are saved.

It's his grace in action drawing us to him. But it is the spirit and truth together that bring us to God. So the truth part of it sounds a little confusing.

So let Jesus clarify it for you. Can we have John 14 up on the screen? verse 6. I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Jesus himself is the truth. Everything he was and said and achieved his life his death his resurrection it is all the truth.

[21:51] The truth is the gospel of Christ. All we know from him from the gospels. His perfect life for us that we might live.

His death is an innocent man that he died for sinners. His resurrection that proves that Jesus won us a way back to God. The gospel is what Jesus came to live out so we could get God back.

It's what we sang about in that first song from the squalor of a stable. virgin born walked our road felt our pain defeated death crowned with glory.

So the truth is the whole gospel of Christ. So then we get God by the spirit by means of the gospel itself.

The gospel is like an open door door. An open door to God and the spirit is like the hand that leads us through it.

[23 : 05] They go together to open access to God and to satisfaction. In spirit and in truth we are satisfied and connecting with God through the gospel by the spirit is drinking living water.

It is that action. We can only come to God through the door of the gospel. We are not getting in any other way. And when we do, we revel in it and soak it up.

We respond with prayers of thanksgiving and praise. Those overflow into singing and serving and loving and giving up our lives for the gospel. The gospel becomes our joy and our motivation. It becomes the source of our worship. But it is only by the spirit that we come at all. The spirit is our reminder of the gospel's effectiveness.

The spirit speaks through God's word. The spirit inspires our prayers. The spirit guides us, inspires, upholds, holds, and remains with us.

[24 : 14] Together the gospel and spirit satisfy because through them, through the door, by the hand of God, we get God. And we know we're satisfied because our satisfaction overflows in worship.

have you ever had a really nice cold drink of water on a sweltering day?

For me, it's a cold beer with dinner because, honestly, that's as good as it gets for me. Do you know that elation, that after you've taken that first swallow?

If I did that every night at dinner, I'd kind of get frowned on, but do you know that that is worship.

Thankfulness, joy, and pleasure just erupt out of us. It's worship. We're responding to the satisfaction that we've found in the drink. the worshipers Jesus is after aren't doers of worship.

[25 : 34] No, Jesus was the doer for us, and now is our reason to worship. We're responders in worship, and can you see how that undoes the woman's expectations?

The ah isn't a set way of doing church or life. It's entirely dependent and responsive to his provision for us.

That ah is the mark of our satisfaction in Jesus. There's got to be some sort of response that has to be part of our every day.

It's got to be the boldest colour of our Sunday services. if we don't look satisfied, are we?

Jesus' offer to come and drink is open to you. Be satisfied once and for all. Jesus' offer does satisfy once for all.

[26 : 46] I've got to be honest, life stays hard. We're sinful and we're still kind of yearning for something. As a Christian, the yearning is still there. The discontentedness often remains.

Does that mean that Jesus hasn't satisfied us? No. He has. But we yearn and hurt and struggle and even doubt because we're waiting for a final satisfaction in eternity with God.

And we're not there yet. But we have the glorious opportunity to go there every day and drink. The gospel is there to satisfy us ongoing every day.

Look, cover to cover, this thing is all the water you will ever need ever. that's what you need to survive as a Christian.

Everything in here points to Jesus, it's about Jesus and it's leading us to look forward to an eternity with him. It provides our hope in hurt and struggle and turns back the strongest doubts and fears.

[28 : 09] This good news, this gospel, this word of God is there every day for us as a reminder of Jesus' provision for us. But as Christians, we still don't always drink from satisfying the satisfying source of the gospel.

We go elsewhere. I still stand over an empty fridge and wonder why I'm standing there. We still go in all the wrong directions, chasing desires.

We go to money and to power and to other stuff that will not last. And as a Christian, if you aren't drinking regularly, you're needlessly thirsty and missing out on joy that Jesus is offering you.

Doubt and pain and fear and uncertainty get continually pushed aside when we drink. So why don't we do that?

Why don't we drink a little together? Look with me at the culmination of the gospel's promises to us, to the end of our thirst, the satisfaction of eternity with Jesus.

[29 : 22] Guys, this is the hope for every Christian. Never again will they hunger. Never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat down on them, nor any scorching heat, for the lambs at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd.

He will lead them to springs of living water and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Compare our discontented cries from earlier.

I'd be satisfied if only I had. I'd be satisfied. That discontentedness is, how does that compare to how you are lifted up and given joy by what is there in Revelation 7?

Does your lack of satisfaction now pale in comparison to how you yearn for what God will have in store in the future for you? That Jesus himself will be leading us, feeding us, and wiping away our tears?

things. And the heat of the day and struggle will soon be over and we will thirst no more. That picture is complete satisfaction.

[30 : 43] Revelation 7 is what we are thirsting toward. And we're crazy if we do not come to the Spirit and the truth of the gospel to drink.

guys, in the last few weeks, friends of mine and Sam's lost their baby at 30 weeks of pregnancy. It was a shock and it was awful. A guy I went to college with this week actually committed suicide and it's devastated everyone I knew at college.

We've got a church member, 530 member, staring death in the face, fighting cancer right now, tonight. How do those involved in this stuff get satisfied in God while life serves up this mess? How do we stay satisfied while we're watching it? By the Spirit of God, through the truth of the gospel, Christ.

[31 : 56] And if we go anywhere else, we're drinking dust. And it's going to leave us empty. As the band come up right now, soon we're going to sing together and respond to what we just drank in Revelation 7.

But before we sing, remember, we will go to the God. We will be satisfied in God. Jesus offers satisfaction free to anyone.

No matter who you are, he offers it now, once, and every day, and on into eternity. And if you find discontent in you now, and it's still raging, as a Christian, already knowing satisfaction, yet struggling, know he is ready to deal with your discontent by the Spirit and by the means of the gospel.

And this, he took your discontent, thirst, and yearning for God, and he wore it on the cross, so you never have to.

You can have satisfaction now, and you can have it forever, by the Spirit, by the means of the gospel and his word. So let's come to God by his grace, by his spirit through the gospel, come as thirsty people, and get satisfied.