

Talk It Over

RHYTHM
(Week 2)
Thirsting

SMALL TALK

1. Describe a time when you were extremely thirsty. What was memorable about that time (good or bad)?

VIEWPOINT

2. **READ Psalm 63.** Make a few notes of how David describes his desire for God, then share these with the group?
3. **READ John 4.** What was Jesus' purpose for saying what he said in John 4:10? What is this "living water"? How does his answer in John 4:13-14 help clarify?
4. Why did Jesus ask the woman to call her husband? What was his purpose in that interchange? Did Jesus correct, or condemn her?

GETTING PERSONAL

5. How do you drink from the water Jesus gives? Does it spring up from within you? If so, how?
6. What are the two characteristics of "true worshipers"?

PRACTICE!

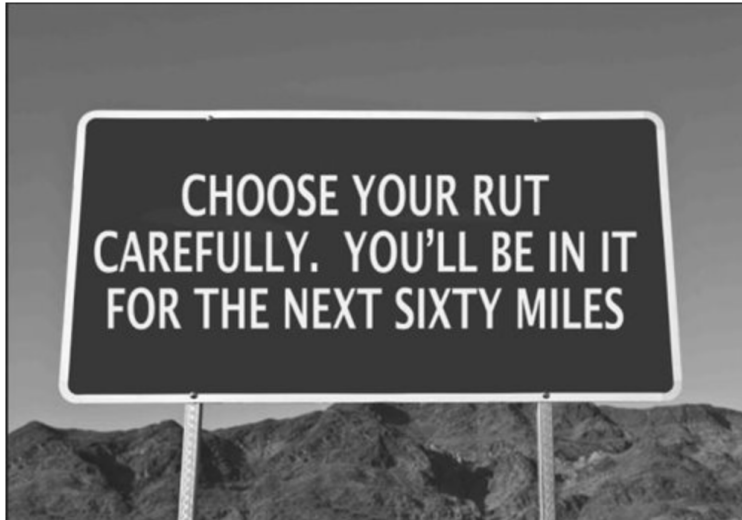
7. What is the Rhythm of your “worship” in your “Devote Daily” (life practice)?

July 4, 2021

Rhythm

Reclaiming God's design for spiritual vitality.

(Week 2) Thirsting



This is great advice for life, not just a wilderness highway. Perhaps we should swap out the word “rut” for “routine” or “rhythm”.

Whereas some of our bodily rhythms seem to be automatic, like that of our breathing, our heartbeat, and our thirsting (which is our topic for today) we quickly learn that our spiritual rhythms are not automatic. Our spiritual rhythms require intentionality. And yet when we look more closely even at our bodily rhythms we discover that these are not as automatic as we might think. For example...

I **Don't WAIT Till You FEEL Thirsty**

I think most people think that thirst is a reliable built-in bodily mechanism. Just drink when you feel thirsty. I learned the hard way that our thirst mechanism is not always reliable. Sometimes it is **FAULTY!**

I did not learn of the extreme danger of dehydration in a hot desert. I learned about the extreme danger of dehydration in a cold alpine scenario with ready access to water all around me. There was

water everywhere, but I did not feel thirsty, and it almost killed Gina and Me, and it played a part in the demise of several who were killed in that same winter storm.

Gina and I were on a late fall back-packing trip in the Sierra mountains. We were experienced backpackers. We thought we had everything we needed for the expected possibilities. We thought we were ready for snow and some great photo opportunities. But storms have a way of surprising you! And a record breaking snowstorm hit very early that season. We were deep into the wilderness, more than 2 days in.

Where we at first thought our greatest danger was finding our way back to our car, we learned after the fact that our greatest danger in fact had been dehydration. Almost as if taking turns we both experienced nausea, and cramping. We thought perhaps these symptoms were a combination of altitude, stress, some anxiety, and bodily fatigue trudging through 2 feet of snow with heavy winter backpacks. We learned later that our biggest danger was not finding the trail, and all these debilitating symptoms were caused by dehydration even though we thought we were drinking plenty of water. The problem was, we did not feel thirsty. We learned later that in winter alpine exertion, **you need to schedule your drinking hourly because your thirst mechanism won't alert you to your need correctly. There is a gap between your perceived need and your real need. You need to drink more than you think you need. This is instructive for our spiritual condition!**

Today we look at a conversation Jesus had with a woman who was dangerously dehydrated spiritually and she did not know it.

II. Jesus exposes our FAULTY thirst

John 4:4–34 (CSB) He had to travel through Samaria; ⁵ so he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar near the property that Jacob had given his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, worn out from his journey, sat down at the well. It was about noon. ⁷ A woman of Samaria came to draw water. “Give me a drink,” Jesus said to her, ⁸ because his disciples had gone into town to buy food. ⁹ “How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?” she asked him. For Jews do not associate with Samaritans. ¹⁰ Jesus answered, “If you knew the gift of God, and who is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would ask him, and he would give you living water.” ¹¹ “Sir,” said the woman, “you don’t even have a bucket, and the well is deep. So where do you get this ‘living water’? ¹² You aren’t greater than our father Jacob, are you? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and livestock.” ¹³ Jesus said, “Everyone who drinks from this water will get thirsty again. ¹⁴ But whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty again. In fact, the water I will give him will become a well of water springing up in him for eternal life.” ¹⁵ “Sir,” the woman said to him, “give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and come here to draw water.” ¹⁶ “Go call your husband,” he told her, “and come back here.” ¹⁷ “I don’t have a husband,” she answered. “You have correctly said, ‘I don’t have a husband,’ ” Jesus said. ¹⁸ “For you’ve had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.” ¹⁹ “Sir,” the woman replied, “I see that you are a prophet.

She then changed the subject, turning it to a religious controversy, dodging the painful and personal topic.

Jesus never comes back to the spiritual issue of her adultery. He doesn’t go anywhere with it. He didn’t bring it up to condemn her. He didn’t bring it up to rehearse the details. **He brought it up to expose the thirst that she doesn’t even know she has.**^{[P][SEP]}

III. FAULTY thirst doesn’t FULLY SATISFY

Faulty thirst misdirects. She was going through relationship after relationship. She had a deep longing, and a deep thirsting, and these men were her attempts to fill her longing, but nothing was working. Either she can't find in a man what she craves, or these men couldn't find what they are craving in her, or both.

Love is substance, Lust, illusion. Only in the surge of passion do they mingle in confusion.

Calvin Miller, *The Song* (1980)

Her soul was thirsty. And she doesn't know it. She was trying to satisfy her soul's thirst the wrong way.

IV. You are **DESIGNED** for a **DEEPER** thirst

Sin is what you do when your heart is not satisfied with God.

John Piper, *Future Grace* (1995) p.9

She had a deeper thirst she was ignoring. She was looking for love, acceptance, and forgiveness, and was hearing Jesus offer that to her as a gift from God. She was not an outcast rejected by God and people.

Do you have spaces of your life that are all locked up? Kept out of bounds from others, even God.

Jesus unlocked this woman's heart gently, with grace and truth. He spoke to her deeper needs and offered her the gift of love, acceptance, and forgiveness from God. He revealed himself as the answer to the world's needs. He was in fact the Messiah / Savior that she was longing for.

Belief is not merely an agreement with facts in the head; it is also an appetite for God in the heart, which fastens on Jesus for satisfaction.

John Piper, *Future Grace* (1995) p.86

You don't have to be a down-and-outer to feel this deep thirst.

Malcolm Muggeridge said,

I may, I suppose, regard myself, or pass for being, a relatively successful man. People occasionally stare at me in the streets—**that's fame**. I can fairly easily earn enough to qualify for admission to the higher slopes of the Inland Revenue—**that's success**. Furnished with money and a little fame even the elderly, if they care to, may partake of trendy diversions—**that's pleasure**. It might happen once in a while that something I said or wrote was sufficiently heeded for me to persuade myself that it represented a serious impact on our time—**that's fulfilment**. Yet I say to you, and I beg you to believe me, multiply these tiny triumphs by a million, add them all together, and they are nothing—less than nothing, a positive impediment—measured against one draught [drink] of that living water Christ offers to the spiritually thirsty, irrespective of who or what they are.

M. Muggeridge, cited in J. Gladstone, *Living with Style*