

### Your Love Is Better Than Life!

Have you ever been thirsty to the point that your throat is dry and parched? You have seen the movies where the person is stranded in the desert and have no water. Their mouth gets so dry that when they do get water they have to take small drops first so they can swallow. When we get dehydrated our body begins to shut down and our attention turns to seeking the water we need to survive.

The beginning of this psalm is said to be written by David while Saul is hunting him down in the wilderness to kill him. Out in the desert of southern Israel especially around the Dead Sea there is little fresh drinkable water. You better carry the water with you and David didn't and he is thirsty. But David realized that what he is really thirsty for is God. His soul hungers and thirst for more than just water, but to be in the presence of God.

It seems the writer of this Psalm remembering what happened to David and was also seeking God in a special way in his life. He was thirsty for the presence of God so he may have spent the night in the temple. He may have been so stressed out because he needed to feel God's presence so badly that he didn't sleep much. As the sun was rising over the Mount of Olives the temple we built to receive those first rays of sunlight and fill the temple with light. When that happened, the seeming presence of God was so strong that it filled the Psalm writer's heart with joy and awe. His hunger and thirst for God were replaced with praise and thanksgiving. His lips that had been seeking God with thirst now became full of songs of praise for the love of God.

The Psalmist knows that his life depends on God as much as his body depends of water and food. He knows the power of the soul depends on the love that God has for each of us. When he is filled with the realness of that love he proclaims. "Your Love is better than life!"

In our time there are many thirsty people. The beverage industry however has suffered in recent years. The makers of beer and wine have seen a decline in sales for several years. The makers of soft drinks have also struggled especially the big two Coke and Pepsi are in a constant battle to keep their share of the market. Diet drinks have tried every product they can find to replace sugar and keep the original tastes of their product. Recently Pepsi has gone back to offering the original Pepsi with sugar instead of corn syrup.

What has caused them the problems is the healthy desire to curb our thirst with water. Even bottled water is beginning to give way to filtered tap water. When we stop coloring water, flavoring water, sweetening water, but just drinking water our body becomes rehydrated and we are not thirsty.

The same is true with people looking for God. In our time we have tried many things to find God. In the older Orthodox Church's like the Roman Catholic, Greek and Russian Orthodox the presence of God is announced by bells ringing, the burning of incense and singing praise to God. Some church's stand with their hands raised high seeking God, some kneel in silence and prayer upon their knees seeking God. In some churches people are slain in the spirit and fall on their faces seeking God. Some people seek God through Organ music and others through guitars and drums. When people don't find what they are seeking they go to great lengths to find what is missing in their

lives. That is why we have over 38,000 Christian denominations in the world. Each seeks to a different belief about how best to experience God

This causes much confusion among people that are thirsty and hungry and seeking God. Some people go from church to church trying to find God. Sometimes people give up and stop looking and are dying of thirst. I think the Psalmist tells us a simple truth. If you want to find God seek him in prayer. If you ever have the privilege of being in Jerusalem at sunrise and watch the sun rise on the top of the temple mount, what you will hear is a call to prayer. Devout Jews, Christians, and Muslims begin each day in prayer. They stop several times during the day and turn to the east and pray. There is no magic in their time of prayer. They simply know if you are thirsty for God you pray. They can go to the temple mount and pray or they can pray at work or at home. The same is true for us.

Worship is our call to pray and draw closer to God. Holy Communion reminds us of God's ultimate prayer for us in Jesus Christ. Jesus chose bread and wine as the daily food of his people to represent God in their lives. When you eat this bread and drink this wine we taste the food of God's table and our hunger for God is met in this bread of life. Then we can embrace the power of God's love for us in the pain, suffering and death of Jesus. God says I love you so much that you can taste it, see it and feel it in this Holy Sacrament.

Jesus says if you want to experience the power of God then take up your cross, deny yourself of your wanton thirsts and seek the living water. God's love is better than anything the world can offer. Better than Coke or Pepsi, better than Gatorade or Power Aide; better than Red Bull or 5 hour energy boost. The real thing is love found in Christ.

Charles Wesley wrote the hymn Love Divine all Love Excelling to speak about this love. The third verse says:

Come, Almighty to deliver,  
Let us all thy life receive;  
Suddenly return and never,  
Nevermore they temple leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing,  
Serve thee as they hosts above,  
Pray and praise thee without ceasing.  
Glory in thy perfect love

The world is always calling us to seek more stuff, find more pleasure, fill our lives with desire fir things we don't have. God calls us to stop and know we are loved in the perfect love of Christ. Isaiah says, "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters."

Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy?

Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.

Come to the Lord's Table with praise and joy and fill your soul with his divine love for you.