

I Thirst

How does this simple, human request make it to the permanent record of the gospel? Why does John want to be sure we remember that Jesus expressed thirst as he hung dying on the cross? John knows that through this simple human need we uncover profound theological truths about Jesus Christ and the fulfillment of scripture. Through these words of Jesus' he also addresses our spiritual condition as we seek to satiate a spiritual longing and desire deep within.

AWARENESS Before listening reflect on what you already know or understand about topics we'll cover in the episode.

- Think of a time when you were thirsty. What was that experience like?
- Can you think of stories in the Bible or passages of scripture that talk about thirst?



LISTEN TO THE EPISODE: [I Thirst](#)

READ [John 19:28-37](#)

REFLECTION After listening, consider the following questions:

- Think about other passages or Bible stories that mention thirst or drinking. What is the significance of thirst or drinking in scripture? Identify biblical stories where Jesus calms water or God controls the water; what do we learn about God through these associations with water?
- Describe a time when you were thirsty. How did it feel? How did it affect you physically, emotionally, intellectually, and/or spiritually? The biblical writers often use thirst as a metaphor for spiritual longing for God. What does the physical experience of thirst and drinking reveal to you about spiritual longing and Jesus' offer of living water in passages like [John 4:10-15](#) and [John 7:37-38](#)?
- In *Thank God it's Friday*, author and pastor William Willimon observes, "*It's God's difference from our expectations for gods that makes God hidden to us. We are blinded to God on the cross by our assumption that if there were a true God, that God would be somewhere a long way from us, not here before us, naked, exposed, and on a cross. I'm saying that Jesus' "I thirst" is another way of revealing God's utter self-giving availability to us*" (p. 74, Books). Reflect for a few minutes. Consider: What emotions are stirring in you in response to Willimon's words? Does anything challenge you? How does this square with your experience of God's involvement in our world? What about in your life?
- In segment 3, host Dave Bast said, "*the irony is that he who is the water of life now on the cross is dry and thirsty...Jesus is still thirsty for us to come to him, and he is the one who quenches our eternal thirst.*" And in her book *The Seven Last Words from the Cross*, Fleming Rutledge writes, "*...the One from whose being flows the gift of the water of eternal life—this is the One who is dying of a terrible thirst on the Cross for the love of his lost sheep*" (p. 57). What does it mean to you that God is thirsty for you?

RELATED PASSAGES for further study

[Isaiah 55:1-3](#), [Psalm 42:1-2](#), [John 4:1-26](#)

CONCLUSION

Fill a glass with water. As you drink it, read and reflect on [Isaiah 55](#). Reread the quotes from William Willimon, Dave Bast, and Fleming Rutledge. Reread [John 19:28-30](#). Journal or simply write notes about your thoughts and reflections as you go. As you finish drinking your water, pray from the words you wrote.

<https://groundworkonline.com/episodes/i-thirst>

Printed on January 5, 2025