

October 8, 2023

Dogs drink from the toilet bowl. Birds drink their stinky bath water. Cats drink the sweet poison puddled underneath your car. What would you be willing to drink to quench your thirst? I imagine a good many of us have tried to quench our thirst in ways more disgusting than the toilet bowl, that we have tried to satisfy ourselves in ways more toxic than a puddle of poison. But we don't have to go to the sewer to quench our thirst. We don't have to poison ourselves to find satisfaction. Our lesson offers us a better thirst-quencher, the real thirst-quencher - **Come! Listen! Quench Your Thirst with Jesus!**

So what do you thirst for? When Isaiah says: “**Come, all you who are thirsty**” he isn't talking about a dry mouth, a parched throat, a physical thirst. A glass of water can take care of that. But what do you thirst for inside? ... in your heart and soul? Sitting around you are people who thirst for love, who deep down wish they could feel accepted for who they are, people who wish they could look good on the outside and feel good about themselves on the inside. Sitting around you are people who thirst for praise, to be seen as good, smart, strong, as right. People around you are thirsting to matter, to be appreciated. People sitting around you are thirsting for peace, a world made right. Some are thirsting for hope, some reason to think a better life is coming. So, what do you thirst for on the inside?

And what's the answer for that thirst? First, to appreciate the answer for our thirst we need to know - Why are we so thirsty

on the inside? Our thirst on the inside goes back to our core at creation. God created us to be constantly fed and watered with God's love and rightness. God created us to live in a world of perfect peace. In the beginning, God created us to walk and talk with God, to live in his love. God created our human race in his image, right in every way. Living in God's rightness, we would be in perfect peace and harmony with God and the world. That's the way life was supposed to be for us. But we thought we could do better for ourselves. Now guilt, shame, failure eat at our core. Now our love is tainted, twisted, dry and no amount of tainted, twisted love can satisfy our heart. And so we thirst - we thirst for rightness and approval; we thirst for love and acceptance. We thirst for peace and hope.

So we try to quench our thirst. We might think that having a family will quench our thirst - find the right spouse, have the right number of kids, and our thirst for love will be quenched. Instead, we find the hurt of family life makes us all the more thirsty. To quench that thirst we might bury ourselves in our work, our job, our family duties - if I just do enough, if I just keep everybody happy, maybe then I'll be loved; maybe then I'll be accepted. Doesn't work, does it? So we might try to demand love, but demanded love soon turns sour. We might try ripping and ragging on everything that is wrong in our world, so people see us as smart and we can feel good about ourselves. But people who try that, they're never satisfied, are they?

So perhaps we turn to the pain-killers. Some try to drink the pain away. Some try to eat their empty heart full. Some think a pill, a puff, a push will make things right - but one or once is never enough. Some try to escape life by hiding in front of a

screen; some look for a new or a pretend life in front of their screens. But none of it works, does it?

Isaiah knew that. He asked, **“Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy?”** Why do we spend so much time, so much energy, trying to quench our thirst in ways that do not and can not fill the emptiness inside? Why? Isaiah isn’t looking for an answer from us. He wants to give God’s answer to us.

God invites us, **“Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live.”** God isn’t just offering a drink of water or a crust of bread, he is offering a banquet of blessing! He isn’t just offering a smile of love or a word of approval, he is offering life! Life the way it’s supposed to be! Life right in God’s love! Life right with God’s approval! A life of peace and harmony in every good way!

Listen to God’s invitation: **“Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David.”** About 300 years earlier God had promised David that the Savior, God’s promised, perfect King, would be born into David’s family.

This was no secret to Isaiah’s people. Isaiah had told them: **“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father,**

Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever." Isaiah is telling us, that promise, that Prince of Peace, that Lord and Savior - and all his blessing - is for you!

How does that quench our thirst? We thirst for love because in our sin we lost God's love. We thirst for approval because in our sin we lost God's approval. But with his death on the cross, Jesus took our sin away. With his perfect life Jesus won for us God's approval. Now, as God's witness, Jesus calls you back to God's love. Now, as God's witness, Jesus announces to you God's peace and approval. With Jesus you have what your heart was missing - God's love, God's peace, God's promise for life made right.

But there are still times we feel mighty thirsty inside, aren't there? Before you give up on Jesus, listen to what God says: **"Come, all you who are thirsty; listen to me; hear me, so that your soul may live."** Listen to Jesus deep inside. When your soul is thirsting for love, listen to Jesus: "My body for you; my blood for you; my life and my everything for you." When your soul is parched with shame, thirsting for rightness, "Why can't I get things right?" listen for Jesus: **"There is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus."** When your insides need to know that life will get better, listen for Jesus: **"You know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him."** What makes your soul thirst? Listen to Jesus deep inside. He has what it takes to quench your thirst.

With Jesus, the day is coming when you will never thirst again.

In heaven you will see God face to face. There you will experience life and love made right, life and love the way it's supposed to be. In the meantime, we still have our thirsty days. On those days, check where you are drinking. Check where you look for satisfaction. Don't settle for the toilet water this world offers. Instead accept God's invitation -- **Come! Listen! And Quench Your Thirst with Jesus!** Amen.

NEW MORNING PRAISE

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... we are surrounded by people starving, thirsting, and dying with holes in their hearts and lives. Sadly, most try to fill their empty holes with more emptiness.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... we hear the LORD invite and offer - for free! - what this world needs to satisfy the hungry, thirsting hearts. And, grace upon grace - we get to share his offer and invitation!

OPENING HYMN

“Blessed Jesus, at Your Word”

Hymn 919

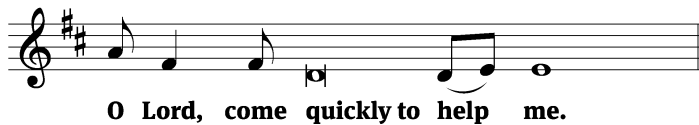
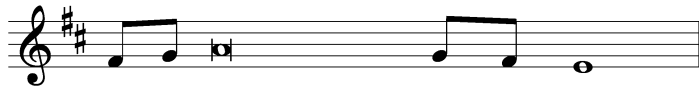
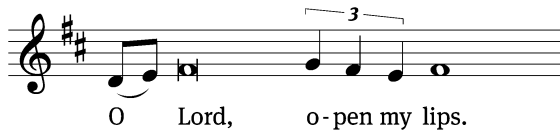
Blessèd Jesus, at your Word we are gathered all to hear you.
Let our hearts and souls be stirred now to seek and love and fear you,
by your teachings, sweet and holy, drawn from earth to love you solely.

All our knowledge, sense, and sight lie in deepest darkness shrouded
till your Spirit breaks our night with the beams of truth unclouded.
You alone to God can win us; you must work all good within us.

Gracious Savior, good and kind, Light from Light, from God proceeding,
open now our heart and mind; help us by your Spirit's pleading.
Hear the cry your Church now raises;
hear and bless our prayers and praises.

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, praise to you and adoration!
Grant that we your Word may trust, confident of our salvation,
while we here below must wander, till we sing your praises yonder.

OPENING SENTENCES



CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION OF SINS

M: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

C: Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C: Amen.



Give glory to God, our light and our life.



Come, O come, let us wor - ship.

COME, O COME, LET US SING TO THE LORD



Come, O come, let us sing to the Lord,



let us shout with joy to our sav - ing Rock;



come, en - ter in with our songs of praise,



come, en - ter in with thanks - giv - ing.



1 You are a great and a won - drous God,
2 Come, let us wor - ship and, bow - ing low,



cup - ping in your hands all the depths of earth.
kneel be - fore the One who has made us all.

You made the hills and the mountains high,
 You are the God whom we call our own,

Refrain

you made the seas and the dry land.
 we are the flock that you shep - herd.

PRESCHOOL-GRADE 2 CHILDREN SING (SUNDAY)

*Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings.
 Listen, Lord, oh, listen to my prayer and keep me as the apple of your eye.
 Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings.
 Listen, Lord, oh, listen to my prayer and keep me as the apple of your eye.*

*Protect and guard me through the night, slumb'ring safely in your sight,
 And when night turns into day, Lord, gude me all along my way.*

*Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings.
 Listen, Lord, oh, listen to my prayer and keep me as the apple of your eye.
 Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings.
 Listen, Lord, oh, listen to my prayer and keep me as the apple of your eye.*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Holy Spirit, God and Lord, keep us ever mindful of the fields ripe for harvest here and throughout the world. Give our members a deep passion for the welfare of others and great courage to witness your lifesaving truth to friends, family members, and coworkers. Establish gospel outreach as an immovable pillar of our congregation's ministry. Make us eager to invest our talents and offerings in evangelism efforts so that many more may be won for your kingdom through faith in Jesus Christ, the Savior of all people. **Amen.**

“Come, all you who are thirsty,
 come to the waters;
and you who have no money,
 come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
 without money and without cost.
Why spend money on what is not bread,
 and your labor on what does not satisfy?
Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,
 and you will delight in the richest of fare.
Give ear and come to me;
 listen, that you may live.
I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
 my faithful love promised to David.
See, I have made him a witness to the peoples,
 a ruler and commander of the peoples.
Surely you will summon nations you know not,
 and nations you do not know will come running to you,
because of the LORD your God,
 the Holy One of Israel,
 for he has endowed you with splendor.”

Seek the LORD while he may be found;
 call on him while he is near.
Let the wicked forsake their ways
 and the unrighteous their thoughts.
Let them turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on them,
 and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
 neither are your ways my ways,”
declares the LORD.
“As the heavens are higher than the earth,
 so are my ways higher than your ways
 and my thoughts than your thoughts.

As the rain and the snow
 come down from heaven,
 and do not return to it
 without watering the earth
 and making it bud and flourish,
 so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,
 so is my word that goes out from my mouth:
 It will not return to me empty,
 but will accomplish what I desire
 and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 98E



1 Sing a new song to the LORD, he to whom won-ders be-
 2 Now to the ends of the earth, see, his sal - va - tion is
 3 Sing a new song and re - joi-ce! Pub - lish his prais - es a -
 4 Join with the hills and the sea thun-ders of praise to pro-



long! Re - joi-ce _____ in his tri - umph and tell _____ of his
 shown, and still _____ he re - mem-bers his mer - cy and _
 broad! Let voic - es in _____ cho - rus, with trum - pet and _
 long! In judg - ment and _____ jus - tice he comes _____ to the



pow'r! O sing to the LORD a new song!
 truth, un - chang - ing in love to his own.
 horn, re - sound for the joy of the LORD!
 earth. O sing to the LORD a new song!

GOSPEL

Matthew 13:1–9, 18–23

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. Then he told them many things in parables, saying: “A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root.

Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear.”

“Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to you, O Christ!**

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

HYMN

“Thy Strong Word”

Hymn 630 vs. 1-5

Thy strong word did cleave the darkness; at thy speaking it was done.
For created light we thank thee while thine ordered seasons run.
Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to thee who light dost send!
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!

Lo, on those who dwelt in darkness, dark as night and deep as death,
broke the light of thy salvation, breathed thine own life-giving breath.
Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to thee who light dost send!
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!

Thy strong Word bespeaks us righteous; bright with thine own holiness,
glorious now, we press toward glory, and our lives our hopes confess.
Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to thee who light dost send!
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!

From the cross thy wisdom shining breaketh forth in conqu’ring might;
from the cross forever beameth all thy bright redeeming light.
Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to thee who light dost send!
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!

Give us lips to sing thy glory, tongues thy mercy to proclaim,
throats to shout the hope that fills us, mouths to speak thy holy name.
Alleluia, alleluia! May the light which thou dost send
fill our songs with alleluias, alleluias without end!

SERMON

HYMN

"Good News of God Above"

Hymn 905

Good news of God above is ours to tell abroad,
the Father's everlasting love in Christ the risen Lord.
For neighbors near and far the seed of life is sown;
then spread the seed by word and deed to make the Savior known.

The love of Christ proclaim, who left his home on high;
to live our human life he came, our human death to die.
The Father's only Son became the sinners' friend,
our lot to share, our sin to bear, and death's dominion end.

The Lord of glory lives! From cross and death and grave
his own abundant life he gives to those he died to save.
His righteousness and peace declare from sea to sea;
his praises sound the world around for Christ has made us free.

Hear now the Master's word to those who bear his name:
"So send I you," till all have heard, "make known, declare, proclaim!"
Go forth in all the earth; embrace the path he trod
with Christ beside as friend and guide to bring good news of God.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Father in heaven, you sent your Son, our Lord Jesus, to bring peace and hope to our fallen world. Already in eternity you planned to overturn the tyranny of Satan and the ravages of sin and you kept your promises to restore the perfection of paradise.

Lead us to cherish your great mercy and hold to it as our priceless treasure.

Lord Jesus, Lamb of God, we praise and adore you for offering your perfect life and innocent death to redeem the world from death and hell. You proclaimed the good news that sins are forgiven and life with God is restored and you called your followers to share the gospel with all people. **Make us bold and confident to be witnesses to family and friends we know and love.**

Holy Spirit, Lord, and giver of life, through Word and sacrament you create and strengthen faith that trusts the promise of the Father and the work of his Son. You break down the barriers of resistance and rejection and bring the lost into the family of God. **Empower and encourage us to speak about Jesus to neighbors and acquaintances.**

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, move us by your great love to enter the mission fields near our homes and neighborhoods. Help us always to be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks us to give the reason for the hope that we have.

**Guide us, strengthen us, and bless us as we share the love of Jesus.
Amen.**

PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

M: O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, you have brought us safely to this new day. Defend us with your mighty power, and grant that this day we neither fall into sin nor run into any kind of danger; and in all we do, direct us to what is right in your sight, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING



The Lord bless and keep you.



A - men.



The Lord's face ev - er shine up - on you.



A - men.



The Lord grant you peace for all your days.



A - men.

CLOSING HYMN

“On What Has Now Been Sown”

Hymn 925

On what has now been sown your blessing, Lord, bestow;
the pow’r is yours alone to make it spring and grow.
O Lord, in grace the harvest raise and you alone shall have the praise!

To you our wants are known; from you are all our pow’rs.
Accept what is your own and pardon what is ours.
Our praises, Lord, and prayers receive and to your Word a blessing give.

O grant that each of us now met before you here
may meet together thus when you and yours appear
and follow you to heav’n, our home. E’en so, Amen! Lord Jesus, come!

OFFERING

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(You heard our school children sing today. Tuition Grant Fund envelopes are available in the pew rack to support affordable tuition for our school.)

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