THE HOLY SPIRIT SATISFIES OUR SOULS

John 4:10, 13–14, 23–24; 7:37–39
Key Verse: 7:38

This summer we are beginning to learn about the Holy Spirit. Today we’re going to look at a very familiar passage in John 4 and look at how one woman came to have her thirst eternally quenched. There’s a TV show on the Discovery channel called “I shouldn’t be alive.” This show basically tells the true events of people who have been in extraordinary life threatening situations and their stories of how they survived. There was one episode I saw recently about 5 people who were on a small yacht when all of a sudden they were caught in a storm and their yacht sank. They jumped on a small raft but unfortunately had no supplies with them. After battling the storm all night, the next morning they saw that they were surrounded by hundreds of hungry sharks. Days pass without any food and water, no one knows they crashed and they begin to lose any sign of hope. They look around and they are only surrounded by ocean water and sharks. Slowly their bodies begin to break down and the greatest struggle they face is not motion sickness, heat stroke, or even hunger, but thirst. Ironically they are surrounded by water, but water they cannot drink. After three days without food and water, two men give up and become so thirsty they begin to drink the ocean water. Thinking that this would quench their thirst, they drink even though the salt is actually killing them. Salt water ironically dehydrates them even more. Eventually they completely lose their minds and they begin to hallucinate that there is land, they jump off the raft and immediately sharks get them and they die. 5 days later another crew member dies of dehydration. The two remaining pushes the dead body off their raft and in hopelessness, they begin to pray the Lord’s Prayer and recite Psalm 23. Then out of nowhere, a Russian ship sees them, and rescues them after 5 days without water and food. This story reminded me of today’s passage. We are all thirsty people, and at times we believe that if we do not quench our thirst we’ll die. We look around and see all that is around us and we believe that these things will quench our thirst, but ironically this water only makes us thirstier and kills our souls. Today’s passage reveals that there is someone who can quench this thirst, if we only hold out, resist temptations and ask Him to come to us. I pray that we may come to God’s words today and see God’s great gift of the Holy Spirit and ask him to come into our lives. Amen.

**Part 1 Unquenchable thirst**

In John 4 we see a Samaritan woman who suffered from what we like to call a thirst problem. She was thirsty for love, companionship, a husband and acceptance from her community. In order to satisfy her thirst she actively pursued men, in fact she was found to have 5 husbands and a boyfriend she was currently living with (4:18). She tried to quench her thirst by satisfying it with what she believed was the solution to her problem. One after the other, she continued to search for that one missing part in her life. But like digging herself out of quick sand, the more men she gave herself to, the more she sank in a pit of thirstiness. Soon, this small unquenchable thirst of hers became the reason for living, the object of her worship. Simply put, love, men, acceptance, became her idol. She gave everything to men, poured out her soul to find love. If she didn’t have this, there really was nothing else to live for. This thirstiness is something that we are all familiar with. The creed of our culture can be summarized by the following statements. Sprite had a slogan that said, “Image is nothing. Thirst is everything. Obey your thirst.” Secondly Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones said, “I can’t get no satisfaction, I can’t get no satisfaction, ‘Cause I try and I try and I try and I try.” We all have a thirst problem. And often times we obey our thirst. We try in various ways to feed our hunger, to satisfy our souls, and although we try and try and try, we get no satisfaction. The problem isn’t that we are thirsty; it is that we obey our thirst rather than accept God’s gift. Obedience to our thirst for the things in this world, lead us to an enslaving path to idolatry.  What are some things that we are thirsty for?  I think love is definitely up there. A relationship with the opposite sex, with someone who will understand us, and make us feel like we’re in a romantic movie. We also thirst for success, in school and in our careers. We thirst for money, or at least financial stability. We even thirst for a flourishing ministry, spiritual renewal and revivals, change in people, communities, and maybe even changing the ministry. How do we try to satisfy these thirsts? We obey our thirst. Like the Samaritan woman we give ourselves in seeking out relationships, we work hard in school or our careers; we invite a lot of students to Bible study, change up the ministry and enforce our laws to promote change. All of these things aren’t bad, relationships hard work, serving ministry, these are not bad at all. But what Jesus reveals in vs. 13 is that everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again. Everyone who tries to satisfy this thirst with anything but the true living water will only continue to remain parched and unsatisfied. Eventually we become consumed by this thirst, and all we live for all we work for is to satisfy our thirst. So what can truly quench our thirst, or who can quench our thirst?

**Part 2 Living Water**
Read vs. 10 Jesus answered her, ***“If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.”*** This Samaritan woman knew of only the well she was drawing water from, the well of her forefather Jacob. But this well no matter how deep could not quench her thirst. Because the problem wasn’t that she was lacking human love. She wasn’t thirsty because she didn’t have a faithful husband. The root of her thirstiness and dissatisfaction was the lack of the presence of someone Jesus could only give. So Jesus continues on to say in vs. 13 and 14, ***“Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but 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.”*** But what exactly is this living water? What is this gift? The correct question is, *who* is this living water, and *who* is this gift? Look at John 7:37-39 ***“On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.”*** John reveals that the Holy Spirit *is* the living water that quenches our dry and brittle souls. Why is the Holy Spirit described as living water? This is the nature of the Holy Spirit. In Isaiah we see a beautiful and perfect description 44:3. ***For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.*** Isaiah 58:11 ***The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.*** Our lives, our hearts, our souls are essentially like a dry desert land, and sin has made us cracked, dusty, completely desolate. But the Holy Spirit like a gushing, flowing river covers us, and penetrates deep into our roots, saving us from our unending thirstiness, giving us new life. His nature is an out pouring of life and satisfaction.

But don’t we normally say Jesus satisfies our souls, Jesus quenches our thirst, Jesus is all we need, so where is the Holy Spirit coming from? How is the Holy Spirit the one who quenches our thirst? In John 14:16-17 Jesus promises the disciples the Holy Spirit. ***“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.”*** This Holy Spirit would come down and be with us as our advocate. The Holy Spirit is the one who counsels (John 14:26), who grieves for us when we sin (Ephesians 4:30), and who is desperately fighting against our sins with us (Gal 5:17). This Holy Spirit is fighting the temptations that suck the living water out from us, the sin that makes us suffer deeper in our thirst. And as he clears out this sin, he opens the path for the love of God to dwell within us. The Holy Spirit is working 24 hours 7 days a week. Not only is he doing all the dirty work desperately fighting against the sin within us, he then delivers the love of God into our hearts souls, and lives. Romans 5:5 says, ***“And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.”*** It is this love that he pours out into us that becomes a spring of living water within us. It is the love of God that brings us true satisfaction. To have the true love of God that is never changing, fully drenching our hearts, that fills us and quenches us of the ultimate and underlying reason for all of our thirst. What an amazing faithful and loving advocate. He is the one who can quench our thirst because he so intimately knows what causes our souls to suffer, he daily fights against all that causes us to thirst and he then pours in the love of God within us.

But the Holy Spirit doesn’t stop there. He not only pours out God’s love into our lives, he enables us to worship God in the Spirit and truth. If Jesus just gave the Samaritan love, she would have been pretty happy, but that would not solve her worship problem.  John 4:23-24 says, “***Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”*** We were all created to worship, therefore without us knowing we are drawn to worship and begin to worship different things. We find ourselves idolizing so many things, football teams, movie stars, husbands, wives, money, we even have a show called American Idol. But as we worship these meaningless things we are left unsatisfied and longing for more. Yet the Holy Spirit realigns our lives and directs us to our true object of our worship. He helps us come to worship the one and only worthy God and come before him in his presence. When we finally worship God as we were created to and intended to, we are satisfied. It’s like the missing piece in our lives that we earnestly sought after for years finally settles in, and we feel utterly complete. But what does it mean to worship in the Spirit and in truth? In Deuteronomy 6:4, Moses sets down for the Israelites how they are to love their God: ***“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.”*** Our worship of God is directed by our love for Him; as we love, so we worship. To worship God in spirit and truth necessarily involves loving Him with heart, soul, mind and strength. Pouring out everything to God and completely surrendering ourselves to our creator God whom we were meant to give all things to bring true gratification and satisfaction. And as we are filled with the love of God we can love him back and love our neighbors and His love is made complete within us giving us the satisfaction of not only receiving but giving. May we all come to love God with all of our hearts, souls, mind and strength and come to worship Him in Spirit and truth.

**Part 3 Come to Jesus**
So now that we know that the Holy Spirit can satisfy our souls, how can we have Him in us today? Can we simply summon him and demand him to enter our lives and quench all our thirst? Let’s look at John 7:37-38 once again **“*On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink.  Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.”*** I thought a lot about this, this past week. For me, the Holy Spirit is very foreign, I honestly didn’t know much about the Holy Spirit nor did I think about Him. I thought that the Holy Spirit was just a means to get emotional, or start speaking in tongues, or claiming to be a prophet and have visions. He actually became very cliché and unappealing to me. But it wasn’t until i started looking into my heart and my life did i finally see how much more the Holy Spirit is. Looking at my daily life I always have a sense of dissatisfaction. Career wise I wish I was doing something life changing. Money wise, I can always have more money. Health wise, I can stand to lose a few hundred pounds. Family wise, we could be closer and have less issues. Then looking into my spiritual life I somehow find that i still have a sense of dissatisfaction. Why do I feel spiritually dead sometimes? Why don’t people just flood our church until we’re popping out of our seams? Why not pioneer a new church? Looking at my dissatisfaction I came to find how we can have the Holy Spirit. Come to Jesus. Believe in Jesus. The Holy Spirit enters into our lives when we come to Jesus, coming to His words, His presence, and His light. This is how the Holy Spirit can enter our lives. I complain about all of my dissatisfaction but honestly, I submerse myself in everything that pulls me deeper in my thirstiness. I am constantly swayed by the things surrounding me and I lack that close relationship to Him. And this is the reason for such dissatisfaction in my life.  I am not coming to Him. But Jesus promises that when we come to Him and believe in Him, he gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit begins to work and penetrate our lives. The Holy Spirit begins to dig a deep well within us so that this living water not only fills us but overflow from our lives. It’s very hard to confess honestly that all of a sudden everything has changed as I’ve come to him, that all of a sudden I’m satisfied, and I don’t need anything in the world. But I know that there is a real and faithful promise from Jesus that when I come to him he will begin to work in my heart. This is a promise we can hold onto and believe firmly in. And as we continue to turn to him, continue to believe, continue to walk in faith, this living water begins to grow greater in our lives.  The Holy Spirit begins his great work in us.

As we see in today’s passage the Holy Spirit is more than a means to get something, he’s more than a way to get an emotional high while singing praise songs. He is the one who satisfies our souls by clearing our hearts of all that choke us, pouring out God’s love, and bringing us to worship God in the Spirit and truth. Let us really honor and praise him for this and give him the glory He deserves. Let us come to thank God for His Spirit that he gives, for this is completely God’s grace that we have received. May we hold onto this truth and come to Jesus faithfully that we may taste the Holy Spirit in our lives. Amen.