

John 19:28-30; Psalm 69:16-21; I Thirst I. Proving His Humanity II. Alleviating that Thirst

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, thirst is one of the most common and pressing needs that mankind shares. We can make it weeks without food- but only a few days without water. To be thirsty and to have no water is truly excruciating. Water is so common in our context- all we need to do is turn on the tap and we can have all that we want. But that is not true in many places today- water scarcity is a real threat to some. Wars have even been fought over water rights and access. Today we come to the shortest of the saying of Jesus on the cross- I Thirst- which is only one word in the Greek. Why of all the things that Jesus said and did during His life- why is it important for us and our faith- that we know this fact- that on the cross, Jesus said these words. I Thirst! Today we consider this theme: Jesus Christ thirsts so that we might be satisfied.

### **I. Proving His Humanity**

In our first point we will see how His thirsting on the cross proves His humanity. Last week we saw that as Jesus suffered, the sky turned black. In the darkness Jesus cried out to God- why have you forsaken men. This being forsaken by the Father is one of the clearest points of proof- teaching that Jesus was suffering hellish agony on the cross. This suffering was hidden from our eyes- as the Son experienced the denial and rejection of the Father. Now this suffering of being forsaken was the extreme suffering of His soul- it was the spirit of Jesus that was being crushed as the Father forsook His son. But as we find today, the suffering of Jesus on the cross was a suffering of both body and soul. So today we find Jesus still on the cross- as He was born of a virgin and laid in a manger- as He took on the body of mankind from his mother in the womb- so also this same body now is nailed to a tree- dying! Not only did Jesus weep as He stood by the tomb of a friend- His own body would soon be laid in the grave as well. When Jesus said that He was thirsty, He was again proving that He had a body that could thirst! As Heb. 2:14 says, He shares in our flesh and blood. Jesus was made to be like us in all things- and that includes having a body that can suffer and thirst! Not only did Jesus experience hunger as He did in the desert after fasting 40

days, Jesus also suffered extreme thirst. So even now- on the cross- He thirsted in his human body. Now this was not the first time that Scripture records the thirst of Jesus. Lets read from John 4:6-14. The woman at the well is asked for water- but in a dramatic reversal Jesus tells her that He- Jesus- has access to a better kind of water. There is some foreshadowing here- because as Jesus asks for a drink- as Jesus asks for water- He is also able to provide living water. We will see more of this in our second point- but already in John 4 Jesus is making it clear that there is both a physical and a spiritual water- that although Jesus would be for a time in need of physical water; a time was coming when He would give living water- spiritual water to His people. But for now- on the cross- Jesus remains thirsty. The fact is, being crucified was not only extremely painful, it was also a grueling process. It would last hours- and the thirst would be extreme. When your body loses fluid- as Jesus was bleeding and sweating- his tongue would have swollen and His mouth would have become dry like dust. Even as we read from Psalm 22 last week which says I am poured out like water- my heart is like wax, it is melted within my breast. My strength is dried up and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death. So as Psalm 22 reveals, not only was Jesus forsaken by God as we saw last week- His very body will be dried up- consumed with fever- and his mouth turned to dust. Perhaps some of you have witness this agonizing thirst as someone draws near to death. As their body starts to shut down and their tongue swells- how they still ask for water- they thirst even in the presence of impending death! Now this physical suffering is not a light thing- just as we learned last week- Jesus was suffering through hellish agony- applied to both His soul and His body. Hell is compared to a place of great torment for the body. As the rich man learned in Luke 16- his mouth was parched and he wished for someone to give him a drop of water to cool his tongue. Well, Jesus is suffering that kind of anguish as He suffers bodily. It is as if Jesus is becoming a dry and weary land in the flesh! Jesus is becoming a curse- even in His flesh! Now we need to embrace and believe this fact – that Jesus had a real, human body that was able to suffer. One of the reasons that the incarnation is such a pivotal truth is this- Jesus needed a body that could suffer! Since we are sinners

who sin in the flesh- we sin with our bodies- Jesus needed to live a perfect life- in the body! And since we deserve to go to hell in the flesh- with our bodies- Jesus needed to suffer on the cross- while sharing our human nature! By doing this, He delivers our bodies from hell! Think of it- since Jesus suffered in the soul and in the body- both our bodies and souls are set free- having been paid for by His precious sacrifice! We are redeemed- in the body- by His body! As the Catechism says- we belong- body and soul- to our faithful Savior- because He purchased our bodies as well as He suffered on the cross with His body! And not to get too far ahead of ourselves- on resurrection Sunday Jesus rose again- in the flesh- by way of the body! So that we can look forward to what Rev. 7:16 says- one day we will be raised when that last trumpet sounds. Those who have washed in the blood of Christ will never hunger or thirst- the Lamb will be their shepherd and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Did you catch that- when Jesus raises our bodies on that last day- we will never hunger nor will we thirst! So Rev. 7 basically says- Jesus suffered thirst on the cross so that we would never suffer thirst in the New Creation! Praise God that Jesus thirsted- suffering in the flesh- so that we might be spared from hell in the flesh and one day we might be raised to everlasting life in the flesh! Being thirsty is a sign- proof that we live in a fallen world- that we are needy, weary and worn. But Jesus takes on our need and deals with us graciously!

## **II. Alleviating that Thirst**

As we continue, back in John 19:28 we read that after Jesus knew that all things were finished- and in order to fulfill the Scriptures He said- I thirst. Jesus knew that everything was now fulfilled- the Father's will and plan- His good design being brought to completion. His active and passive obedience complete. Jesus knew that everything needed to be accomplished- so He said- I thirst. One word in the Greek- Dipso. This directly fulfills what we read from Psalm 69:21 as we read earlier, they gave me poison for food and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink. Every word of prophecy needed to be fulfilled- and every word uttered must be completed. So Jesus said- I thirst- and he was given sour wine to drink. Now this is not the first time that Jesus has been offered drink while on the cross. Turn to Mark 15. In

the parallel reading found in Mark 15 we find this: in Mark 15:23 they offered Jesus a drink of wine mixed with myrrh. This drink was a mild sedative- it was a drug that would lessen the pain and bring death quicker. But Jesus refused this first offer of wine and myrrh. However, after Jesus speaks of his thirst there is second drink offered. In Mark 15:36 someone gets sponge and dips it in sour wine- or a wine/vinegar mix. There was usually a drink for the roman soldiers on hand- and this drink may have been the one offered to Jesus. This is sour wine is offered to Jesus and Jesus takes it. This second drink would not alleviate his pain- but it would moisten his lips so that Jesus might speak with renewed vigor. His parched lips and swollen tongue receive a small and short comfort. After this drink, Jesus will endure to cry out and speak 2 more times. Note also the object used to bring this drink to Jesus' lips- as Mark 15:36 says it was a reed- John 19 says a hyssop plant. The very same twisted shrub used to spread blood and smear blood on doorposts on the first Passover of Ex. 12 is now used to bring the blood of grapes to the lips of Jesus as His blood runs down. A hyssop plant covered in blood was used on the day God passed over the sins of His people and delivered them out of bondage- from the house of slavery! As Hebrews 9 says- without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness of sins! So the blood of Jesus is shed- real, human blood- in order to secure the complete forgiveness of all our sins! So that we in our sins might be passed over- the judgement that was due us was placed on Him!

Getting back to what John 19 says about Jesus' knowledge- that everything needed to be fulfilled- that everything was finished- it was then that Jesus said I thirst. Now we have to keep the big picture in mind here. Back in Luke 22 when Jesus was praying in the garden, He prayed these words- Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. We saw this a few week ago, that Jesus was referring to the cup of God's wrath- sometimes called a cup of foaming wine as in Psalm 75. It was now, on the cross that Jesus drinks this cup to the last! It is as if Jesus now sees and understands- there is no other way. Father, I will drink from cup of wrath that I must drink. He receives it because all things must be fulfilled- knowing that only after He drinks this cup to the dregs- only then will the justice of God be satisfied and the wrath

poured out for the forgiveness of our sins! His suffering must be complete! In order to fulfill all things- in order to secure our salvation- Jesus drinks the cup of Father's wrath and thus fulfills His ministry and calling! What did Jesus truly thirst for? Only wine- or did Jesus hunger and thirst for righteousness? He had lived His life perfectly- desiring to and actually obeying His Father's will in all things! Even submitting to this suffering! This suffering and thirsting that He endured- was it not a fainting and longing for the courts of God as Psalm 63 puts it. My soul earnestly seeks you- my flesh faints as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. Even now Jesus longs for the presence of His Father- as He thirsts for the things above! But there is even one more way in which this thirst will be satisfied. You see, the sour wine that Jesus receives is not enough to satisfy His longing desire. And that desire is to drink the wine of the New Kingdom- with God's people in the new creation- the Wedding Supper of the Lamb. It is that wine that Jesus looked forward to in Matthew 26. In Mt. 26 Jesus is celebrating the Passover with His disciples- as He institutes the first Lord's Supper. Now the passage of Matthew 26 needs to be understood- because in Matthew 26:29 Jesus said, I will not drink again the fruit of the vine until that day I drink it with you in my Father's Kingdom. So Jesus rightly had a desire- He longs to celebrate the wedding supper with His people. But did Jesus keep His word? Did Jesus break this promise when He drank wine on the cross- if He promised that He would not drink wine until He drank it in His Father's Kingdom? Well, we answer this question two ways. First of all, the wine that Jesus drank with His disciples was the wine of joy and gladness- new or good wine used to celebrate the Passover. The wine that was offered to Him on the cross was the cheap wine mixed with vinegar and water. So the kind of wine was different. But more importantly, in Matthew 26 Jesus said I will not drink the fruit of the wine with you until we drink it together in the Father's kingdom. On the cross Jesus was alone- all the sheep had been scattered. The wine of gladness will be shared between Jesus and His people only when He comes again in glory in His Father's kingdom. So Jesus did not lie in Mt. 26- but rather he spoke of His longing for a future celebration that will happen only after His humiliation is over and all things have been made new.

To conclude, the thirsting of Jesus on the cross proves the suffering of His humanity as well as the promise of a future celebration. Jesus died thirsty- in order that we might never thirst! He died without water- so that He might give His people living water! His thirst is proof that He suffered in the body for our sins- and the thirst of sin that leads to death is met with a gracious provision of abundant life! As Jesus said in John 7- if any man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink! Without water there is only death- but with Jesus our living water there is resurrection life and one day soon- the wedding supper of the Lamb! When that day comes, we will never thirst again! Indeed, those who believe in Jesus have a spring of living water within! Jesus thirsted- so that we might never be thirsty again!