



Substitutes that replace our Spiritual Thirst

"Everyone who drinks this [physical] water will thirst again, but whoever drinks the [spiritual] water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

John 4:13-14



Just as all of us cannot live without physical water, our souls also crave spiritual water.

Many years earlier God called himself, "The Fountain of Living Water". Although we were designed to drink from this spiritual living water, too often we reach for substitutes because they are readily available. These substitutes may initially quench our thirst but will never become a spring of living water welling up inside.

Today we look at one of these substitutes, and how we can ensure we drink from the living water of the Spirit which Jesus alone provides.



Intro |

About two weeks ago my son and his new girlfriend came to stay. It was entertaining listening to their playful banter.

My son's new girlfriend, Claire, is an avid drinker of water. She doesn't go anywhere without her water bottle.

When Kenyon mentioned that he struggled with regular headaches, Claire responded, "it's because you need to drink more water! And fruit juice doesn't count!"

It is almost the same as what Jesus was saying to the thirsty woman we just saw, "your body is screaming out for water, but you're drinking the wrong thing. Only the pure water I give, will quench your thirst."

Point 1 | Just as all humans cannot live without water, every person has vital need for the spiritual water of God's Spirit which only Jesus can provide.

We all know how intrinsic water is to our survival. Three days without it and we'll shrivel up and die!

Physical life needs physical water.

Well, in exactly the same way, spiritual life needs spiritual water.

Let me explain.

Just as our physical bodies become dehydrated when we don't drink water, our hearts are in desperate need for the pure living Spiritual water which God created for our hearts to drink.

The reason we need physical water is because a good portion of our bodies is made up of water!

But we humans are not just physical bodies! We have an unseen component that governs our decisions, our emotions, and our motivations and desires. We call this our soul.

But it is not our 'soul' that sustains our lives!

Rather, the Bible says, "The Spirit of God has made me, And the breath of the Almighty gives me life." (Job 33:4)

So, the fact that you are breathing, is a living testimony, that God's Spirit is sustaining your physical life. (Ecclesiastes 7:12). For those interested, further evidence of this truth is that God said to Noah, "my Spirit will not contend with humans forever, for they are mortal; their days will be a 120 years." (Genesis 6:3)

So, what has this got to do with being thirsty?

Well, because our physical life relies on God's Spirit for its continuance, we all have an intrinsic need for spiritual water.

Point 2 | God's arch enemy, the devil, knows our need for spiritual water, so he pollutes God's water, offering substitutes which can never really satisfy our thirst.

What are some evidences of this spiritual thirst?

We crave meaning and purpose in our lives.

We cry out in desperation to a higher power when circumstances get beyond us.

We all have an intrinsic awareness there is life after death.

We yearn for justice and peace in our world.

And we long for the characteristics that only God provides - love, peace, hope, joy, patience and kindness. We know how important these qualities are in our lives.

All these are spiritual cravings, which show our spiritual thirst!

Even God's arch-enemy, the devil, who is himself a spiritual being, knows that we all have spiritual cravings.

But, because he wants to keep people away from God's pure spiritual drink, the living water of eternal life, he pollutes God's spiritual water and offers us substitutes.

He sells these substitutes, promoting them as having the ability to quench our thirst, when in reality they are no better than drinking poison.

The woman, we saw in our video, drank from one of these substitutes – human love can never satisfy the cry in our heart for God's love.

To what shall we liken these substitutes?

Well, it is a bit like substituting *Red Bull* or a *Mother* for fresh spring water.

He'll say, "Hey! it it's 90% the real deal, I've only just added flavouring and some stimulants and some sugar – that will make it feel great and goes down easily."

What he doesn't say, (but we know it's true), is he adds these additives, so they become addictive.

So, what is Red Bull in the spirit realm? The Bible calls it the spirit of error, which John tells us is a twisting or distortion of the Spirit of Truth which proceeds from God (1 John 4:1-6)

Any messages or agendas which contradict the truth revealed in God's word has been tainted by the spirit of error, making it poisonous for our hearts.

Now, there are many other substitutes which the devil offers.

I'd love to speak longer about how substituting God's living water for spiritual fruit juice will also have a detrimental effect. But you'll need to ask me about this later.

Point 3 | Only the living water of God's Spirit offered by Jesus will satisfy the human spirit.

The point is none of these substitutes will satisfy the cravings of the human spirit.

Only God, who called Himself, The Fountain of Living Water (Zechariah 14:8-9; Jeremiah 17:13) has the true spiritual water we need.

That's why God the Father sent His Son Jesus, to be God's fountain of living water on earth.

We just heard Jesus say,

"... whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life." (John

Jesus is talking about the most miraculous event that can ever occur.

I hope this explanation is not too crude – it is like God gets a straw and sticks it all the way into your heart, blowing His Spirit through the straw, breathing spiritual life into your heart, so that suddenly (from our heart) we burst forth with bubbles that well up for eternity (John 4:14).

Can you believe it? Those who put their trust in Jesus, believing that He is their Saviour who forgives all their wrong doings, will experience the constant bubbling up of God's Spirit inside them.

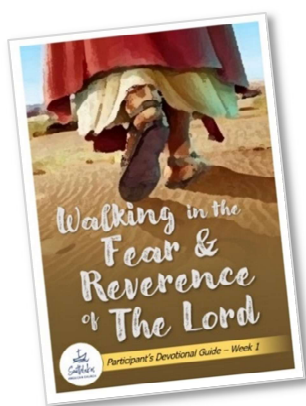
And boy, would I like to talk more about that!

Application | Have you fallen into any of these substitutes?

But let me finish by asking, if you would like to have this eternal refreshing Spirit breathed into your heart, come and see me after.

And if you have been tempted to drink the spiritual substitutes the devil has on offer, say to yourself, "No! I choose to drink the spiritual water of eternal life that only Jesus can offer me. Then, I will never thirst again."

Lenten Study: Walking in reverential fear of the Lord



Week 4 |

Grab a copy of the next week of our Lenten devotional.

Note: As we are celebrating the baptism of Evie Rose Moore on Sunday, 12th March we have stepped away from our series on Walking in the fear and reverence of the Lord.

Next Sunday, 19th March, Br Bill will preach on how a reverential fear of the Lord is expressed in our private worship of our Heavenly Father.