Come Thirsty: Max Lucado Study Theme & Title: Thirsting After Righteousness
Scripture: Matthew 5:6 / John 7:37-38; Pastor Bob Vale; April 26th, 2015

Biblical Focus: Matthew 5:6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”

Scripture Lesson: John 7:37-38 “On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him."


Saturday Worship Service:
Hymn of Praise: # 733 Come We That Love The Lord
Praise Chorus: All who are thirsty
Hymn of Response: # 694 Come Ye Thankful People Come.

Sunday Traditional: 8:30 a.m.
Hymn of Praise: # 733 Come We That Love The Lord
Prayer Hymn: # 177 He Is Lord
Hymn of Response: # 694 Come Ye Thankful People Come.

Sunday Contemporary: 11:00 a.m.
Praise Song # 1: Mighty To Save:
Praise Song # 2: All who are thirsty:
Praise Song: # 3 Grace Like Rain:
Praise Song: # 4 Hungry:
Illustration: Hungry, Hungry, Hungry! Have you ever been in your home and found yourself hungry for something? I mean really hungry? You don’t know if you want something that is salty, sweet, hot, cold, crunchy, chewy, cheesy, or as my wife does from time to time, she just craves some form of chocolate; any kind of chocolate.

Such as: (Milk chocolate, semisweet chocolate, hot chocolate, cold chocolate, or even luke warm chocolate. She is a fan of white chocolate, dark chocolate or really any color of chocolate. Nancy likes chocolate, Hershey Kisses, chocolate rabbits for Easter, chocolate ice cream for her birthday, chocolate pumpkins for Halloween, chocolate reindeer for Christmas, and a box of chocolate for Valentine’s Day is her favorite. Her favorite candy bars are Kit-Kat, Snickers, Milky Way, Reese’s Peanut butter cups, and anything Hershey’s from Pennsylvania. Nancy holds stock in both Russell Stover’s and the South Bend Chocolate Factory…my wife loves chocolate!!! (I just thought I would throw that in this morning for your entertainment.)

Back to being Hungry: You look in the refrigerator…even in the far back of the refrigerator and don’t find much. You look in the cupboards and don’t find anything good. You even search the freezer for anything that you can put in the microwave quickly. Then you start to consider some sort of delivery food such as pizza delivery or Chinese takeout. You are just Hungry, Hungry, Hungry!!

Have you ever been that kind of hungry?

Our souls are like that from time to time. There are times in our lives when we are just hungry for spiritual nourishment. Our hearts get restless for a deep hunger and thirst for God in our lives. Have you been there? I have.

If we don’t find spiritual nourishment for our soul, then we become weak and malnourished in our spirit. We become stressed, stretched and strained in the midst of our busy lives. We need that spiritual food to feed our craving souls.
I think of Moses leading close to a million people in the desert wilderness for 40 years. He was responsible to find them food and water, which he took very seriously. The people were not afraid to complain about the lack of food and water.

Moses prayed to God asking for food and water for his people. God certainly came through.

(Exodus 16:13-16):
1. Manna on the desert floor as they woke up each morning.
2. Quail lying dead on the ground for them to eat.
3. Water came out of a rock when it was struck by Moses.

Nehemiah 9:13-15 (Moses): "You came down on Mount Sinai; you spoke to them from heaven. You gave them regulations and laws that are just and right, and decrees and commands that are good. 14 You made known to them your holy Sabbath and gave them commands, decrees and laws through your servant Moses. 15 In their hunger you gave them bread from heaven and in their thirst you brought them water from the rock; you told them to go in and take possession of the land you had sworn with uplifted hand to give them.”

The point here is that God provided for their physical needs of hunger and thirst.

Even when God was giving them free food, some “stiff necked” people were disobeying and being greedy. They were taking more than they could eat. By the next morning, the manna that was not consumed was rotten and being eaten by maggots. (Greed, greed, greed!!!)

1. We live in one of the most blessed places on the planet as far as food and water goes. The United States is the breadbasket of the world in many ways. We also live in the great lakes area of the world, which comprises 20% of all the fresh water in the world. So hungering for physical food is not a major concern for us.
2. It is very important for us to realize that all of us are hungry for something in our lives. (Not necessarily food related.)

3. **Soul Food:** I believe we long to fill our soul and life with something.
   a. The question is….what will you fill it with?
   b. Things of the world or the things of heaven?

4. Paul talks about this to the church in Philippi about people filling their life with worldly things rather than spiritual things. 
   **Philippians 3:18-19** “For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

5. Are we a people who long to fill our lives with righteousness and the good things of God? Or are we only interested in worldly things? Such things as: fishing, playing racquetball, singing & playing guitar, viewing television shows and news stations, eating good food, watching a good movie with popcorn on Friday nights, going to a sporting event every now and then, spending time with my wife and children, occasional long vacations to distant places. By the way, did I mention I really enjoy fishing? What fills our personal tank in life?

6. Please note that I really only mentioned what fills my personal tank in life. Please feel free to fill in the blanks in your own life.
   
   A. What is it that brings you joy and fulfillment in life? (Long Pause!) **What are those things?**

7. Now that you have considered those things….is God anywhere in the mix of filling your personal enjoyment tank?
A. Jesus said to us in the gospel of **Luke 6:21** “Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied.

1. I believe Jesus is talking about those who hunger for the things of God. We are blessed when we thirst for such things.

2. Jesus then turns things upside down a few verses down in Luke 6:25 “Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry.”

3. I believe these verses are talking directly to us today; to the people of the United States of America; Christian and non-Christian alike.

   a. **Listen to me carefully people:** We live in a land of plenty where a person can immerse themselves in nearly any hobby or interest known to man. Most of them good and wholesome, yet some of them perverse and destructive.

   b. We have filled our personal tanks of interest so much with food, lust, business, possessions, materialism, outward appearance of fashion, travel, and things that help us feel good about ourselves that there is little to no room left for God or the thirst for righteousness. (**Let me repeat that**)

4. If I am not talking about you, then I am truly sorry, perhaps I am only talking about myself. I have to honestly ask the question…I am I just playing the “American Business and Materialism Game” with God. Is that what my life is about?

5. If you want to know if I am talking about you or not then do this…look at your check book, credit card, debit card and bank statements. Where are you spending your money!!! Follow the money trail. Are you spending your money on the things of God or the things of YOU? (The Bible clearly says in Matthew 6:21, “Where your treasure is there your heart will be.”)
6. **What is your treasure?** Where is your heart? Are you thirsting for God and righteousness in your life? Or thirsting only to fill your belly and be comfortable in life with possessions and status?

7. Maybe you want more of God and righteousness in your life…but you’re stuffed full with other things. (*Check the money trail.*)

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B. **So what should we be hungering for if Jesus tells us in the sermon on the mount, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”** *(Matthew 5:6)*

1. Love the Lord your God with all your heart.
2. Love your neighbor as yourself.
3. Thirst to be a righteous person of good will & deeds.
4. Be a person of Prayer.
5. Be a person of study.
6. Be a person of Patience.
7. Be a person of Love.
8. Be a person of Peace.
9. Be a person of Reconciliation.
11. Be a person of happiness & NOT gloom and negativism.

   *(Why is it that I find some Christians so negative and depressed?)* What kind of witness & life is that?

12. Be Like this guy! *(Show picture)*
If we call ourselves Christians...then Jesus is our example. Do you know why Jesus is carrying the lamb? The lamb is probably hurt & needs attention. Perhaps it has a broken leg and the shepherd carries the lamb until it is better. In this way the lamb and the shepherd get very close during this time. (Perhaps it is OK to be broken before the Lord, so you can be drawn closer to God.)

C. As we read the gospels and learn about Jesus, we can see the attributes of his life to follow.

1. (Attributes of Jesus: Righteous, loving, peaceful, graceful, compassionate, caring, humble, patient, longsuffering, merciful, gentle, meek, kind, strong, courageous, holy, perfect, prayerful, submissive to the will of His father in heaven, obedient, divine anger, joyful, sensitive to others, and divine anger towards injustice and hypocrisy.)
D. **We cannot become righteous on our own.**

1. **We need divine help to become righteous.** Many times we think we need to go out and do something to become righteous, when it is a combination of heart, soul and action. (Not only action.)

**Illustration:** When I was growing up my father taught me two things that stay with me to this day:

1. If it seems too good to be true…it probably is. Don’t be fooled by scam artist trying to sell you a treasure for a nickel.
2. You get what you pay for.
3. There is no such thing as a free lunch. Someone is paying somewhere.

What my father was trying to teach me was that hard work is what will get me through life and reward me in the end. These are good life lessons.

But these life lessons conflict with my understanding of God’s grace, which is absolutely free and I don’t have to work to receive His grace. God’s free gifts to us run counter to the three wisdom quotes my father was trying to teach me.

Does your work ethic interfere with your understanding of God’s free gift of Grace?

a. When we begin to play the game of only “Righteous Acts” striving to make us holy or righteous, then our relationship with God becomes “Works Based” rather than “Grace Based.”

2. King David asked God to create in him a pure heart and restore a righteous spirit in him. **Psalm 51:10** “Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”
3. David was smart enough to know that we are a fallen people, only God can help us in our effort to become perfect as his son Jesus is perfect.
4. God can help us develop a hunger for Righteousness in our lives.

E. **Jesus is the Answer**: Could it really be that simple?
   1. Simply having a relationship with Jesus Christ can place us on the path towards a life of thirsting for righteousness?
   2. Jesus is the source of everything we need. In John 3:37 Jesus says, “If anyone thirst, let him come after me and drink.”

In closing, do you remember the story in the gospels of Jesus speaking to the woman at the well? Jesus made an outlandish claim to her. “whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water I will give him will never thirst again. The water I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life.” (John 4:13 & 14)

Like the woman at the well we recognize our need for living water from God. I encourage you to drink deeply and to drink often from Jesus’ well.

**Let’s pray,**
Heavenly father, help us to be both hungry and thirsty for your righteousness in our lives. Not to simply live for our own glory and satisfaction, but for your glory and goodness. Help us to see that “You must increase and we must decrease.”

**Wisdom Quote:** “If you live by the thought that Jesus is your co-pilot in life…please land the plane and trade places with God.” You are much better served in life if God is the pilot rather than the co-pilot.

**Benediction:** May God bless you today. May you be a people filled with love, goodness and joy. May the Lord walk with yourcomings and goings. May God’s hand of protection be upon you until we meet again. Amen.
Mighty To Save; By Ruben Morgan and Ben Fielding

Verse # 1  Everyone needs compassion, Love that’s never failing
D                          C                                                      G                                                      Em
Let mercy fall on me; Everyone needs forgiveness.
D                          C                                                      G
The kindness of a Savior.  The hope of nations.

Chorus:
G                                      D                                              C                 G
Savior He can move the mountains, My God is might to save
Em                              D        G                                            D
He is mighty to save.  Forever Author of Salvation.
C                            G                        Em                            D
He rose and conquered the grave, Jesus conquered the grave.

Verse # 2  So take me as You find me, all my fears and failures.
D                      C                                               G
Fill my life again. I give my life to follow
Em                              D                    C  D   C  D
Everything I believe in; Now I surrender

Bridge:  Shine your light and let the whole word see; we’re singing
C                  G                                      D Em                      C                                     G
For the glory of the risen King; Jesus; Shine your light and let the
D Em                      C                                     G                      D
whole world see, we’re singing for the glory of the risen King.

Road Map: Verse # 1; chorus; Verse # 2; chorus; Bridge; Chorus
All Who are Thirsty

D
All who are thirsty
    F#m
All who are weak
    G
Come to the fountain
    Em   D   G
Dip your heart in the streams of life
    D2
Let the pain and the sorrow
    F#m
Be washed away
    G2
In the waves of his mercy
    Em   D   G
As deep cries out to deep
(and we sing)

D - D2 – Dsus-D G
Come Lord Jesus come
(repeat 3 times)

D - D2 – Dsus-D G
Holy Spirit come
(repeat 3 times)
    Em   D   G
As deep cries out to deep
(repeat 2 times)

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Words and Music by Brenton Brown and Glenn Robertson
Grace Like Rain / by Todd Agnew

Verse 1
C#m     A     E     B     C#m     A     E--B
Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me.
C#m     A     E     B     C#m     A     E     B
I once was lost but now I'm found was blind but now I see so clearly

Chorus:
C#m     A     E     B
Hallelujah; Grace like rain falls down on me
C#m     A     E     B     C#m
Hallelujah; All my stains are washed away; They're washed away
C#m---A---E----B

Verse 2
C#m     A     E     B     C#m     A     E--B
Twas grace that taught my heart to fear and grace my fears relieved
C#m     A     E     B     C#m     A     E----B
How precious did that grace appear, the hour I first believed

Verse 3
C#m     A     E     B
When we've been there, ten thousand years
C#m     A     E--B     C#m     A
bright shining as the sun,    we've no less days
E     B     C#m     A     E----B
To sing Your praise, than when we'd first begun
Hungry (Falling on my knees)
Kathryn Scott

C                      Am7                  G                      F
Hungry, I come to you for I know you satisfy
C                      Am7                  G                      F
I am empty, but I know your love does not run dry
G                      F/A                  G/B                    F
and so I wait for you so I wait for you.

C                      Fmaj7
I’m falling on my knees
C                      Fmaj7
offering all of me
C                      Fmaj7                  C
Jesus, You’re all this heart is living for.

C                      Am7                  G                      F
Broken, I run to you for your arms are open wide.
C                      Am7                  G                      F
I am weary, but I know Your touch restores my life.
G                      F/A                  G/B                    F
and so I wait for You so I wait for You.