

“I AM THIRSTY”

Resources online: SermonCentral.com; IVP Bible Commentary at biblegateway.com, and others.

Scriptures: [John 1:3](#), [John 19:28](#), [John 19:28-29](#), [John 19:29](#), [John 7](#), [John 7:37](#), [Luke 16](#), [Luke 16:24](#), [Psalm 22:14](#), [Psalm 42:1](#), [Psalm 63:1](#), [Psalm 69](#), [Psalm 69:21](#), [Revelation 22:17](#), [Revelation 7:16](#)

Sermon Topics: [Spiritual Thirst](#), [Words From The Cross](#)

INTRODUCTION

Of the seven final statements that Jesus spoke from the cross, the one on which we will meditate today is rather short, ...three words: “I AM THIRSTY”. ... In older English Bible versions is just two words: “I THIRST”. ... Same in Spanish: “TENGO SED”. ... My understanding is that also in Arabic is two words: *lñáá conchén*. ... At any rate, those who have attempted to put the seven statements in chronological order consider this one as number fifth. ...

//On the surface, when Jesus says, “I am thirsty,” it would appear to be the simplest statement to understand. ... On a strictly physical level, wouldn’t you expect someone who has gone through a true human ordeal up to this point in his crucifixion to be in desperate need of quenching his physical thirst? ...

//But, would it be possible for us today to not hear Jesus saying, “I am thirsty” on just a physical level? ... In all fairness to the Bible, isn’t there a need for us today to dig a little deeper into the meaning of Jesus’ fifth word on the cross, so we may also hear His words with our heart and see their meaning through the eyes of eternity? ... If that is the case, may I invite those of you here at the sanctuary and those who have joined us through Facebook Live to do just that? ... In other words, may I invite you to hear this “I am thirsty” in as deeper a spiritual dimension as possible for the benefit of our souls? ... Let’s trust God’s Holy Spirit to help us to do just that, will you? ...

I. “I AM THIRSTY” ON THE PHYSICAL LEVEL

A. Jesus’ fifth statement from the cross is found in The Gospel of John, chapter 19, verse 28. ... We will read also verse 29 to have a more complete picture of what was occurring, not only in the body and mind of our Lord but also in His spirit. John 19:28 and 29, New International Version, reads as follows: *“Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, ‘I am thirsty’. A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips.”* ...

B. It is deeply moving what Jesus is saying here. ... You see, when our Lord says that He is thirsty, it is His only human expression of physical suffering that He has voiced so far on the cross. ... As a matter of fact, it will be His only human expression of physical suffering before He dies. ... And yes, in these circumstances, we all will agree it would be the most human thing to hear him saying, “I am thirsty”? ...

//I’m sure that all of us at some point in our lives have encountered a time when we desperately needed and desired a cold drink of some kind. ... We all know how a cool, refreshing drink of any liquid

can satisfy a deep unquenchable thirst, and revitalize us. ... But, mind you, what is taking place here is more than a desperate need for someone to quench his physical thirst? ...

//Capture this picture in your mind...

//See Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane where He sweats great drops of blood. ... See Him as He is arrested and carried away for trial. ... See Him as He faces His accusers and then is slapped and beaten. ... See Him as Pilate allows Him to be scourged, which brought a great loss of blood. ... See Him as He carries His cross to Calvary and where He is nailed to the cross. ... See Him as the blood flows from His wounds. ... See Him as He hangs from the cross for six brutal hours. ... See Him as His body is weak and drained. ... And now see Him anxiously asking for something to quench His desperate thirst. ...

//So, my point is this: ... Could you see Jesus, who in a wider Bible context will be revealed as God's only Son, as a Jesus Christ fully divine, now being here revealed as so completely human. ... So completely human, like Juan and Noemí. ... So completely human, like you. ... "I am thirsty. ... "I am thirsty." ... Oh, what a profound doctrinal discovery to see Jesus here revealing himself as a true human being! ... As someone we humans could identify with even in our worst moments! ... The humanity of God: what a profound Christian truth indeed! ...

TRANSITION: But even then, to hear Jesus saying, "I am thirsty" if we are going to be faithful to the biblical context, should invite us to dig in for additional meaning today. ... And here is a second profound thought that should grasp our immediate attention. The Bible says here that when Jesus says "I am thirsty", he was saying Old Testament prophecy was being fulfilled! ...

II. "I AM THIRSTY" IN THE CONTEXT OF OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY

A. Please listen carefully as I read again from the Gospel of John, chapter 19, verses 28 and 29: ... *"Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, 'I am thirsty'. A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips."* ...

//Did you notice? ... The sacred writer says that Jesus knew "that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled," He said, "I am thirsty". ... In other words, Jesus knew at this moment that He had done all God the Father had ordained him. ... Get this: because He was completely dehydrated in the physical sense, but also because what the ancient Hebrew Scripture prophesied about Him was being fulfilled, he said, "I am thirsty". ...

//Put it in another way: ... The very compelling reason why Jesus said, "I am thirsty" at this moment on the cross was that He knew that the messianic prophecies about Him in the Old Testament were being fulfilled! ... And this is very important for us to understand this morning. ... Indeed, Jesus' physical thirst was an even more profound thirst. ... Please listen to this: ... Here Jesus was also thirsting to fulfill to the very end the will and purpose of God the Father for His earthly mission as God the Son!!! ...

B. Of course, we don't have the time this morning to go into a full study of Bible prophecy about Jesus as our Messiah. ... There are at least 300 prophecies in this sense in the Old Testament. ... But what prophecies specifically were being fulfilled when Jesus said, "I am thirsty"? ...

//Christianity is expecting us to consider as prophetic of John 19:28-29, in particular, quite a few Old Testament passages, but, for the sake of time, I'm going to call your attention to only two of them. ...

//The first passage is found in Psalms 22:14. ... Brother Mike dwelled on verse 1 of this psalm in his sermon last Sunday as a verse relevant to Jesus' fourth saying on the cross. ... Psalm 22 is considered one of the clearest Old Testament examples of foretelling the Messiah's death as an atoning sacrifice, that is, a sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins. ... But in regards to Jesus' fifth word, "I am thirsty", I will call your attention to verse 14 of psalm 22. ... The main character in Psalms 22:14 says: *"I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted within me. My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death."* ... Church, as a prophecy, I ask you, could any combination of words in a book of the Bible anticipate more vividly in its description the moment Jesus is now experiencing on the cross? ...

//And then I kindly ask you to go back with me again to John 19:28-29: *"[v. 28] Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, 'I am thirsty'. [v. 29] A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips."* ... Did you notice that phrase, in verse 29: "A jar of wine vinegar"? ... Now, is there a prophecy in the Old Testament anticipating that Messiah, the Christ dying on the cross as a sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins would be given vinegar? ... Yes, indeed! ... Again, in the Book of Psalms, psalm 69:21 says: *"They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst".* ...

C. Now please understand that the Gosper writer notes that Jesus said "I am thirsty" to fulfill the Scripture, not that he was consciously thinking of texts and doing things to echo them. ... The point is this: Jesus had a conscious, burning thirst for God's will in His life, and that thirst lasted to the very end. ... He knew that even at this moment when He expresses thirst, Scripture was revealing God's will for His life, and that He was perfectly accomplishing it. ... What a profound revelation about Jesus' obedience we have in His fifth word on the cross! ...

TRANSITION. And this brings me to the last point in my message today. ... There is one last profound truth for us to consider as we meditate, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in the meaning of our Lord's fifth word on the cross. ... Let me put it in the form of a question for you and me. ... If Jesus had a burning, driving desire to do and fulfill the will of God throughout His life, could we do so too? ...

//Of course, I'm not suggesting that you now go and have someone to hang you on a cross, although you probably know that there are thousands of brothers and sisters in Christ around the world even today that are sacrificing their very lives for their faith. ... Just a couple of years ago, a denominational leader in our Church, a dear friend of mine of a lifetime, was sharing with me the story of this young Nazarene pastor in his country of origin who was executed for his thirst to follow Christ. ... And my friend was sharing with me a recent photo of this pastor. ... This Nazarene pastor was traveling on a bus to a preaching point when the bus was stopped in the middle of the road. ... Religious extremists ordered every passenger to get out and to stand in line. ... Only one question was being asked to each passenger: ... Are you a Christian? ... When this Nazarene pastor answered yes, he was immediately shot to death. ...

//But no, although I'm not suggesting here that thirsting for God's will in your life will imply necessarily martyrdom, my point is this: ... In whatever spiritual stage you may be in your spiritual pilgrimage, are you thirsty for God? ... Let's reflect a little on this, will you? ...

III. "I AM THIRSTY" AS APPLIED TO OUR SPIRITUAL HUNGER

A. One of the most important things in our spiritual life, if not the most important one, is that our hearts should long for and thirst to do the will of God. ... We in the Church of the Nazarene are very conscious of this aspiration for every one of us. ...

//As we have seen from the previous messages from Pastor George on this sermon series on the seven words of Jesus, Jesus' first three statements on the cross have been the following: the first statement, *"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing"* (Luke 23:34); the second statement, this time to the repentant thief, *"Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise"* (Luke 23:43); and the third statement, to Mary, *"Woman, here is your son,"* and to the disciple, *"Here is your mother"* (John 19:26-27). ... And as Pastor George so ably has pointed out, all these first statements of Jesus on the cross were pronounced for the benefit of others within reach of His voice that first Good Friday on Calvary Mount. ...

//And then there was Jesus' fourth statement: *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"* (Matthew 27:46, cf. Mark 15:34). ... These words, as Brother Mike West so well explained last Sunday, are among the most haunting and awe-inspiring words ever spoken. ... Our Lord pronounced these words, not only for those within reach of His voice that day but for all humankind. ... To rephrase the sacred writer somewhere else in the New Testament [2 Corinthians 5:21], He who had never known sin, allowed Himself to become sin so that we could know eternal life. ...

//And then Jesus' fifth statement being considered today, "I am thirsty". ... And how we have already explained that, in context, figuratively speaking, Jesus was saying he was thirsty to fulfill His part on God's plans to save humankind. ...

B. And there are several important things along the line of God's plan of salvation for you and me that I would like to invite you to consider. ... Are you still with me, here in the sanctuary and online? ... These things are too meaningful for us to miss? ...

//Remember that the Gospels tell us that darkness deeper than midnight covered the land for three hours on that first Good Friday. ... It was during that darkness, that the sins of the whole world were poured out on Jesus as He who knew no sin, literally became sin. ... At that moment, Jesus experienced what no other had ever experienced. ... At that moment, as Jesus became filled with your sins and my sins, God poured out the fullness of His wrath of judgment that was meant for us, and He poured out the full weight of His wrath upon Jesus because He took upon Himself our sins. ...

//We are to accept that at that moment Jesus suffered the worst agony that could ever be faced or endured. ... He experienced the agony of hell and separation from God so we would not have to. ... And so, in that dreadful darkness Jesus experienced the terror of the soul when for the first time, He was completely separated from the light and presence of God. ...

// There are no words deep enough or powerful enough in any language to describe what Jesus endured for you and me. ... There are no words in any language that can describe the awful darkness Jesus endured as He was separated from God and took upon Himself the agony of hell that was meant for us. ... Yet, again, He thirsts for God's will in His salvation plan for you and me to the very end. ... Do we thirst for God's will with the same passion? ...

//Consider this... Some of you will remember the moment during His ministry when Jesus described in a parable to His listeners a place called hell. ... You will remember that He described it as a place of torment and thirst. ... In that parable, He described how this man in hell begged with all of his soul for someone "to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool [his] tongue" [Luke 16:24]. ...

//So, among other things, we have all the reason to believe that hell must be a place of thirst, and we are not just speaking of physical thirst. ... We are speaking of an unquenchable thirst in the soul of the condemned, a thirst that is so great that it is impossible to describe in human terms, and too late to be satiated. ... We are speaking of an endless thirst for God that will never be satisfied. ... We are speaking of thirst so great that it ravages a person's soul and yet will be impossible to quench. ...

//But my question is this? ... Why will people experience this kind of torture? ... If we can derive the answer from the parable I just alluded to, it is, because they chose to reject and deny Jesus Christ, the only one who can satisfy the unquenchable thirst in our souls. ... They chose to reject the true living water that endures forever. ... Because of the cross, Jesus Christ has provided a way for us to drink of the living water that completely and forever satisfies our soul. ...

//But again, the question for us is not, do you thirst spiritually? ... Because human beings are made to thirst spiritually, whether people acknowledge it or not. ... The question is what do you thirst for most in your life? ...

C. There are only two things that your heart and soul thirst for. ... You either thirst for and long for this world and the things of this world, or you have a heart that is thirsty for Christ and His kingdom. ... Those are your two choices and you have to decide from which cup you will choose to drink from. ... You will either drink from the cup of this world that will never satisfy your soul or you can drink from the cup of living water that comes from Jesus Christ. ... Which cup will you choose? ...

// Those who drink from the cup that is offered to them by the world will drink from a cup filled with the sinful pleasures and treasures of this world, and yet, the more they drink from the cup of the world, the thirstier they become because what the world offers, no matter how glamorous it looks, it can never satisfy your heart. ...

//Remember the Samaritan woman? ... Like the Samaritan woman at the well we are told about in the Gospel, the water of this world cannot satisfy what your soul longs for, no matter how much of it you drink. ... Many try to quench that raving thirst in their soul with alcohol and pleasure, or with opioids and drugs of all kinds, or with riches and power. ... And yet none of these things, no matter how great or attractive they may appear to be, do not have the power to satisfy and quench that driving thirst in your soul. ... Only Jesus Christ can do that. ... Only Jesus Christ, who He claims to be the eternal, living water of life, can quench that burning, unquenchable thirst in your soul.

CONCLUSION AND ALTAR CALL

A. So, in closing, I ask you: ... Do you have a deep longing thirst in your soul for something you can't describe? ... Could you confess with the powerful words of the psalmist your thirst of the soul: ... *"You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water"* (Psalms 63:1) ...

B. I am asking you: What does your heart thirst for most? ... Are you thirsty for God and His good news of salvation in Christ, or are you trying to quench the thirst of your soul with the things of this world? ... Do you thirst for God's purpose to be fulfilled in your life? ...

//If you thirst for God and the things of God, Jesus Christ promises that you will be satisfied. ... Jesus Christ says to you and to all who thirst, to come. ... Today is your day to come to Jesus Christ. ... Let today be the day you drink from the living water that comes from Jesus Christ. ...

C. Again, there is no question that you thirst for something because we all thirst. ... The eternal question for you is what do I am thirsty for most? ... How you answer that question will determine the outcome of your eternal destiny. ... The answer to quenching that eternal thirst in your soul requires two radically transforming steps. ...

//First, you must come to Jesus Christ. ... Only Jesus Christ can give you living water that will endure forever. ...

//Second, you must choose to believe in Him. ... Believing in Jesus Christ is what opens the water well that leads to eternal life. ... You must choose to believe He is the Son of God and that He is the only way of salvation. ... You must repent from your sins, and choose to believe that He died on the cross for your sins. ... You must choose to believe that He rose from the dead, ascended to heaven, and is the eternal King of kings, who will return with power and great glory. ...

//I pray and trust that I am speaking to someone here in the sanctuary or online who may want to make a decision for Christ right now. ... If you do, bow your head and pray this short prayer: "Of God, I thirst for your saving plan for my life, in confession, repentance, and faith. ... I accept your only Son Jesus Christ as the living water for my soul right now. ... In the name of Jesus, amen. ...

//If you have decided for Christ, please see Pastor Gini at the end of the service, or call her at the phone number she will give you shortly. ... God bless you. ...