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Jesus; The Ultimate Thirst Quencher
Revelation 22: 16-21

Have you ever been thirsty, I mean really, really thirsty. Erin and I were hiking one summer in the mountains just west of Lake Tahoe, California. It was a hot day and the sun was making the sweat stream down my back. I was thirsty. It was your typical hot and dusty trail. There was a good reason why they called this area the Desolation wilderness. There just wasn't that much to see. It was hot and desolate. There was water, but the signs all said "Do not drink the water, impure" Fortunately, my friend Steve had brought a water filter purifier, the pump kind. The instructions said it could make sewage water become crystal clear. I wasn't interested in testing that claim but, I was very thirsty. Yet, it took so long to filter out the water and you only got to drink just a few swallows that when I finally got a drink it tasted soooo good. I wanted to drink more and more. It's interesting how when you want a drink of water so bad and you can't just walk over to the faucet...you desire it even more. When we will be in Ukraine this summer we will long for a cup of our fresh Yacolt well water.

The Bible compares water to the Words of God in the Bible. It paints a picture of living water as the eternal life that God offers to all who would drink. An invitation to the parched and thirsty. An invitation to come and enjoy a refreshing drink from the living water that only God can give. When pressed through His filter the sewage of your life can become fresh and clean and pure. Don't you want that? Are you thirsty this morning. Jesus says come. Come and drink from the water, the life that I can give you. Jesus invites you this morning to come.

Turn with me to the very last chapter in the Bible, the very last verses, which by no coincidence include the very last invitation to us to come to Jesus. It is a call to life. It is a call to faith. God desires that all come to Him and restore their shattered relationship, between God and man. For the past year we have been studying the book of Revelation. We have waded through the warnings, rejoiced at the praise and worship.

We have shuttered at the terror that awaits those who refuse to accept Jesus offer of freedom, of release, of salvation. All through our study Jesus whispers at times, shouts loudly at other times. Be ready! For I am coming soon. Come unto me, all who are weary and heavily burdened down, and I will give you rest. Are you feeling thirsty? Haven't you put it off long enough? Here is the last invitation in the Bible...I hope it not your last opportunity to respond and drink from the living water that Jesus holds out to you now.

Read with me Revelation 22 verses 16-21. (READ) Verse 16 we see the one who is and is to come. The reason for hope is wrapped up in the person of Christ. Jesus is hope for the hopeless. Jesus says, I have sent my angel to deliver to you the truth and hope of the book of Revelation. Jesus has sent it to us, the churches. For. Jesus says, "I am" I am the root of David. As creator and Lord. Jesus is the source of David, the root. He is also the offspring of David, a descendant. An heir to the earthly, throne. He is the Messiah, the Savior whom the people in Old Testament longed for and hoped for, desired to come and deliver. Jesus came and delivered. He lived, He died, He rose again. So we can be saved. Jesus is hope for the hopeless. All the OT sacrificial systems were banking on a perfect sacrifice, Jesus the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Only Jesus is the one who can save.

The verse continues for Jesus is not only the fulfillment of past hopes. Jesus is the fulfillment of present and future hopes. Look at the end of verse 16, Jesus is the bright and morning star. Jesus is hope for the hopeless, the fulfillment of all future hopes. Jesus is a comforting light to the believer in a dark world. The world may seem dark and full of fear right now, but one day the dawn of His return will come as Jesus returns like a bright and morning star. Jesus is hope for the hopeless.

In this world, the Christian is involved in the human situation. Within he must battle with his own evil human nature; without he must live in a world of death and decay. Nonetheless, the Christian does not live only in the world; he also lives in Christ. He does not see only the world; he looks beyond it to God. He does not see only the consequences of man's sin; he sees the power of God's mercy and love. Therefore, the keynote of the Christian life is always hope and never despair. The Christian waits, not for death, but for life.

To be faced with total hopelessness, one cannot continue to live. For you go on without hope is to cease to live. Above Dante's gate to hell a sign reads, "Leave behind all hope, you who enter here." For hell will be hopelessness. Some on earth drag themselves around here without hope, or they dash left and right, hurry and scurry to anesthetize their profound lack of hope. CS Lewis writes, "Most people, if they had really learned to look into their own hearts, would know that they do want, and want acutely, something that cannot be had in this world. There are all sorts of things in this world that offer to give it to you, but they never quite keep their promise."

Jesus is hope for the hopeless and that kind of hope will not disappoint for it is true hope. It is founded on the one who is faithful and true. It is based on the One who is and was and is to come. The One who has the eternal perspective on all of life, The beginning and the end, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. The root and offspring of David, the bright and morning star, pouring in comfort to a hurting and dying world. Jesus is hope for the hopeless.

Not only is Jesus hope for the hopeless. Jesus provides refreshment for the thirsty. Jesus is the ultimate thirst quencher. Look at verse 17 you will see two invitations that can bring refreshment to all who drink. The first is from the Holy Spirit coupled in duet with the bride of Christ, of church. Come they say to Jesus. Those who hear echo that cry in the next line. Come. This is a plea of hope for the bright and morning star to return to the world, to make right all the wrong things. As the early church believers say, "even so Lord, come quickly."

Then the second invitation is to all others to come to Christ to join Christ by grace through faith. The one who is thirsty, "Come". The one who wishes, whosoever will, come. Come and take the water of life without any cost at all. It's available it's free. Take it. Come. All who take it may drink freely and accept the benefits of accepting the invitation. All who come by faith accepting Christ's gracious offer. This invitation is available and is good up to the time when Christ returns again. Yet, there is little time. He is coming shortly.

Some may read this verse and say. Whosoever will may come. What about Divine election and God's sovereign choosing? Well, we don't have to concern ourselves and fret about ferreting out who is elect and

who is non-elect. We are told by God to share the good news and offer a genuine invitation for all to come. Whosoever will may come. We can let God worry about the problem of election. Second Timothy says, "The Lord knows those who are His." Someone told me once, The people who are saved and elect will be the whosoever wills and the people who are not will be the whosoever wont's. A professor a seminary described a signs over the gate of the entrance to heaven and as you approach it says "Whosoever will may come" then as you go through the gate and turn around, the back of the sign read, "Chosen before the foundation of the world" God knows those who are His, we will let Him take care of that part. We can go anywhere with confidence and genuinely offer people to drink from the living water and say, whosoever will may come.

So in verse 17 we see two invitations to come. For Christ to come back to the world and for the world to come back to Christ. Why would the people in the world want to come back to Christ? Because they are thirsty. There is something that is lacking in their life. They are tired of chasing after what the world has to offer. Maybe they reached the end and came up empty. The success, the money, the sex, the drugs, the recreation, the travel, the toys, it all came up as a poor substitute unable to quench their parched souls, unable to quench their thirst. So many here today discovered their thirst. That thirst in the soul that only God can quench. That vacuum. That empty place that only God can fill up and truly make you totally satisfied. Why do people come to Christ? Because they are thirsty and everything else is dry and empty. Only Jesus really satisfies for He is the ultimate thirst quencher. Jesus provides refreshment for the thirsty.

It is then no coincidence that He calls believers to be salt and light in a dark and thirsty world. Salt does at least two things. One it is a preservative. As salty believers we ought to be a moral preservative in a socially decaying world. Salt also create a thirst. Salty things make you thirsty. There is a cow pasture in from of our house I noticed the owners placed a large block of salt for the cows to lick. Why? Because the cows need to get thirsty and hungry enough to want to eat nutritious food and plenty of good water. The salt entices then to want to eat the good stuff they need to eat. As Christians we are to be salt, we are to live our lives in such a way that it is attractive to non-believers so they thirst for what

they see in our lives but is missing in theirs. As we love each other. As we love people. As we serve. As we live out some of the fruit of the Spirit. That fruit ought to make people thirsty to want to have what they see is missing in their own lives. In doing so we have a chance to point them to where we all once went when we were thirsty. Point them to the ultimate source of life, of hope, of true satisfaction. Point them to the ultimate thirst quencher. For it is Jesus who provides refreshment for the thirsty.

In the Chilean village of Chungungo water is nearly as valuable as gold. The region is arid and parched, forcing the villagers to truck in fresh water over dirt road from miles away. Until recently each villager was allowed only four gallons of water a day. Compare that to the average American that consumes over 90 gallons a day. Just buying water gobbled up to 10 percent of their income. Bathing was a luxury. Then a Canadian cloud physicist invented an ingenious new system for obtaining water and now the 330 residents of Chungungo, Chile have the freshest water they have ever tasted. The physicist directed the villagers to go to the top of nearby Mt. Tofo. There they hung 75 finely woven propylene nets, each about the size of 8 queen size bed sheets sewn together. The 75 nets sift the clouds that sweep constantly in from the Pacific ocean. Just like dew collects on grass, extremely small water particles from fog collect on the fibers, 10,000 particles combine to create a single drop of water. Still each net will collect 40 gallons of water a day, the 75 nets collect 3000 gallons of water daily for the village of Chungungo. Amazing isn't it.

Maybe some of you remember what it was like to live your life in a desert, dry and parched with little life. Then when you began to restore your relationship with God, you began to put out those spiritual water nets. Slowly, little by little those particles of spiritual refreshment began to catch into your life. It may have seemed insignificant at first but drop by drop combined to form gallons of fresh spiritual, life giving that totally satisfying water. Remember what that was like? The same drought can happen again when we fail to put up our spiritual water nets, when we fail to repair, by confession of sin the huge hole that gets shot through them by the flaming arrows of the evil one. How are your spiritual water nets today? Are they up? repaired? In good shape? Ready to receive the refreshment Jesus has to offer? There is nothing more refreshing than to

drink from the water of life, to bathe in the water of forgiveness. Jesus is the ultimate thirst quencher. Jesus provides the refreshment for a thirsty soul.

The invitation extends to you today. Come..whosoever will. Isaiah 55:1-3 Ho everyone that thirsts come to the water and you who have no money come buy and eat. Why do you spend your money on that which does not satisfy. Listen carefully to Me and eat what is good, and delight yourself in abundance.... Listen that you may live. Jesus calls out to the thirsty to come. There are no requirements. This is not a clean yourself up and then you can come to God and drink. The requirement of salvation is so simple. Take the free gift offered. Jesus Christ died on the cross. He died so that we might have life and have it more abundantly. So that we might be saved and have eternal life with Him. It is not the intellect that draws people to Christ. We cannot educate people into the God's kingdom. It is not emotion that saves. It is the will of a person coupled with the sovereign spirit of God that draws all men to Christ. Whosoever will let them come. In Luke 15 the story of the prodigal son. He wasted his life away on all the things the world said would satisfy and parched his dry and thirsty soul. But then it says he finally came to his senses. Drawn by the Spirit, it was time, He could feel God pulling on His heart and He made a choice to go back home, to return to He loving father. Some of you may be feeling that same thirst this morning. Some of you may be feeling a need to go home to God, a loving father who desires you to come to Him. He desires to allow you to drink from the springs of living water. He wants to satisfy your soul. Jesus is hope for the hopeless. Jesus provides the refreshment for thirsty souls.

In verse 18 and 19 for anyone who hears the words of this book. That would be anyone sitting hear today. You will be held accountable to hear the words and respond. You cannot walk away from God's word, His invitation to come and remain apathetic, unmoved. You must be confronted with a choice to accept or reject. In verse 18 any who add to the words of God, God has a strong consequence. He will add to your life disasters written in the book of Revelation. Whoever takes away anything from this book, God will take away his part in the tree of life and the holy city. This is a warning. The point here is that whoever rejects the truth and invitation and offer of this book, by denying it, by subtracting from

it. Possibly by relegating it to some mystical ramblings of an old man and so denying that it is indeed the Word of God. By rejecting God's word, one is rejecting God Himself. Those who reject will have no part in the eternal life, no access to the Holy City. Whoever adds falsehood or takes away truth from the Bible demonstrates that he is not a believer and will not share in the eternal tree of life, will not drink from the living water. He may be a whosoever want to, but because he refuses to be a whosoever will, so he is really a whosoever wont. A true child of God would not tamper with the words of God. When a child of God is saved, he is born into a new life and the family of God. He is sealed with the Spirit of God. He is a man made new.

Look at verse 20. Jesus says once again, "I am coming quickly" Five times in this chapter Jesus refers to his coming quickly. It could be at any time and when he comes it will be sudden with no more second chances.

Sometimes you can be late and tardy and get away with it; sometimes you can't. It was near midnight on the evening of June 30, 1997 a United Airlines flight 728 from Chicago was bound for Harrisburg, Pennsylvania..running behind schedule. The Harrisburg airport had earlier informed United that their one airport runway would be closed from 11:30pm to 6:30 am for construction. The pilot of flight 728 believed he could get their and land before the runway closed, but when he radioed the control tower, he was refused permission to land. He had arrived too late. Well, its a big country and you would think he cold just land in say Baltimore or Pittsburgh. but no the place was ordered to fly all the way back from Pennsylvania to Chicago, Illinois so it would not disrupt any other flights. You can imagine the passengers were none too pleased. Yes they were angry. The plane of people had missed the window of opportunity, they thought they could sneak in past the closure and just get in. They were wrong. Sometimes in life we don't get that second chance. So it is with an opportunity for salvation.

Jesus is coming quickly are you ready? The day of judgment is coming and when it does there are no more second chances, now we live in grace. But we don't know when Christ will return and we will run out of chances. Look at that last verse. A very common prayer and greeting brings the Bible to a close. Even so come Lord Jesus. May the grace of

the Lord Jesus be with you all. This book of Revelation begins in 1:4 with grace and ends with grace. In the midst of judgment on unbelievers, don't miss that message of grace. Don't miss the free gift of salvation offered and found in this book. He is coming quickly and we must be ready. Now is the appointed time. Now is the day of salvation. For those who are ready. For those who desire to drink from the living water that Jesus offers. I invite whosoever that will to come. Come to Christ. How? It is really very simple. That doesn't make it easy. That doesn't make it cheap for it came only at a very high price. Jesus died for our sins on the cross. First, Admit your a sinner. You have done things that make God sad. For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Good deeds won't get you into heaven. Confess your sin to God. Second, Believe that Jesus, God's son came to die on the cross and save us from our sins. Jesus paid our sin debt to God. Paid it in full so that we could be free. Free to live as God wants us to. Free to do right. Free to have a relationship with God, by grace through faith. It is a gift of God. Will you accept that gift and come to him today. Prayer with me.