

**CrossRoads September 2, 2007**  
**At the Well- Dying of Thirst**  
**John 7:37-38; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Revelation 22:17**  
**Thoughts and Ideas from “Come Thirsty” by Max Lucado**

Important questions for people who want to live

Do you ever get thirsty?

- How do you know you are thirsty?
- What are the signs of dehydration?
- Where do you go to get a drink?
- Why do you have to drink...and keep drinking?

Have you ever been really thirsty and not known it?

Most of us are acquainted with thirst. According to some estimates our bodies are made up of as much as 80% water or fluids. That means I stand before you as a 148 pound walking bag of liquid and 37 pounds of other stuff. It seems to always be leaking out this time of year doesn't it? So we drink more.

Have you ever missed a few glasses of water on a hot day? Your Body will start to tell you. First in the mouth goes dry and the tongue thickens and you **want** to drink. Then a headache, stomach ache, dizziness, and cramps kick in as the chemicals get out of whack and the body **needs** to drink. Later, light headedness moves to delirium, sleep and as the blood becomes toxic... withering organs shutdown – one system at a time. All this takes about three days- depending on the heat. The point is that we all know drinking is not an option.

**Where do you go to get a drink?** Coke is the real thing. Pepsi is the answer of a new generation, Sprite is being obedient to your thirst, and V-8...you coulda had that... Gatorade, Powerade, Lipton, beer, Vodka, Jin, Tequila, Wine and clear cold water. We all reach for something. Some of it slakes thirst and some covers it up. Some of it meets our bodily need, and some of it destroys our thirsty being...but we all reach for something.

Not being camels we must drink sufficient water for each day. No choice. We can't drink 20 gallons and call it good for a week. Our bodies use it constantly– cells need blood, kidneys and livers use it to flush toxins, joints need lubrication fluid, eyes need tears, your mouth needs it to swallow, your glands demand it to keep you cool.

There are no days off for water. We must have it to survive. God made us this way.  
 Story:

## Important spiritual questions for people who want to live

Does your soul ever get thirsty?

- How do you know you are thirsty and what are the signs of spiritual dehydration?
- Where do you go to get a drink?
- Why do you have to drink...and keep drinking?

Has your soul ever been thirsty, maybe really thirsty, and you didn't know it?

Have you ever thought about or made the connection that our souls get thirsty much like our bodies? Have you ever considered that there are signs and consequences for spiritual draught. Have you struggled with the demand that we need to continually renew our spiritual lives?

### **How do you know you are thirsty or what are the signs of a thirsty soul?**

Max Lucado says, "Deprive your soul of true spiritual water, and your soul will tell you. Dehydrated hearts send desperate messages. Snarling tempers. Waves of worry. Growling mastodons of Guilt and fear. You think God wants you to live with these? Hopelessness. Sleeplessness. Loneliness. Resentment. Irritability. Insecurity. [Control]. [Addiction]. [Sexual addiction]" ([ ] mine)

Lucado suggests, "These are warnings. Symptoms of a dryness deep within. Perhaps you have never seen them as such. You've thought they, like [the] speed bumps [all over town], are a necessary part of the journey. Anxiety, you assume, runs in your genes like eye color. Some people have bad ankles; others, high cholesterol or receding hairlines. And you? You fret.

And moodiness? Everyone has gloomy days, sad Saturdays. Aren't such emotions inevitable? Absolutely! But unquenchable? No way. View the pains of your heart, not as struggles to endure, but as an inner thirst – proof that something within you is starting to shrivel"

What are *your* signs that your soul needs even craves the water only Jesus can give? What are the character struggles and spiritual questions we live with and assume have nothing to do with the dryness of our souls? Why is it we so often believe they are ours and Jesus has nothing to say or do about them?

Do you think it coincidence that Jesus, while in a barren desert, would use the image or thirsting and drinking to describe our desire and need for God to fill our souls?

Have you ever thought you were made for something more? That there must be something missing? Your soul is telling you it is thirsty for the only thing that can quench its thirst. It is thirsty for the one who made it. Have you considered that what Jesus offers can be

found no where else and in nothing else on this planet? How do you know your soul is thirsty?

### **Where do you go to get a drink?**

The setting is the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles. The people take a week and live in tents to remember the exodus, the wandering in the desert, and how God provided life sustaining water. Every day, for seven days, the robed priest takes a golden pitcher and scoops some water out of a spring then carries it through street lined with people and trumpets to the temple. In the temple the priest circles the altar and pours it out. On the last day the priest makes seven circles and pours seven pitchers over the altar. The scriptures suggest it was this moment Jesus spoke. It is written in **John 7:37-39** On the final and climactic day of the Feast, Jesus took his stand. He cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Rivers of living water will brim and spill out of the depths of anyone who believes in me this way, just as the Scripture says." (He said this in regard to the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were about to receive. The Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus had not yet been glorified.)

Jesus words must have caught the crowds by surprise. God had not spoken like that in over 400 years. The people were very thirsty. Jesus could have pointed to the many symbols as the source of the life giving water but he doesn't. He points to himself and in effect says, all these symbols before you point to me.

He asks. what are you thirsty for? A new fresh drink? – Jesus is saying, I am the true, living water of the soul...not stale, stagnant, old, empty life and religion that does not speak to the soul or move the heart. Think about it. We can become caught up in the same parade as the people at the feast of tabernacles.

We get used to going to the same things week after week and rely on the same church activities to fill our souls, and soon it becomes years, and we don't realize **WE'RE NOT DRINKING ANYMORE** – a new church program, projects, a new book to read, the latest Beth More study, new songs, and all of these are good as long as they point us to Jesus and fill our hearts anew with him. Jesus words have not changed – I am the way the truth and the life, the true living water that will satisfy your souls. What we are thirsty for? A fresh, living encounter with our living God.

The thirsting image in not just for people who don't know Jesus. Jesus shouted his proclamation to Israel! The people of God! His words are for believers too.

Look at Isaiah 55. Israel was very aware of being thirsty for God. Verses 1-3 **1** "Hey there! All who are thirsty, come to the water! Are you penniless? Come anyway - buy and eat! Come, buy your drinks, buy wine and milk. Buy without money - everything's free! **2** Why do you spend your money on junk food, your hard-earned cash on cotton candy? **Listen to me**, listen well: Eat only the best, fill yourself with only the finest. **3 Pay attention, come close now, listen carefully to my life-giving, life-nourishing**

**words.** **6** Seek God while he's here to be found, pray to him while he's close at hand. **10** Just as rain and snow descend from the skies and don't go back until they've watered the earth, Doing their work of making things grow and blossom, producing seed for farmers and food for the hungry, **11 So will the words that come out of my mouth not come back empty-handed. They'll do the work I sent them to do, they'll complete the assignment I gave them.** **12 "So you'll go out in joy, you'll be led into a whole and complete life.**

If we are not regularly drinking in Jesus – Listening to God’s word, reading, praying, worshipping, and paying attention –yielding to God, desiring and allowing Jesus to be the Lord of our hearts and lives, allowing God to complete his work in us - we are shriveling – and our souls will tell us

### **Why do you have to keep drinking? What waters your soul?**

What we know is that spiritual vitality and growth is a continuous process – In a garden, the weeds need to be pulled or they will take the garden over. The plants need to be watered if they are going to grow. If they are not watered they will drop their fruit and die. We are no different.

Our souls need to be doused regularly with good, fresh, pure, life giving buckets of Jesus through regularly reaching for God’s word and drinking it in, by regularly dropping the bucket into God’s well through prayer and drawing deeply from the wells of salvation, by frequently jumping into the pool of the Holy Spirit in worship.

Has your soul ever been thirsty, maybe really thirsty, and you didn’t know it? I hope you see now the need to drink in Jesus. Water knows where to go but can’t get there unless it is swallowed and Jesus doesn’t do it for us...

I will leave you with this, As a church, CrossRoads has been and will continue to be, until Jesus tells us otherwise, a watering station. We must be diligent about making sure we are offering the true living waters of Jesus, in sufficient quantities to fully hydrate withered souls.

1 Corinthians 12: **12** You can easily enough see how this kind of thing works by looking no further than your own body. Your body has many parts - limbs, organs, cells - but no matter how many parts you can name, you're still one body. It's exactly the same with Christ. **13** By means of his one Spirit, we all said good-bye to our partial and piecemeal lives. We each used to independently call our own shots, but then we entered into a large and integrated life in which he has the final say in everything. (This is what we proclaimed in word and action when we were baptized.) Each of us is now a part of his resurrection body, refreshed and sustained at one fountain - his Spirit - where we all come to drink. The old labels we once used to identify ourselves - labels like Jew or Greek, slave or free - are no longer useful. We need something larger, more comprehensive. **14** I want you to think about how all this makes you more significant, not less. A body isn't just a single part blown up into something huge. It's all the different-but-similar parts arranged and functioning together. (The Message translation)

