

I Thirst

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[0:00] Now seeking the Lord's help, we'll turn again to the portion of Scripture that we read together in the Gospel of John. John chapter 19.

And we shall read once again verse 28. After this, Jesus knowing that all was now finished, said to fulfill Scripture, I thirst.

Particularly these words, I thirst. We want to look tonight, seeking the Lord's help, at this our Saviour's fifth saying on the cross.

The fifth of his seven sayings. And we shall look at it under two headings. First of all, we shall see Christ's physical thirst.

And then secondly, we shall look at Christ's spiritual thirst. When we think of the seven sayings on the cross, we can come to this the shortest of them.

[1:12] Two words. And we can be tempted to think that in some way, these two words are less glorious than his first one.

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Or less glorious than when he said to the thief today, Thou shalt be with me in paradise.

But these words, I thirst, are of equal glory of all the seven sayings of Christ on the cross.

I came across this story at the start of the year. And it was a true story of many, many, many decades ago. When a group of young men, seven of them, went to the Sahara Desert in order to hunt gazil.

Gazil, if you don't know, is a type of antelope. And they went this day in order to hunt them. And they were destined to arrive back at their base at a certain time.

[2:22] And when they didn't come back at a certain time, the alarm was raised. And at dawn the next day, there was planes set out in order to find these seven men.

And trucks set out for them. There was great fear that they would die of thirst if they were not found soon. And hope was fading fast.

And the next day at three o'clock in the afternoon, they found the abandoned truck, which gave a little bit of hope. And two or three hours later, in the late afternoon, they found three of these seven men.

But their excitement didn't last long. Because these three men were half dead and half mad, due to the hot sun.

And immediately you see the struggle then to revive them and to bring them back to life. Their veins were injected with fluids. Their bodies were washed down time and time again repeatedly with iced water.

[3:31] A helicopter was taken in, and they were whisked to the nearest hospital. And miraculously, these three men survived. But in interviews afterwards, they spoke time and time and time again of their ordeal with regard to the agony of thirst.

The agony of thirst that nearly broke them. The agony of thirst that nearly killed them. The agony of thirst that killed their four friends, whose body were found later in that evening.

Very few people, my friends, have experienced thirst like that. But Christ did at Calvary.

In these six hours, Christ experienced extreme thirst. And it is important for us to understand the agony.

There is another world awaiting where there will be a thirst forevermore for all those who do not believe in the Christ who cried at Calvary.

[4:52] I thirst. So let us look then at our first heading, Christ's physical thirst. We all know what it is to thirst.

Every single one of us. Whether it be something as small as eating a bacon sandwich, or having salt mackerel or salt herring, you know what it is to thirst shortly afterwards.

You know what it is to thirst if you go for a run, if you're playing football, if you're playing any sport. You know what it is to thirst. And you know what it is to feel the joy of having that cup of water, that cup of milk going down your throat as you thirst.

This thirst was part of your Savior's human suffering. And in verses 25 to 27 of this chapter, we read of the provision that Jesus Christ makes for his beloved friend, John, and his beloved mother.

You read of that in his saying on the cross where he addresses both his friend and his mother.

Behold, woman, behold your son, and to his disciple, behold your mother.

[6:15] This was his third saying on the cross. And then you have the fourth saying where he cries in the darkness, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

And then we come to verse 28 where we read these words after this. Now when we read these words after this, I believe the hours of darkness have passed at this point.

It is no longer midnight at midday. The light is beginning to show again. And as it does so, I truly believe that the final three sayings of Christ were said very quickly one after another, perhaps in a matter of minutes.

Christ now nears death. And as he hangs on the cross, and as he nears death, it is important and it is vital for us to understand as the darkness lifts, as Christ nears death, Christ is satisfied.

He is not relieved. He is satisfied. And the reason that he is satisfied is that he knows now that he has reached the point where he has fulfilled the work that his Father has given him to do.

[8:01] Three times at least we read of this in John's Gospel. In John's Gospel and in chapter 4 we read in verse 34 that Jesus said to his disciples, My food is to do the will of whom who sent me and to accomplish his work.

The authorised version of the Bible says it better. It says, My meat is to do his will of whom who sent me. Can you put your amen to that today, my friends?

Can you put your hand on your heart and say that your food and your meat is to do the will of God? If it is, let me tell you this.

You are on your way to glory. You are on your way to glory. And again in chapter 5 we have similar words where Christ says in verse 36, the testimony that I have is greater than that of John.

For the works that the Father has given me to accomplish the very works that I am doing bear witness about me that the Father has sent me. And then you have similar words in chapter 17 where in his high priestly prayer in verse 4 he says, I glorified you on earth having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.

[9:33] Yes, Christ was put to death. Yes, Christ was sentenced to death. But Christ let us always remember chose the very moment to give up his life.

it was a voluntary part on his behalf in order that you and I would have hope of redemption in our hearts.

What a saviour we have. And in these words of Christ and saying I thirst we see clearly two things here. We see that God's foreordained plan in action is taking place.

And more than that we see as we read here in the middle part of this text we read of the fulfilment of scripture. I thirst is the fulfilment of the prophecies of old and we sang them both in Psalm 69 earlier on in verse 21 I looked for pity but there was none for comforters but I found none they gave me poison for food and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink.

Prophecy written hundreds of years ago that is why we read Psalm 69 why we sung it rather and in Psalm 22 we read these words and we sung these words my strength is dried up like a orchard and my tongue sticks to my jaws you lay me in the dust of death that is why we sang Psalm 22 but there was one scripture that was yet to be fulfilled the last one with regard to the sufferings of Christ and this was this one I thirst these two words and we already read as well didn't we and we sang what it was in Psalm 22 they divide my garments among them for my clothing they cast loads when you go through the whole experience of the trial and the sufferings of Christ you find countless number of prophecies being fulfilled and now we come to this last one

[12:13] I thirst and this is all the evidence that we need to see the humanity of Christ and also to see the divinity of Christ in the book of Psalms in many of the Psalms you have this little word Selah or Selah and in the Psalms when you see this word Selah it means stop think of what you've read don't move on to the next part of the reading re-read what you've read and meditate upon it and this is a Selah moment in the New Testament think my friends if you can think if you can think if your

minds will allow you close your eyes for a moment and try and understand that the

Lord of glory is in need of a drink try and understand that here the Lord of glory is calling out for a drink and this is a cry of his bodily sufferings as he cries out for a drink this is a sign of the incredible physical pain that he is in I thirst medically speaking to die of thirst is torture and here is the God man nearing death crying I thirst now when you think of Christ do not think of Christ on the cross when you close your eyes do not think of

Christ on the cross as one with a treacle of blood from the crown of thorns and one with a treacle of blood from his hands and feet many years ago when I was preparing a sermon and I was up early in the morning about five o'clock looking over my notes and my neighbour was it was lambing time and it must have been April time and I saw my next door neighbour going down the croft to check the sheep and about ten minutes later I saw him carrying a dead lamb back up to the house I looked at the lamb at the window I spoke to my neighbour as he carried him by his legs and I saw a sight I wished I had never seen there was no beauty in this lamb the lamb had been mutilated by the birds of the ale and all of the beauty of the whiteness that it once had was now covered with blood that my friends is how you must think of

Christ on the cross Christ was covered from blood from head to toe he was a bloody mess of a man where every part of his body has been ripped apart and blood pouring from his flesh!

And that is the way and that is what he endured in order that you and I would have hope and salvation and the hope of redemption and more than that when Christ utters these words I thirst and when Christ says all the other six sayings on the cross you think of this the taste of blood is in his mouth all the time the taste of his own blood not saliva but the taste of his blood the blood that cleanses us oh my friends try and understand what he went through and here is the evidence of his Christ's humanity God does not thirst the angels in glory do not thirst and the

[17:03] Lord's people do not thirst we read in Revelation 7 verse 16 they shall hunger no more neither shall they thirst no more the sun shall not strike them nor any scorching heat every single one of us in here has worshipped in the past with people who were believers in Christ and their seats are empty now they have gone home to glory some of them were in your families and they will never thirst again they will never thirst again because he thirsted on Calvary's cross oh no wonder Christ was thirsty no wonder if we could only understand and take in the whips with the glass and with the metal that was wrapped around the skin as his flesh was torn apart long before he was made to carry his cross and then whilst on the cross between 9am and 12 midday you have these three hours of scorching sunlight directly upon him before the darkness comes and for the Christ for your saviour and for my saviour no refreshments has passed his lips since the previous night when he took of the cup in the upper chamber no wonder he thirsts but as he thirsts he is thinking of this one scripture that is yet to be fulfilled and now he brings the end to all the prophecies of the

Old Testament by uttering these words I thirst remarkable isn't it Lord never let us forget that Christ thirsted in his sufferings for his believing people in the gospel of Matthew we read before Christ says these words I thirst we read that they offered him wine to drink mixed with gall but he tasted it but he would not drink it he would not drink it he refused this pain deadening wine he refused this wine that was given mixed with mal and you would think that this was a mercy from the soldiers but it was not this was given by the soldiers not out of mercy but to extend the life of the person that was suffering on the cross and they would allow people to drink as much wine and as much mal within it as they wanted if it meant that they suffered an extra hour on the cross but

Christ tasted the gal the word gal means sedative and he would not allow himself to be removed from any of the pain that he was going to endure think of that there is not one of us in here that has not at one time in the past needed medication I have a bad back I have had a bad back for many years 30 plus years and when my back goes I have to take a very very strong medication I won't say what it is but let me tell you it kills the pain but it doesn't help me straighten my back it doesn't help me with my movements but it removes the pain and of course it has so many other side effects which of us would not take something like that but Christ took nothing

Christ endured the full amount of hell that he had to endure on Calvary for your sake and for my sake ah my friends you might be on medication for the rest of your life in this world as a believer but like the water there will be no need for medication and glory in the fullness of time what I thought no thirsting and glory here in Matthew 27 the prophecy remains unfulfilled the wine that was offered to him he does not take Christ does not drink it he does not drink it until we come to this portion of scripture in John that we read where he has offered it again and after this knowing that all was now

finished to fulfill scripture he said

I thirst and a jar full of sour wine stood there and so they put a sponge full of sour wine with his branch and they held it to his mouth and Jesus received the sour wine why does he take it here he takes it here because there is no mal in it and he takes it here upon his parched lips in order that he is able to say very shortly afterwards with a triumphant cry it is finished it is finished and he does that and he says that for you and for me he is not excluding one single person in here tonight when he says that it is finished and this should satisfy us my friends as believers that in all the trials that we will go through and we will most certainly go through them that the will of

[24:12] God will be done and accomplished in all of these trials and isn't it remarkable have you ever thought my friends have you ever thought of the fact that the only words that Christ ever spoke upon the cross indicating any pain or discomfort that he was in was these words I thirst I thirst and he does not he says that and it is not that he did not suffer there are many people who say that because he was the son of God he did not suffer he did not feel the suffering he most certainly did but he did not complain about the sufferings as our substitute this was not a whisper this was a triumphant cry from the words of

Christ oh my friends what a saviour we have nearing death and all that is honest mind is accomplishing and fulfilling the work that his father has given him to do uncomplaining thinking only of his own beloved people as he nears death not begging for mercy just like was revealed to us in scripture many many hundreds of years prior to that where we read these incredible words yet he was oppressed and he was afflicted yet he openeth not his mouth like a lamb that is led to the slaughter like a sheep before her shearers is silent so he openeth not his mouth Isaiah 53 he could have lessened his pain he could have lessened the torture he could have lessened the hell that he was enduring on the cross at any stage but had he done that his work as saviour would have been unfulfilled!

And a failure! He endured it all for us! Never once in scripture did he fulfil a miracle for his own benefit! or for his own comfort not even on the cross!

Or a lesson to us! Why then does Jesus hang on the cross with parched lips at this time? It is to fulfil scripture the last scripture I thirst!

Oh my friends never let us forget that as he nears death he is seeking his father's face and he is thinking of his own people and he is satisfied that the work is complete with the taste of blood in his mouth he is thinking of you and he is thinking of me what a saviour there is not one of us in here that has never ever had a vomiting bug at least I don't think there is you know what it is when you start with that bug you know what it is that taste in your mouth you know what it is you take a drink of water you can't get rid of it you take a drink of lucasade you can't get rid of it you take a sweet you can't get rid of it it is there all the time that taste

[28:25] Christ tasted the blood of redemption in his mouth the entire time at Calvary as he utters these seven glorious things on your behalf and on mine and that includes these words I thirst let us then look for a moment at Christ's spiritual thirst here is Christ and where surely we can see he is now reaching the stage where he is nearing death where he is satisfied that he has finished the work that his father has given him to do and now he is thirsting after God these three hours of darkness have now passed away and within these three hours he has said these words and who of us will ever understand my

God my God why hast thou forsaken me when it was midnight at midday and the entire power of hell was let loose upon Christ and his father was not there to help him or to shield him where hell in all of its brutal force was let loose where Christ felt abandoned for you and for me now however Christ has endured to the uttermost and now we see that even throughout these three awful horrific hours where the full force of hell is directed at Christ and where the mysterious hiding of the Lord is hidden from

God is hidden from Christ now we see that the darkness starts to disappear and as the darkness starts to lift and as the light begins to shine once again Christ sees his father Christ sees the father and he sees that his face is radiant!

with love for his son who has accomplished all that he had to do for his own people and here now Christ knows that his work as mediator is over that it is only but a matter of moments or a matter of minutes before he gives up the ghost before he sleeps the sleep of death he has done all that he can do for sinners he has done for sinners what they can never do for themselves and this has pleased the father as we read in Romans chapter 8 in verse 3 for God has done what the law

weakened by the flesh could not do by sending out his son in the likeness of sinful flesh for sin he condemned sin in the flesh he has done it all on our behalf and can we not say then my friends that Christ is now thirsting for fellowship with the father to our redeemer the travail of his soul is now over it is nearly time to die on his terms in his time for his people and can we not say that when he utters these words I thirst that Christ is thirsting to see an end of his very sacrifice so that he can start to see the fruits of the blessed fruits of those who will yet believe upon those of us who are sitting in here today as his believing people he is thinking and he was thinking of you as he uttered these words I thirst what a saviour here

[33 : 15] Christ is thirsting to die here Christ now is thirsting to sleep the sleep of death here now Christ is thirsting to rise from the dead here now Christ is thirsting to ascend unto heaven once again for a whole new part of prophecy to be fulfilled now that his sufferings have come to an end there are new prophecies to be fulfilled in and through the risen Christ surely we can say he is thirsting to rejoin his father in glory now let me ask you this question and I ask this question in love I do not ask this question to annoy anybody or to upset anybody but I ask this question can you put your hand on your heart in here today and can you say that

Christ thirsted in glorifying God in accomplishing the work of your redemption can you let me ask the question again can you say that Christ thirsted in glorifying Christ in accomplishing the work of your redemption have you experienced his redemption if not why not if not it is not his fault it is yours if not there is nothing else that Christ can do there is no plan

B it is Calvary and trusting in the Christ who died as our substitute and entering into glory at the end of life's journey or refusing him and spending eternity in hell that is the power of these words I thirst Christ is most definitely thirsting surely we can see for the presence of the father again to be in the presence with the Lord's people in glory to be in presence with the angels in glory in a place where the sin and evil in this world would have no more pain upon him and torture his pure spirit is this not your desire to as a believer at the end of life's journey and to you my friends who have yet to trust in Jesus and Christ do you not see the beauty of the Christ who was crucified at Calvary is your heart not full of love for the crucified saviour who became our substitute here we are one more time in the Lord's house and here we are and God is speaking to us one more time and here we are the Lord is leading us all into the valley of decision and in a matter of ten minutes or so every one of us will be walking out these doors and we will be deciding and we will be choosing if we will trust them the Christ of Calvary who cried I thirst what will your choice be let me tell you a beautiful story that beautiful story is in the gospel of

John you know the story well John 4 4 and he must needs go through Samaria Samaria he must need to go through Samaria why did Christ have to go through Samaria because in verses 6 and 7 we read that there at Jacob's well Jesus was wearied from his journey and he was sitting beside the well it was about the sixth hour and a woman of Samaria came to draw water and Jesus said to her give me to drink for his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food a simple request from our saviour from one who was thirsty again Christ did not just experience thirst for the first time at Calvary he experienced it time and time again in this world in his human nature but the remarkable thing about

[38 : 42] John chapter 4 is that you never read that Christ drank the water that was given to him from the woman of Samaria why because his real refreshment was not in the water that she took from the well but his real refreshment was in the knowledge that she had been one for Christ he must need go through Samaria because his meat was to do the will of God to meet this woman to speak to this woman to challenge this woman in order that she would be saved and he says to her in verse 14 whosoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again the water that I will give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life what does she say sir give me this water my friends

Christ suffered thirst in this world and Christ has provided the water of life for us in this world in order that we will never thirst again in the eternal world to come and in this water of life that he offers us in John 4 it is for our keeping it is for our protection in this world and it is for the ultimate aim of bringing us home into glory and avoiding the torment of hell forever and ever as our time nearly comes to an end what is our response then do we dare say to Christ tonight I don't want your water

I don't want your living water I don't need your living water I don't even care that you thirst it is that your reply the world is full of people and that is their reply and unless grace and mercy finds them

they will be lost and damned forever surely you don't want to be with them at the end of life's journey can we not say then that Christ is also spiritually thirsting for the salvation of men and women throughout the world even tonight can we not say that in a sense there is a thirsting within Christ in a sense even in glory tonight that anybody in here who has not yet fully trusted in Christ a saviour and friend that they would do so tonight that this would be the night even now as he thirsts for the love and fellowship of each and every single one of us is believing people to join him in glory imagine that Christ is thirsting for me to join him in glory and years of you too as his believing people how then my friends how can you possibly refuse the saviour how why why would you possibly refuse the saviour when we think of Christ on the cross what do we think what do we see when you combine it all together you see suffering you see darkness you see isolation from God you see thirst you add all these things together and what do you have you have hell you have hell the place where all those who refuse to trust in Christ will go to now our time is nearly over I wonder if I was to give you the name of a man would you know who this man is most possibly a lot of you wouldn't this man is called Herman Gill and Herman Gill made the news about three weeks ago when he was rescued after eight days in the rubble of the [44:17] Venezuela earthquake disaster eight days buried in the rubble and this man was rescued well Hernan Gill is a man who knows what darkness was he knows what isolation was he knows what suffering was he knows what thirst was but he was rescued after eight days of crying for help in the midst of the rubble the last known survivor from that awful tragedy where yet there are tens of thousands of bodies still missing he was rescued from the rub but my friends nobody will ever be rescued from hell nobody but we thank the

Lord tonight that there is a rescuer that there is a rescuer who rescues from the rubble of sin from the rubble of sin that traps and suffocates us in this world and his name is Jesus Christ he is our deliverer he is our rescuer and the wonder of it all is that he will rescue and deliver and redeem all who call upon his name finally my friends in Luke chapter 16 we read these words with regard to the rich man and Lazarus and in hell being in torment he lifted up his eyes and he saw Abraham far off and Lazarus by his side and he called out father Abraham have mercy upon me and set Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and to cool my tongue for

I am in anguish of this flame oh my friends if you die in your sins your eternal cry will be I thirst because there is an everlasting thirst in hell but let me tell you this that Christ thirsted at Calvary in order to provide a way so that none of us would thirst in hell and that is why the words I thirst are words that challenge those of us who are not believers in Christ and words that encourage us who are believers in Christ I'm not asking tonight are you a member in this church or are you an office payer

I'm asking you are you a believer I believe that there are multitudes of people in glory that loved the Lord that did not get the strength to sit at the Lord's table but do you love the Lord do you love this crucified saviour is he altogether meaningful to you is your meat to do the will of him who was a bloodied mess whose body was torn apart at calvary who thirsted for you at calvary with a taste of blood in his mouth with every saying that he said as our substitute and he pleads one more time that we will all come and drink of the water of life that he offers is it not better than my friends that we would do this is it not right and is it not the only sensible thing to do to go to the one who says that whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again but the water that I will give will become a spring of water welling up to eternal life oh my friends it's nearly the Sunday is nearly over and you're already making plans for tomorrow who knows will we see it now is the time to trust in the Christ who thirsted and was crucified at Calvary who has provided a way of redemption and salvation and who is longing tonight from the glory that none of us would be lost he has done all that he can do and now he asks will you trust in me may it be that we would all do so and may it be that in the fullness of time that each and every single one of us who are gathered here will be found praising the Lord forever and ever in glory throughout the endless ages of eternity amen may the

[50:17] Lord bless to us these thoughts from his own holy word and that is why we will conclude tonight with these words I heard the voice of Jesus say surely we believe that Christ is speaking to us and that the Lord is speaking to us again tonight I heard the voice of Jesus say come unto me and rest lay down you weary one lay down I head upon my breast I came to Jesus as I was weary and worn and sad I found in him a resting place and he has made me glad I heard the voice of Jesus say behold I freely give living water thirsty one stooped down and drink and live I came to

Jesus and I drank of that living life giving stream my thirst was quenched my soul revived and now I live in him may that be so for each one of us shall we sing this glorious hymn by Horatius Bonner together in conclusion I heard the voice of

Jesus say I heard the voice of Jesus say come unto me and rest great and the weary lovely time thy head upon my breast I give to Jesus as thy woes weary and bored and sad I found in him a resting place and he has made me love!

I heard the voice of Jesus say behold thy dreaming give him the living water thirsty one to dine and think and live I came to Jesus and the tribe of!

I heard of Jesus say! I this light I this dark light and heard the voice of Jesus say I heard of Jesus say I am this world's light look unto me born shall and all thy be bright I look to Jesus and I find in my son son and in light of I walk drowning days are done

I heard the voice of Jesus say God I the voice of the earth love the weary one day died thy head upon breast I came to Jesus as thy walls weary adorn sound I carved in him a and has with me now!

[54 : 39] Amen! Let us pray in conclusion. O Lord, our God, how wonderful a thing it is that it is possible that we can hear the voice of Jesus speaking to us.

How glorious it is that we as a people are able to see us your believing people. I found in him a resting place and he has made me glad.

! My thirst was quenched, my soul revived, and now I live in him. O Lord, we pray that these would not be the words of some of us, but that these would be the words on the confession of each and every single one of us as we part from the house of God this night.

O Lord, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.