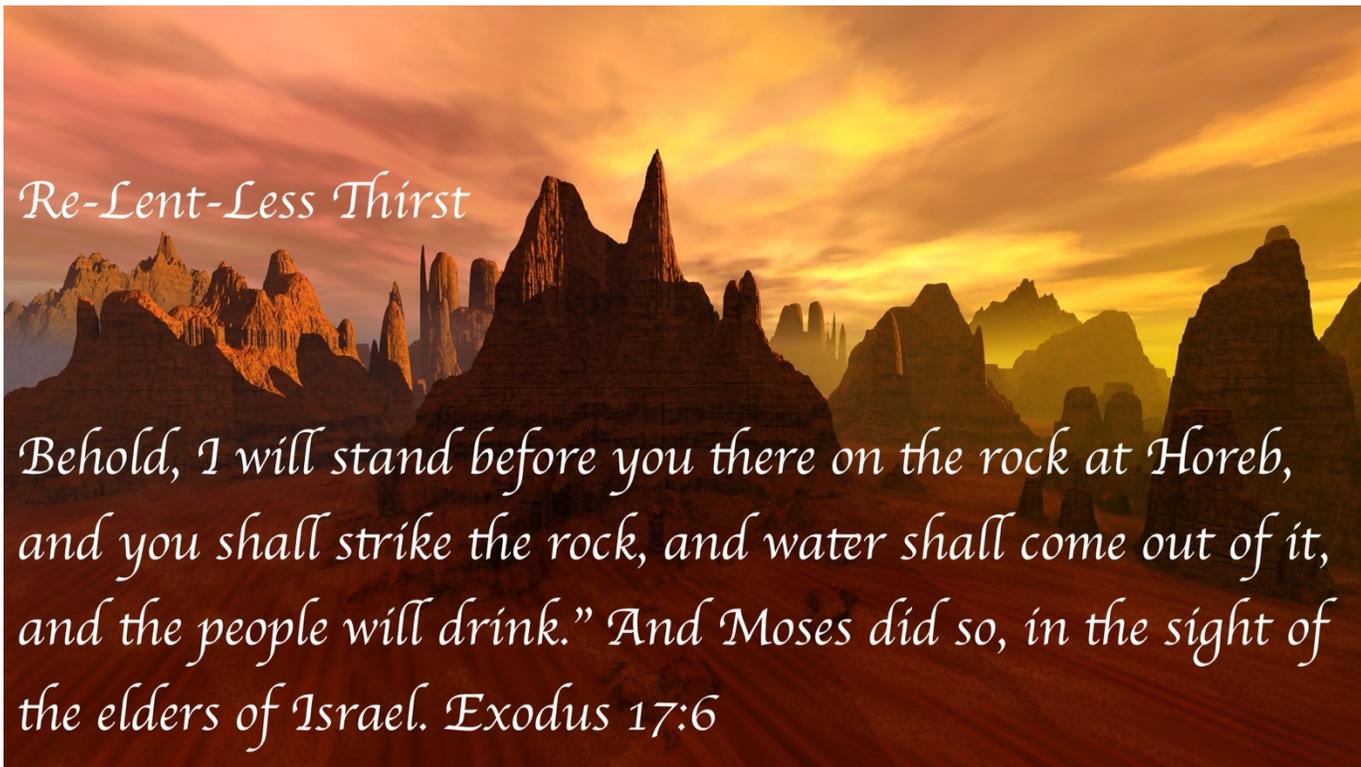


Sermon – Relentless Thirst

Pastor Ed Blonski | March 12, 2023



As we continue this message series called “Re-Lent-Less” today we explore Relentless Thirst.

Boundless Need

One of our Needs is Water

Physical Thirst Need Met

One of the boundless needs around the world is the need for clean, fresh water.

This is something that we tend to take for granted. All we have to do is go to the nearest sink, turn a knob and water comes out of the faucet.

But that isn't the case in many parts of the world!



When you need water, you are “thirsty”

The need for water is abundant, dare I say “boundless”?

And when you need water, you call that being “thirsty”.

But “thirst” can mean several different things

There are several instances in the Bible that talk about “being thirsty”, talk about our need for water.

But it isn’t always referring to H₂O.

1. Need for Water (Physical)

Sometimes that’s exactly what it is. A physical need for water.

Humans need water to live. That’s the way God made us.

You cannot go more than 4 days – generally – without water. You will die.

2. Need for companionship (Emotional)

Emotional Thirst Need Met

But “being thirsty” is not just a thirst for water.

You can be thirsty for companionship.

This is often called “being lonely.”

We can thirst for friends, thirst for companions.

Because that is the way God made us – to be and live with other people around us.



3. Need for Forgiveness (Spiritual)

Spiritual Thirst Need Met

You can also have a spiritual thirst.

The greatest – and most widespread – kind of thirst is the thirst for God and His forgiveness and righteousness.

The Book of Psalms references this thirst in a number of places:

My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. Psalm 42:2

O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you.... Psalm 63:1

I stretch out my hands to you; my soul thirsts for you like a parched land. Psalm 143:6

Have you ever been thirsty? In any of these ways? Then, you know what I'm getting at.



A Time When I Was Thirsty

There was a time when I was more thirsty in my life than I had ever been before or since.

July 2007, North Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River, Idaho

Ed Fishing

I believe it was July of 2007.

Our family had been in California for about a year. I had set up a Christian men's camping and fishing trip to Northern Idaho.

Three of us had flown in to Spokane, Washington and made our way east to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

We met up with our trail guide at Shoshone Basecamp in the Coeur d'Alene National Forest.



And from there we then drove 22 miles up the forest road to the trailhead.

1. 4-mile hike from trail head to campsite

birch path

We started the four-mile hike to our campsite. We had to take everything in with us on our backs (and take everything we brought in out with us the same way).

It was a very warm July morning – over 90 degrees and not a cloud in the sky!

2. Through a beautiful meadow.

We started off through a grove of cedars that opened out onto a beautiful half-mile long meadow.

It was hard not to think of and thank God for His creation. I was in awe of His creative beauty!

It nearly took my breath away!

But it also distracted me.

3. Over a big hill (with a switchback)

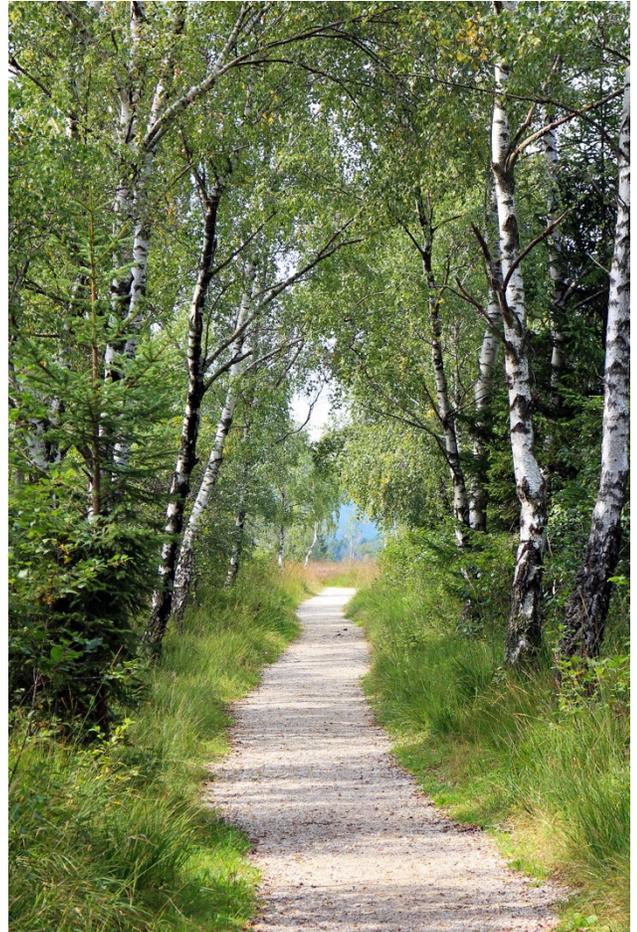
The hike wasn't terribly difficult. There was one big hill that we climbed by navigating switchbacks.

At the top was our midway stopping point.

4. Scenic overlook of the campsite
150 feet below

Overlook of Campsite

There was a scenic overlook of our campsite 150 feet below us on the banks of the north fork of the Coeur d'Alene River.



It was about then that I realized I hadn't brought enough water in my canteen. It was all gone by this point.

It was hot, it was humid. But I began to notice I wasn't sweating. Not a good sign.

5. Through a grove of birch (with bear claw markings 15 off the ground!)

Bear Claws on Birch

We began our descent through a large grove of birch trees, thankful for the shade.

At one point, our trail guide pointed out scratches on one of the trees about 15 feet up.

These were made by a bear. That gave us something else to think about.

We finally made our way down to the river, crossed the river and made it to our campsite.



6. Campsite - I was dehydrated and just sick setting up my tent.

Idaho River

By this time, after about 4 hours of hiking, with not enough water in the hot and humid sun, I was thoroughly dehydrated.

I was dizzy, had a headache, and my body ached. It was all I could do to set up my tent.

7. I got water from the river (after filtering it - no beaver fever please!)



I had brought along a hand-held water purifier and got to work at the river.

I had been warned not to drink the water straight from the river.

It's called Giardiasis, but is more commonly known as "Beaver Fever."

8. Drank about 2 gallons and laid down for the rest of the afternoon

I was able to filter and purify about 5 gallons for all of us. Drank about 2 gallons myself, and laid down out of the sun in my tent for the rest of the afternoon.

9. God met my need for water!

I was physically thirsty – more than I had ever been before or since – and God wonderfully met my need for water through a beautifully placed river and the technology to purify the water!

God Meets the Need of Relentless Thirst

That's what God does! He meets our need of relentless thirst – no matter what that thirst may be.

It could be physical thirst, emotional thirst, or spiritual thirst.

No matter, God will meet that need in you!

Physical Thirst

Physical Thirst Need Met

God has met the need of physical thirst and there are two stories in the Bible that show this clearly.

1. Exodus 17

The children of Israel have been led by Moses out of slavery in Egypt.

They had crossed the Red Sea through an awesome miracle of God.

Now they were on their way to Mt. Sinai nearly 250 miles away.

Through a barren and dry land.

It wasn't long before they were getting thirsty.

The story is in Exodus 17:1-3.

God knows their relentless thirst! God will meet this need miraculously.

He tells Moses to strike the rock. He does so.



Water comes gushing forth and the entire nation has water enough!

2. Numbers 20

This story is nearly repeated verbatim 40 years later. Nearly.

The grown children of the people who were given water in Exodus 17 find themselves in a barren and dry land yet again.

This story is told in Numbers 20.

God again meets their thirsty need. But there is one significant difference for Moses!

He is told to speak to the rock instead of striking it like he did 40 years previous.

Moses not only strikes the rock, he strikes the rock twice – ignoring, or worse, rejecting, God’s specific instruction.

This would result in Moses being barred from entering the Promised Land of Canaan with the rest of Israel.

Emotional Thirst

Emotional Thirst Need Met

God not only meets the physical need of thirst. He also meets the need of emotional thirst.

By this, I mean the need for companionship, for friendship, for fellowship.

In the Bible there are several stories where God brings people together to meet this emotional thirst.

1. Paul & His Companions

Paul and Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, Luke.

God brings them all together at various times in order to meet their need for companionship and to bring the Gospel to the world!



2. Jesus & the 12

God brings twelve men to Jesus and for three years they experience the quenching of emotional thirst for companionship and fellowship with the very Water of Life that Jesus brings.

3. Our Fellowship in a Congregation

And God meets this need in us through friends, family, as well as a congregational family.

Spiritual Thirst

Spiritual Thirst Need Met

The most pressing need that literally everyone in the world has is that of quenching a spiritual thirst.

God does exactly that – quench our spiritual thirst – with Jesus Christ.

We are thirsty for God and His love and salvation for us.

Because of our sin – original that we bring into the world and actual that we commit every day since – we are forever thirsty for God's love and forgiveness.



1. Exodus & Numbers are pointing ahead to Jesus

The stories of water from the rock in Exodus and Numbers point ahead to Jesus being the source of the water of life.

The source of the salvation that will quench our spiritual thirst!

2. Jesus on the cross

Look no further than a cross to see Jesus quenching your thirst.

A. "I Thirst"

In the irony of ironies, Jesus even utters as one of His seven last "words", "I thirst!"

Jesus went thirsty on the cross so that your thirst would forever be satisfied with the living water He brings to each of us.

B. Meets our need of forgiveness!

Jesus Christ's death on the cross forgives all your sin, all my sin, all the world's sins.

That's the precious and wonderful Gospel that we – as the Church – are privileged to proclaim to the world.

And it is the Gospel that quenches the relentless spiritual thirst that all people have.

God provides all the water your thirsts will ever need!

Wouldn't it be great to have all our relentless thirst quenched?

I think it would.

And it is, by Jesus Christ, who provides all the water – physical, emotional, spiritual water – we will ever need.

Jesus Christ who tells all of us:

“If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” (John 7:37b-38)