

Come to the Waters

[Isaiah 55:1-9](#)

There is a local Christian radio station that has initiated a campaign for ordinary people to do small kindnesses for strangers. The program is called “The drive-thru difference.” Basically, you download a positive note from the radio station’s website, letting someone know that God loves them and it explains the program of how the person in front of them wanted to show kindness without any strings attached. What you do is pay for your order and the order of the person behind you, and then you leave this note for the cashier to pass to the person with his/her order. Imagine having a rough day, running late (which explains why you are going through a drive-thru for fast food in the first place) and you receive a nice note instead of a request for money. Little things can often make the biggest difference.

The prophet Isaiah seems to be saying something similar when he says, “everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat!” Imagine that – inviting those with no money to come, buy and eat. It sounds silly really. No merchant that wants to stay in business long will offer food for free. Yet the prophet goes on to explain there are more kinds of food than the physical, and there are more types of nourishment than just of the body. Come to the waters – cleanse your souls and walk with God. Feed your spiritual being as well as your physical.

Some of these words should sound very familiar. Jesus said, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me,” (John 7:37). Jesus’ encounter with the Samaritan woman took place at a well. Daily, women would come with water jars to fill for the day’s use. [Read John 4:10-15] The woman asks Jesus to give her the

living water, and in turn she becomes the first evangelist to a shunned people. Suddenly it became evident that the living water was a feast for her thirsty soul and she was included within the household of God. She did not need to meet minimum qualifications or pass a test. The Messiah was offering her living water to feed her soul so that she would never thirst again.

Jesus referred to himself as the bread of life. He was making people aware of their spiritual hunger, but he was also providing the food they so desperately needed. Times were difficult. Despair was rampant. Roman soldiers were always in sight, making sure everyone knew the penalty for stepping out of line for any reason. People were routinely beaten or killed – they were in essence prisoners in their own land. Hope was

virtually non-existent. People simply didn't have much hope in anything except trying to survive another day.

Then we have this man from Galilee telling people that there is hope; that God cares for them, that he had come as the Messiah to take away the sins of the world. Jesus was reminding everyone, both Jews and Gentiles, that spiritual food was available in abundance. Jesus was telling people to come to him and ease their burdens. In the midst of despair, Jesus shined as the light in a dark world. Even in the darkest times, joy can spring forth as we remember to feed our spiritual selves.

So how is it with your soul? John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, would regularly meet in small groups with others who had caught the fire of spreading the gospel to the least, the last and the lost. When these groups would get together the first thing that was asked of each person was, 'how is it with your

soul?’ So I ask you the same question – how is it with your soul?

Do we take time to nourish our souls? Do we cram in prayer time while driving in traffic or standing in grocery lines?

Do we take time to study God’s word and meditate on its message? Do we take time to listen for God’s direction in our lives? Are we remembering our Creator in our everyday life?

It’s not an easy thing to do. We can easily get caught up in pressures placed on our day that we forget we have a Messiah who is saying, “Come to the waters. Feed your weary souls.”

Today is Communion Sunday during this season of Lent.

We are preparing ourselves for the Easter season as we take time to pause and remember Christ’s sacrifice for us. We have heard the words of the communion liturgy so many times we may not even be hearing the message. Jesus is taking bread, blessing it

and telling us to ‘take, eat, this is my body broken for you.’ He then took a cup of the fruit of the vine, blessed it and told his disciples as he tells us to drink from the cup, as this was his blood, shed for our sins. For an outsider, this sounds very strange. It only makes sense when we accept that Jesus is referring to our spiritual selves and the need to nourish them. By using ordinary elements of bread and wine, Jesus was helping his disciples, and us by extension, to realize the spiritual food that is so necessary for our souls.

Yet many of us are content to starve our souls. We see many fall into despair as they lose their focus on their Creator and can only see the difficulties around them. If you recall the story of Peter walking on the water toward Jesus, Peter was successful as long as he fixed his eyes on Jesus. The minute Peter turned away and started looking at the waves around him,

he began to sink. Are we looking toward Jesus or are we focusing on the waves around us? Are we finding time to commune with the Messiah as we walk through the storms of life?

I seem to be asking a lot of questions today. I think the season of Lent presents the opportunity for soul-searching and pondering these types of questions. As we come together for communion today, let us pause and listen for God's message to us. Take time to pray either in your seats or at the altar rail. We take communion together as this body of Christ so that together we can reflect on Jesus' sacrifice for us. We pause to listen for God's guidance so that we too can keep our eyes fixed on Jesus as we journey through the storm. Amen.