

Scripture: John 4.5-42 (2)  
Date: March 27, 2011  
Service: 3 Lent  
Place: St. Mark's Episcopal Church  
The Rev. Canon James M. Dorn III, Rector

*Give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty.*

In the aftermath of and during their current disasters, the people of Japan are finding out just how valuable drinkable water is and those of you who have suffered through a hurricane or two or five also know the value of a glass of clean water. Even if we have not been subject to a water shortage, we know being thirsty is a serious matter and sometimes we can empathize with those who have little or no water.

When someone becomes thirsty, their body is telling their brain, "You need to drink some water or you'll be sorry." Failing to acknowledge our bodies' need for water is not unusual for Americans because we typically do not drink the 8 cups of water a day our bodies require to be adequately hydrated. This living in a state of perpetual mild dehydration is it no wonder we are tired and thirsty, our mouths are dry and sticky, our skin is dry, our heads hurt, our bowel movements are less than optimal, and our heads feel fuzzy. And if we are not careful, not drinking enough water will lead to extreme irritability and confusion, little or no urination, sunken eyes, low blood pressure, rapid heartbeat and breathing, fever, hysteria, unconsciousness, and finally death.

If a lack of H<sub>2</sub>O will make us ill, crazy, or dead, what is the result of not giving our souls their 8 cups a day of living water?

We become spiritually dry with unpeaceful and unhopeful souls. The living water Jesus Christ promised us when we said, "Yes Lord, I believe," appears all dried up as if someone built a dam to prevent the living water from flowing into our souls and we can't find the faucet to let the water flow.

This mysterious dam is built by our sins and causes our spiritual dehydration. God does not build the dam which cause us to become thirsty, we cause ourselves to be thirsty by our actions and inactions, which is why the Samaritan woman, when confronted by Jesus, said, "He told me everything I had ever done." The same is true for you. Jesus Christ knows everything you have done and Jesus is anxiously waiting for you to ask for the living water, which refreshes for all of eternity; especially, when you feel faithless, when you feel hopeless, when your life is a war zone, when going to church is a chore, when praying is a one-way conversation with yourself, and when you get more out of reading the phone book than reading your daily devotion and your Bible.

So what is one to do when one's soul feels less like a plum and more like a prune?

Without grumbling, ask Jesus to help you remove the dam that is blocking the flow of living water, the spiritual water of your Baptism by asking, "Lord Jesus, what do you want me to learn in this spiritual desert? What rock in my life do I need to strike for your living water to fill my life? What is the rock I love so dear that causes me to feel so dry?"

Fortunately, spiritual dryness never needs to end in death or craziness unless you refuse to tell Jesus, "Give me water." Ask Jesus for living water, tell him you are thirsty, and the Holy Spirit will tell you

every rock you must remove from your life to keep the water joyfully and peacefully flowing into and through your life.

Whenever you begin to feel dry, remember this, *“The Spirit helps us with our weakness. We do not know how to pray as we should. But the Spirit himself speaks to God for us, even begs God for us with deep feelings that words cannot explain. God can see what is in people's hearts. And he knows what is in the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit speaks to God for his people in the way God wants. Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. (Romans 8:26-27 NCV)”*

For the remainder of Lent, pray to Jesus every day for the strength to begin removing the rocks you know are keeping your soul all dammed up; so that when Easter comes you will be raised with Jesus Christ and you will know living water is flowing through your soul and you are marked as Christ's own forever.