



“More Than Water”

“He that drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; but, the water I shall give him will become in him a **well of water** springing up into eternal life” (John 4:14-15). These words were spoken by Jesus to a Samaritan woman he met while resting at the village well. A village well at Sychar. **A well, much like the three wells that you are digging.**

First: Our question then, becomes, When does water become “more than water?” How does water become “more than water?”

What could be more important than water? Well, you can't live without water. Yes, that is right; you can live 3 weeks without food –but, only 3 days without water. Hospitals use bags of water hanging from poles to keep fragile patients alive and hydrated (as they say) –and help bring them back to health. Water and life go together. When astronomers look for possible life in the universe, the first thing they look for is water.

We celebrate today the raising of over \$15,000 as a mission project in memory of Darrell Chumard to dig more than 3 wells in villages like Sychar. Each well will provide water for 1,000 people. Yet, what has happened with this project –this mission for Christ, is much larger than that. Much larger than that. To find out what has happened here, we must go back to the well at Sychar.

When does water become “more than water?” How does water become “more than water?” What has happened to us as a consequence of digging water-wells. In the doing of our project, for the love of a friend –we hit far more than the water we were digging for. What is this water, that is more than water?

Let's go to the well and see what Jesus says. Hear Him say, “ He that drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water I shall give him will become in him a well of water springing up into eternal life.” Jesus said that to the Samaritan woman standing by the village-water-well at Sychar.

Jesus is saying:

1. “This water doesn't come from that well.”
2. This water is for “thirsty hearts.” Don't you think, that is, at least, part of why we started this well-digging thing in the first place. I certainly think so. Something in our hearts needed to do this.
3. “This water can be shared and shared, and shared.” This is a well that cannot go dry. It goes on, and on, and on” –from one person to another, to another, to another. The word He used was “Eternal.” Nothing can stop it. Nothing. So, what was it that prompted us to dig these three wells? What? Well, our love for a man named Darrell to begin with. Then, our love for thirsty people **we have never met**. Was it not Jesus who said “Love one another as I have loved you?” As the Bible so aptly says, “Through having trusted in Me, he still continues to speak, even though he is dead” (Heb. 11:4). I'll say it another way, “Don't expect to march into the future without Darrell.” That's nonsensical. Sure, “He continues to speak.” Why be surprised? Eternal!

You cannot stop this water; it is eternal. Yes, we have dug three wells, only to find that we have struck something that is “more than water” –as a result of our being willing to dig, we struck water that is “more than water.”

Second: We all need water; however, we need this water more. This water has become “more than water.”

“Jesus answered and said to her, Whoever drinks of this well-water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water that I give them, well never thirst.” Yes, water that is “more than water.” How did water become “more than water?”

What exactly has happen over the past two months as we have dug these three well? We gave, we dug –and we learned. We changed.

- * Sure, water is important; but the “heart to give it” is a thousand times more important.
- * To feel the hunger of the hungry and share your own lunch, to share what you already have is a thousand times more important than the lunch itself.
- * The “spirit of a thing” is the “heart & the true substance of it.”

So it is that Jesus said, “the water I shall give him will become in him a well of water springing up into eternal life.” “Christ in you is the **hope** of glory’ (Colossians 1:27). People who have the heart of Christ in them become “water to the world.” They become hope. People who drink that water are never thirsty. In the digging of wells for Christ, for other thirsty people --this water has become “more than water.”

Third, We must remember that Christ is the water; but, He expects us to dig the wells. (Ps. 84:5-6).

“Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also fills the pools.”

The Valley of Baca is a desert valley, a treacherous, abandoned valley –like “Death Valley.” We have all had those hot, dry, barren places in our lives. You can do one of two things when you get there –and, you will get there. You can leave a warning –or you can dig a well for the next traveler. There are so many ways to dig wells.

Sometimes, people need their bodies healed. Sometimes, they need their soul and spirit healed. Sometimes, they need their minds and hearts healed. Yet, there is always this water that is “more than water” that can help. Sure! “He leads me to the still water where he restores my soul” (Psalm 23). In the Greek language it is He restores my “psychological.”

I had one of the sweetest ladies in our Washington State church; the finest Christian heart you could ever hope to meet. Yet, she would end up in the hospital with depression time after time. I began to realize that if I intended to be helpful to this lady who knew more Scripture than I did, I would need to gain skills I didn’t have. This was not a spiritual problem. So, I sold my antique tractors to help pay for a Masters Degree in Clinical Psychology. I have successfully helped about 100 people through major depression since. In God’s work, all the work must be done. So, could a well-driller do the work of Christ? You bet! A builder, a doctor, nurse, a PA, an engineer, a farmer, a bus driver, a carpenter, a teacher, a scientist, a truck driver, Moms and Dads. Do your work for Christ as “well-diggers.”

There are different ways to dig a well. Find a way to dig a well. If the only thing we’ve got is “tacking up warning signs” –people will want to avoid us like a desert. Dig a well, where the water is “more than water.” Instead of being a desert, help other people across the desert.

Mark 9:41 “For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, shall not lose his reward.” May the good continue! Cub Scout Pack 30 of the Five Rivers Counsel helped in this project. So, do you see what I see? I see another generation of “well-diggers” for our thirsty world. I see young boys and girls who want to do good. I see another generation who can understand the thirst of others –others, they have never met. I see good in the world. When you see “good in the world” -you have seen God in the world. Surely, this water is “more than water.”

We all go through these hot, dry, desert places –we can either leave a well or a warning. It’s up to us.

Fourth, water can never stay in one place. It spreads, it flows, it goes places. It joins up with other water.

You can’t stop water I remember something Jim Lyon (one of Mary Lyon’s sons, and an excavating contractor) once told me, “Kenny, you can’t stop water; you have to accommodate it.” You can’t stop God. This is the water that has become “more than water.”

When water becomes “more than water” you cannot stop it. It won’t stop with one well, two wells, three wells... No, not this water. This water that is “more than water.”

I see people who have worked together: Two churches, a hunting camp, friends, family, a scout pack –all at a time when no one is together –and fewer people than ever actually like each other. **Well, I see people who are determined to change that.** People who decided to dig-wells instead of argue. You can’t stop water; you can’t stop God! Sure, as Jesus said, water can be “more than water.” You can only divide this water for so long –and it will go back together. I’m telling you, there are people working their heads off to divide the country, communities, families, friends, and churches. We’re not going to let them **because we’ve got the water that is “more than water.”**

People from Maine to Florida, to Ohio, the Carolinas, from New Jersey to California, to Colorado, to Delaware, West Virginia, Kentucky, Maryland –and of course Pennsylvania and New York –came together to dig wells. The whole country is full of “good-hearted people.”

The wonder of this experience is as much in the “more than water,” than in the water itself. Water on the move; water that is not divided. After all, what good is water, if we don’t have “**more than water?**”

Fifth, water has power –and the water that is “more than water” has more power. This water is the very heart of the church. People can’t live without water. Surely, the church cannot live without this water –this “Christ in your heart water.” This water that will “never forsake you” –or, never leave you “high and dry.” It brings people together for good things. It heals broken hearts. It lifts fallen spirits. It never runs dry. And, it is eternal –it flows eternal. The power of good does not stop. This is when water becomes “more than water.” It is good water for all of us to drink. I don’t see what keeps the church from drinking more of it. It is the best water you could ever hope for.

Remember, you don’t have to own a drilling-rig to dig the “more than water” water-wells for other people to drink from. Never stop digging wells. The real miracle, and wonder, and hope that I see here today is the “more than water.” The “more than water” in the hearts of people, that would cause them to “rise up” and dig 3 water-wells for 3,000 people, who they don’t know, in the first place.

Never stop digging wells –for your family, for your friends, for your neighbors, for your church, for your world –that God loves so much!. Help people you don’t know –you’ll be doing the work of **the Christ** who you do know.

“He said to me: It is done. I am the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of life” (Rev. 21:6). Surely, this water is “more than water.”

What gives Eternal value to water is not the water itself –**but, the heart that is compelled to dig the well.**

“Then the Angel showed me the river of **the water of life**, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God, and of the Lamb” (Rev. 22:1).

I believe that when people care, when they follow and listen to their hearts, “water as clear as crystal flows from the throne of God.” And water becomes “**more than water.**” Surely, this is what we have seen here today.

I wrote the following poem with the idea that the water Christ gives is “more than water”:

SUMMER BROOK

by Rev. Ken Marple, M.A.

The brook is never silent; it chatters all the day
And sings a song through night-watch, it has so much to say.
It travels through a snowbank, a mile of icy, crystal mall,
Careless, carefree, on the falseness of a January thaw.
Committed in the springtime to carry off the rain
Of gutter, roof, and dooryard, and then the farmland drain.
The summer brook's for Bobby, the season school is out;
It takes time then for friendship and traps for him a trout.
Lazy in the summer, mighty in the spring,
Busy with the autumn rain, a lonesome winter string.
The autumn brook is here again and must be on its way;
Soon ice and snow will stop her, she knows she dare not stay.
So Bob became a sailor, to range the whole world wide;
The brook could not forget him, and searched with each new tide.
Thus it ran to find him, just where his ship did lay;
Somewhere in brackish water upon the Chesapeake Bay.
Yet, still and always with him, the brook turned myriad bend,
To mingle with the waters of a thousand distant friends.
It found him at the gunnel, reflecting in the dark,
Not knowing at the moment, she'd come to float his bark.
He felt her lifting spirit beneath the steel-clad deck!
But knew she must return again to summer school-boy beck.
In gutter stream of John Brown's roof,
down the drive, under fence, to splash and foam,
A friend is always working, to find us, lift us, carry us home.

Water becomes “more than water” when people decide to get together, and heal, and help –rather than sit on the sidelines and criticize, complain, and gripe. It doesn't take a genius to point out a desert. When we start to “dig wells” instead of “leaving warnings,” that's when we're following Christ. **We've got water, that is “more than water.”**