

Sermon for May 24, 2026
Pentecost Sunday
"Are You Thirsty?"

John 7:37-39

Are you thirsty? Have you ever really been thirsty? We take clean water for granted. In some places people have to walk miles to find water. We simply turn on a tap and there it is.

The context of this statement by Jesus was the Festival of Booths or Tabernacles. This was the annual celebration of the time when Israel wandered in the wilderness. One of the things that they commemorated and celebrated was the water that God gave from the rock in the wilderness, and each day the priests would pour out water before the altar to remember that gift of water. It was in this context that Jesus said, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me."

Of course Jesus was not talking about H₂O. He was speaking of the Holy Spirit of God. Jesus knew that after he rose from the dead and ascended into heaven that he would send the Holy Spirit. You know you can live a long time without eating but not very long without drinking. Some estimate that about 2/3 of the human body is water. In the same way that water is essential for physical life, the Holy Spirit is essential for spiritual life. When our heart or soul thirsts, it is for God's Holy Spirit.

So I ask you again, "Are you thirsty?"

Once upon a time there was a woman who was thirsty. She had been rejected by her community. She had been cast off by men. Husband after husband after husband had divorced her and sent her away. She was shunned by the women in her small village. Now, her village was small enough that everybody there knew her history. On top of that she was a Samaritan, a people who has been shunned by their own kin the Jews.

She was thirsty on many different levels. So one day she went to the well near the village to get some water, but she went at noon when she knew that the other women would not be there to sneer at her and turn their backs on her. To her surprise she was not alone. There was a man there, a Jew from his looks of him.

Jesus spoke to the woman asking for a drink. A conversation followed during which she discovered that he already knew her whole story and yet he wanted to talk to her. He also offered her living water that will become a spring of eternal life in her. Realizing that he was the Messiah she left her jar and ran to tell the others. Jesus had given her the assurance that even though the Jews had rejected her and even though the town's people had rejected her and even though her husbands had rejected her, God had not. In fact God's Messiah had even offered to share a drink of water with her.

There are a lot of thirsty people in our world. Steve was thirsty. He was going

through what some would call a mid-life crisis. He had been working for years in a career that didn't seem to be going anywhere. As he watched his parents age, he realized that time was running out. There are so many things he wanted to do in life and the opportunities to do them seemed to be slipping away. He thirsted for meaning and purpose and fulfillment.

Regina was thirsty. Looking at her, people would say she was a typical teenager. She made decent grades and was into a few outside activities. She had never really been in trouble except for a few tardies. Yet, High School would not last forever. The "real world" waited for her. College, jobs, marriage, family: it all seemed so scary. Regina thirsted for acceptance, direction, hope, peace.

Catherine was thirsty. The kids had grown up and moved away. Occasionally she saw the grandkids, but less and less now that they were in school and her daughter in law had gone back to work. One day while she was at the grocery store, she suddenly found a 4-year-old with his arms around her knees giving her a hug. He looked up and realized he had grabbed the wrong grandmother and ran off to his grandmother, who was further down in the same aisle. At that point Catherine realized that was the first time she had been hugged in a month and it was by accident. Catherine was thirsty for assurance, for affection, for hope, for love.

Jerry was thirsty. He had made so many mistakes in life. Some of them big and some small. He had hurt people and alienated people. He had lived for the day with no thought for the future. He was empty. Jerry was thirsty for forgiveness, for joy, for peace, for salvation.

Are you thirsty? When you are thirsty you need water. I know that Coke-a-Cola may be the "pause that refreshes," but I have found that nothing beats just plain water. If I have been out in the sun working up a sweat, I find that drinking water replenishes me. Because water is what I need. It is essential to my existence as a living physical being.

If you are thirsty spiritually then the Holy Spirit is what you need. Only God's Holy presence can give you the hope and peace and joy that you thirst for. Through the Holy Spirit you can receive the love of God, the assurance to hope for the future, and the acceptance you crave. Only through the Spirit which comes from above can you receive the forgiveness and salvation that Jesus bought with his own blood for you on the cross.

If you are thirsty or if you know someone who is thirsty, come to Jesus. He said, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, 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.'"

Jesus has poured out the Holy Spirit for the whole human race. Come and drink! Let the Spirit of God well up in you. Then let it flow out of you for the world!