

Christ Community Covenant Church  
The Story: Chapter 27 – The Resurrection satisfies our Thirst!  
Pastor Dave Scherrer - Easter Sunday April 8, 2012

## Introduction and Prayer

God, right now we are so aware of the fact that evil seems to win so often, and there are places in the world where it seems like violence wins or famine wins or oppression wins or racism wins— just so many places in so many parts of the world and even in some of our homes where it doesn't seem like there's much hope. And then comes Resurrection Day and we get that slap-in- the-face reminder that with God all things are possible, that evil doesn't win every time, that stuff can be overcome in resurrection power.

And, God, we're aware of the fact that on this weekend cathedrals in Europe that have been empty for decades will start to fill again; and in the underground church in China and elsewhere, people will risk their lives to come to Easter service. In under-resourced parts of the world, people will meet in huts or under trees in open fields and as we sang a few minutes ago, they'll sing *Christ the Lord is Risen Today*.

And, God, here in this church we give witness to the amazing power of God that brought Jesus back from the dead. We hang onto the hope that some day those of us who put our faith and trust in him will be resurrected too. We don't get to the end of our lives and die and rot, but we rise again to follow the Risen One, Jesus Christ.

Now, God, I pray that you'll pour an Easter blessing on every family, every individual, every young person at 4Cs. And I pray that sometime in this service heaven would touch earth, that there would be a resurrection in the lives of people who have lost hope, that some folks who have wandered will come home, that the confused will get some answers, that the despondent will be encouraged, and that fired-up people will get fired up even more to live in the name of the Risen One.

We pray this prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

In 1 Corinthians (15:14-20) the apostle Paul says it like it is. He says that if the resurrection of Jesus Christ is really a fact and actually did happen, it has sweeping implications for every single human being. Christ has a claim on everyone's life. People will stand before that risen Christ someday. Paul says that the resurrection of Christ is the centerpiece of the Christian faith. It's the hinge point of all human history. It's just that big a deal.

And we're celebrating that today. You've gathered that, I think, because you really believe in the resurrection of Christ. Or maybe you are here because you would like to believe, but it all sounds so "too good to be true" that you have a hard time embracing the idea. I really respect that honest skepticism. Usually when something is too good to be true it is! However not today! We won't be able to address all of that today but I hope all of us leave today with a fresh hope and a brighter future fueled by a fresh look at the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

Every year many come to church on Easter investigating this amazing assertion of Christ Followers that death is defeated and the promises of God are true. If that is you, we are so glad you are here. You are welcome, as everyone here is seeking after Christ and none of us have it all nailed!

Before we talk any more about the bodily resurrection of Christ, I want to talk to you for just a few seconds about your body. I am leading to a point; I'm not just short of material.

Here's the first question: How long can the average human being go without food? You know what it averages out about? Thirty days. You can go about 30 days without food. So any of you who right now are saying you're starving, you're not. Come see me the end of April; we'll talk about it. But you're not starving. And besides we have some snacks so you can recharge your tummy in the Fellowship Center. You won't starve today!

How long do you think a human being can go without sleep? You're saying it depends on who's preaching. The record for going without sleep is 11 days. It can be done. So I'm holding you to that for 45 minutes at least.

How long can a human body dance? The record is 123 hours - dancing for 123 hours straight.

How far can a human being walk? The record for a man is over 600 miles. The record for walking women is a little over 500 miles. Does that mean men are stronger than women? I'm not sure about that, I was doing a little research on this. I think the guy who set the record and the woman who set the record might have been married, and he wouldn't ask for directions and it took him about 50 miles to figure out he was walking the wrong way. That's how I think that all happened.

Anyway, the human body is amazingly resilient in a lot of ways, except for when it comes to water. We're wimps when it comes to water. If you go about three days without water, you're probably going to die. If you're working hard in a warm place in the world and you get dehydrated, you could die in two days. If you are eating but not drinking water you can last a little longer. But still inside a week, you are toast so to speak. We are very, very dependent and vulnerable when it comes to this thing called water.

Here in Colorado water is a life and death deal. We are very concerned about water rights and such for good reason. We don't get a lot of water here. Thirst is a pretty compelling motivator.

[Castaway clip]

[Fasting from food and water for 36 hours]

The geographic area where most of the Bible stories take place is a very arid land, parched and barren. People in Bible days knew that water was a life and death deal. People died of thirst. And sometimes when Jesus taught, he used the metaphor of water to make a point.

For example, he says to a woman who was standing by a well: ***Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. It will become a spring of water welling up to eternal life*** (John 4:14 NIV). The water metaphor there meant a lot to a parched area and parched people.

Then there's another kind of mind boggling text, along the same lines. This is Jesus talking and he simply says, ***If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink*** (John 7:37 NIV).

We are going to spend some time talking about this idea of thirst. What are people thirsty for? What were people thirsting for in Jesus' day? What are people thirsty for today?

Of course there are the regular things that make us thirsty, like we saw with the children. Exercise and saltines make us thirsty. Just not having enough water makes us thirsty. But what about the deep thirst that these passages in the Bible were referring to? The things that make our 'soul' thirsty that only a God with Living Water could satisfy? What are those things?

I think there are three main things that our souls thirst for, and this is all going to come back to the resurrection pretty soon, not to worry! Those basic three things that all people thirst for, that we long for and can't seem to find in ourselves are for:

1. To be at peace and free from fear - SECURITY
2. To find meaning and enjoy purposeful endeavor - SIGNIFICANCE
3. To love and be loved - RELATIONSHIP

**Let's tackle the 'security' piece first.**

I believe that there is a deep-soul every-human need to be at peace and free from fear. I have a prop up here for this thirst for security; it is a loaf of bread. Let me explain.



The famous 20<sup>th</sup> century psychologist Abraham Maslow studied these deep soul needs and he agreed with me and he published a culture transforming work called *Motivation and Personality* in 1954. In that work he maintained that at the very base of his pyramid of human needs are what he called 'physical' and 'security' needs.

A primary or foundational need for every human being's soul is to be free from fear and to experience peace. The most basic of these needs that are vital to our survival itself, such as the need for water, air, food, and sleep. Maslow believed that these needs are the most basic and instinctive needs in the hierarchy because all needs become secondary until these physiological needs are met. These include needs for safety and security. Examples of security needs include a desire for steady employment to, health insurance, safe neighborhoods, safe cars, safe homes, and shelter from the environment.

We don't really need Professor Maslow to tell us this. Our lives give testimony to the fact that we thirst for safety and security and to be at peace. What God tells us is that when we look to satisfy our hunger and thirst for peace and security with new clothes and stored up food and good jobs, we will ultimately still be thirsty. Jesus said (Matthew 6:25-26, 31-33)

"Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

When it comes to the deep soul needs for peace and security, Jesus has the answers. Over 100 times in Scripture we hear God utter the words; "Do not be afraid." It is for good reason that Jesus said it too. I can tell you with great confidence that ***'My God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).***

Now let's talk for a minute for our deep-soul thirst for "significance." My prop for this is a graduation cap.



Not only are we thirsty for peace and freedom from fear, but we also thirst for significance. Since humans first started comparing themselves to each other we have been trying to prove our worth to each other and ourselves. We do it by trying to achieve significant things like graduate degrees and by netting that position of influence or power, that high paying job that will let me own more things than you. We thirst to feel important. But we are so thirsty for significance that we are willing to settle for the temporary. To drink from a cloudy salty glass of water that can never sate our thirst for that deep soul need that tells us "I count." That I have meaning and the life I lead has meaning.

I was reading a book by Phil Yancy this week and he tells of a 19 year old girl with cancer and you know what her greatest fear was? She said it this way; "I am afraid that I will die from this cancer before I can accomplish something that people will remember. I am afraid that six months after I die, no one will remember me. My grave will have grown over and it will be like I never existed. I just want to live long enough to prove my significance.

You know what the sad thing is? Resurrection weekend is the proof that God believes we are of utmost importance. The Bible says that while we were yet sinners Christ Died for us. Jesus' dying on the cross was God's way of saying I love you so much just the way you are that I would die for you.

Finally I want to chat with you about this thirst for **"Relationships"**— to love and be loved. This deep soul thirst is so compelling and gripping that moment by moment we are tempted to settle for 'second best love' in our lives.



You've probably all seen something like this circle of friends ceramic. I am using this this morning to represent people's thirst for relationship, thirst for connection, thirst to know and be known and to love and be loved. It's a really, really significant thirst in every human's life. When babies come into the world, they always have their hands out to their parents: hold me, hold me, feed me, change me. They want to be held.

Kids grow up a bit and go to junior high school. Junior high kids don't go to junior high school to learn; they go to junior high school to figure out if they belong. Are there friends? Are there peer groups? Where do they belong in their school? Who can meet that need for connection? It's a very important time in their life.

Then in high school, it goes beyond just the friends in the group; it goes to, is there a guy or a gal that I can connect with and date? And that just accelerates in college.

We find ourselves really searching for love in all the wrong places, looking for where we will find the love and connection we're thirsting for. But God has a warning for us. That search will only bring us sadness:

**Jeremiah 2:13**

"For my people have done two evil things:  
They have abandoned me - the fountain of living water.  
And they have dug for themselves cracked cisterns that can hold no water at all!"

Jeremiah is saying that if you resist the downpour of the love of God into that chamber in your life that needs his love, if you close yourself off from that, then the only love that you're going to seek out and eventually find to one degree or another is human love, which can be a beautiful thing. But this cistern in your life that you think can be filled up with human love has a leak in the cistern and you'll always feel a little empty. You'll keep thirsting. Human love ultimately disappoints and it isn't enough to satisfy the deep soul thirst to love and be loved.

God is saying to us today, there is only one relationship that will never leave you or forsake you. Only one love relationship that will never die on you or betray you or forget you. Only God can make that promise and fulfill it every time.

Susan and I have two children, Kristin and Heather. They started out quite small which I think is good. Eventually they grew older and they got lives of their own (which sometimes seems bad) and ultimately they left our house ... I know that many of you have experienced something very similar to this. I hated it when my kids left the house. I would like them around me all the time. Some of you are ready for your kids to leave; I understand that. It was never that way with me. I always wanted them around me. However, when they left the house, I was able to know they were not my reason for living and they were not my everything.

I've been in ministry for almost 40 years and the last 8 years here at this lovely church. Some of the people I've loved most through my 38 years of ministry and in this church have died. Some of the co ministers I deeply loved have gone to serve other ministries and churches, and every time one of those disappointments comes, I remember, "They're not my reason for living; they're not my everything. God is."

Some of you need to get this straight and you need to get it straight today. You're putting way too much expectation on what human beings can provide for you, and you're probably drastically underestimating what can happen to a human heart when it's filled with the thirst quenching rain of the love of God.

You've got two chambers in your heart, friends. One chamber needs to be filled up with the love of God. He will keep filling it up and that will provide your stability, your security, in all of life. The other chamber ebbs and flows with human love. It's a beautiful thing; it's a wonderful thing. I'm not denigrating it at all. But it's just something that you have to keep right-sized, something that you've got to get straight.

What does this all have to do with Resurrection Sunday? Everything in my opinion. Jesus promises to keep us safe, that he will be our stronghold and our fortress and our sure defense. He promises to satisfy our deep-soul thirst for peace and for freedom from fears of all kinds. He promises to give us life and that life is abundant. It is a life of meaning and purpose and our significance comes straight from His arms. He promises to show us love, real love - a love that will walk with us through the tongue slacking salt water waste-land that is called life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. But I have a question for you.

If Jesus is still in the grave, if he lived a good, well intentioned life but died murdered 2000 years ago, what good are His promises now? I don't need a dead martyr, no matter how good the cause. I need a Living Savior who can treat my deep soul thirst not just with a sip but with streams of living waters, waters so refreshing that I will never thirst again. That's what I need! How about you?

Jesus said to the woman at the well when she came for water:

“Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.”  
John 4:13-14 NASB

You see we are all a bit like the Samaritan woman who was so thirsty that started all this dry mouthed conversation this morning.

Today, we will give you some water, but I promise you there will be barely enough in that little bottle to wet your whistle. Will you pray with me now to receive the gift of Christ that only His Resurrection Power can give you? That is a water that will satisfy the deep soul thirst that you have been longing for!

Prayer