

WATER
Matthew 5:6
By Raymond White

A favorite analogy that Jesus used for his parables was water. Why he would choose that image is no mystery since we cannot live long without it.

[1] THE NEED

Matthew 5:6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled.

Humans cannot live long without water — in the desert, three days, tops. And when a human is deprived of water for any length of time, the resulting thirst will become agonizing to the point of total fixation. A man dying of thirst wants nothing else except water. A delicious prime rib steak will not do. If, on the other hand, he's dying of hunger and not of thirst, the steak is what he desperately craves. Whatever he is deprived of, that is what he desperately seeks. That's the image Jesus creates for us in this beatitude.

Humans have a desperate need for righteousness, and God is anxious to fill that need, but only for those who desperately want it. How do you know if you thirst for righteousness? If you do, then nothing else will satisfy that craving: not money or any of the things that people long for. Guilt, like thirst, causes a person to fixate on one thing: relief.

Luke 16:24 have mercy...send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue.

In the parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man (if it is a parable), the rich man finally got thirsty, but too late. He finally craved water or righteousness when none was available.

[2] THE SOURCE

So, if we need righteousness like a thirsty man needs water, where can we look to find it? Certainly not ourselves. If a thirsty man could just look in his pocket and find water, he wouldn't be thirsty in the first place. Instead, he has to look to some source elsewhere.

Philippians 3:9 Not having my own righteousness, but God's.

If we have no righteousness of our own to satisfy our thirsty souls, what righteousness is available? God's righteousness. And where is that?

John 4:13 Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.

A vivid picture. Not just water, but a well of water that never runs dry. And with the continual flow of water unabated, comes continual life unabated, eternal life. The significance of this particular parable is that Jesus is speaking it to a woman who is living with a man that she is not married to. He is offering to her eternal life if she drinks the water of righteousness that he is willing to give. That's the best kind of water there is; eternally, thirst quenching righteousness.

John 8:36 If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

People who aren't thirsty, don't drink. I don't drink when I'm not thirsty and that's a problem because my doctor tells me I should drink more water. But how can I do that when I'm not thirsty? Righteousness is available, but only to those who are thirsty for it, enough to come to the well and drink.

[3] THE PRICE

Water costs. Yes, I know, you just turn on the faucet and water flows out freely. Well, it isn't free. The city and its tax payers spend billions of dollars to make that water flow freely to you every time you turn on that tap.

So, what about righteousness that Jesus offers so freely? Did it cost him anything to be able to offer it? Actually, it cost him a lot.

John 19:38 I thirst.

Psalms 69:21 ...in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

This was no parable. It was for him a horrible reality and a fulfilled prophecy. On the cross he was deprived of everything. All the things that he offered so freely to us, he had to pay for. Here's a list:

<i>John 19:38</i>	He became thirsty so you could drink.
<i>2 Corinthians 8:9</i>	He became poor so you could be rich.
<i>Romans 6:10-11</i>	He became dead so you could live.
<i>2 Corinthians 5:21</i>	He became sin so you could be righteous.