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John 19:28
A Word of Distress—the Two “S’s”

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28 Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.” John 19:28

Just as I began my sermon last week, I want to recap what we have talked about for the last few weeks. Last Sunday I mentioned what Lent season is and what the purpose behind it is. Today, I would like to begin the sermon by giving you a recap of the words that we have gone through in our “Seven Mile Miracle” series. The first was “The Word of Forgiveness” - (Luke 23:34). That one in particular challenges me because Jesus said something that I usually don’t say when someone disappoints me or offends me. My initial reaction when someone disappoints me or offends me is not to ask for forgiveness or to forgive, but to say “Father, hit them right back as hard as you can because they knew exactly what they were doing.” I am challenged.

Then Jesus said to one of the criminals, “*Today you will be with me in paradise.*” - (Luke 23:43). “The Word of Salvation” was the second word on the cross. You know I don’t think like that. When I think of a person who will be in paradise, I think of someone who has spent their life doing good deeds and actions such as helping families who struggle, helping the homeless on the streets, feeding them, providing them a place to stay at nights, becoming a member of a church, going through a nine-month curriculum for confirmation, and *then* being able to enter paradise. But Jesus didn’t do that, He just told the thief - after his whole life of crime - that he would be in paradise with Him, with Jesus; very contradictory. Now I am thinking that salvation is a gift that you can have and it doesn’t have to with my works at all; it’s something that can only be given by God.

But still, I am challenged.

Then Jesus on the cross was thinking about his mother. This leads me to the third word - “The Word of Relationship” - (John 19:26-27). How important was it for Jesus to let all the people know that being in relationship with one another is crucial in our

lives? Jesus was dying on the cross and what was He thinking about? He was thinking about others...that challenges me.

And lastly, last week I shared "The Word of Abandonment" – (Matthew 27:46), in which Jesus, in the midst of all He was passing through, asked God the Father to forgive them/us, gave a thief access to paradise, and directed the people who were desperately losing their hope while watching Him die to a direction of having a relationship among themselves and with God. On the cross, Jesus felt abandoned by His own father. I want you to think a little about this for a moment...I can never imagine myself turning my back on my own daughters...can you?

Well, for the next 15 minutes today I am going to share "The Word of Distress". But before continuing, let me define the word distress: it means sorrow or pain. So Jesus was in distress, after having been mocked, sentenced, and hanged to die, with blood all over his body and with excruciating physical pain. And the Bible says in John 19:28 "After this when Jesus knew that all was now finished (achieved: Original language), he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." Which, from my perspective, is definitely very ironic.

It is ironic because I am seeing here that the same voice who spoke the seasons to existence is thirsty; the same voice who told the Red Sea to fall apart is asking for water. How come the voice who commands the sea to be still... how come the same God through which all things were created through Him and for Him, how come *that* God is asking for water? John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." That is Jesus. Jesus, the one who said, "I am the living water." How come the *living water* is thirsty? Jesus is the One who was at Jacob's well, how could Jacob's well be dry...it does not make any sense to me. It's very confusing for me, and I don't know about you, but HOW CAN GOD BE THIRSTY?

I can understand myself when I'm thirsty, I drink a lot of water. I can understand you if you ask me for a drink because you are thirsty.... you know! Neither you nor me are God. But Jesus, He is God, and there He was - asking for water.

So let's figure out together what the purpose was behind Jesus saying, "I am thirsty". To give you more information, after the Roman soldiers mocked and beat Jesus, they gave Him the cross and ordered Him to go up the hill to Golgotha. Do you know the distance Jesus travelled carrying that cross? 650 yards up hill (six and a half

maria?" In other words, I know you are not talking to me. You know, most of the time we think that when the preacher is preaching they are talking to someone else. NOOOOO...I am talking to you...because we are all thirsty today. Everybody in this sanctuary today is thirsty. Some of you are thirsty because of stress, of afflictions, of depression, of success, of religion, of the pressures of Facebook, of Instagram.... and so much more. But let me clarify, to have thirst is not a sin at all; the problem is how you satisfy that thirst.

In conclusion, my friends, today I want to encourage all of you, including myself, to see Jesus, the Living Water on the cross, who said: "I *thirst*." With purpose, Jesus meant to communicate that you and I today are able to understand that He is the only one who can satisfy our thirst. He did not say that you will never thirst again...you are going to have days when you feel discouraged, lonely, and thirsty for something more.

I am talking about the thirst that just only Jesus can satisfy...whatever situation that you or your family may be in, the answer to it was on the cross and now He is alive.

What do you thirst for from God? (Which means your need)

Are you like the Samaritan woman who was ashamed to be seen by people and have thirst?

Are you that person who is satisfying your thirst in a wrong well?

Today is the day in which you and I can surrender all of our needs to that cross because all that Jesus said on that cross was to fulfill the scripture and give us the opportunity today to drink from His grace, righteousness, and love.

But Jesus, in His humbleness, surrendered His life to do His Father's will; He took that heavy beam and began to walk up the hill, carrying not only the beam itself, but also carrying our shame (my shame). And that changed the perspective I had on the phrase "I thirst". It changed because even if He was really physically thirsty, His focus was the cross...He cared for us, He suffered for us. I am not sure if this makes sense to you... but it made sense to me when I realized how shameful I have felt because of the mistakes that I have made in the past. Of course! You probably would not expect a pastor to say something like that, right? The question for you and for me this morning my dear friends is this: have you felt shame at least once in your life?

"I thirst" was the word from Jesus on the cross. Of course He was thirsty, but it was not the first time that the Bible in the Gospel of John registered that Jesus was thirsty. Let me give you another example from the Bible:

It is very interesting because Jesus had decided to go to a place but instead of going directly, He took a different route – a pathway where Jews were not accepted. I am talking about Samaria.

Last Sunday, I talked about the WHY's in our lives. ...Today I will refer to the WHY but because of Jesus. Why did Jesus go to Samaria? Why did He have to go to a place where the Jewish were not welcome? He was Jewish. Why did Jesus have to go to the cross? Why?

So, Jesus went to Samaria and He waited by the well for someone who could give Him water because He was thirsty. Jesus knew that a woman would come. And in the middle of the day, a Samaritan woman arrived to the well to take water out from it. Let me tell you something - that was not the tradition in Samaria, it was not common to take water out of the well at noon. The only reason this woman arrived at the well in the middle of a hot hour in the day was because she did not want to be seen by anybody; it was because she was ashamed to be seen by people. So she went in the middle of the day when she thought that nobody was there to draw water out because she was thirsty. She never imagined finding someone else by the well. And that person was Jesus...why? Because all that Jesus did in His life had a purpose; because all the words that He spoke on the cross-had a purpose.

Let me paint a picture of the scene: In John 4:7, Jesus said to the woman: *"Give me a drink."* She did not like that very much, and in verse 9 she responded to Jesus in a very sarcastic way. *"How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Sa-*

football fields) from Pilates palace to Golgotha. That is a lot of distance. You know that He fell and a person from the crowd offered Him a drink and He refused to take it. *"And they offered him wine with myrrh, but he did not take it."* (Mark 15:23) He refused to take it because He was focused on finishing what God the Father gave Him to do; He knew that if He accepted that drink, it would put him down before reaching the top of the mountain. In other words, Jesus's goal was to be crucified. But the text that we are looking at today takes place six hours after Jesus was crucified. During those six hours He said the words that I just said at the beginning of the sermon, but now He was thirsty. What I want you to understand today is that what happened on the cross, did not start on the cross and did not finish on the cross. The cross was pointing to the fulfillment of the scripture as the text says today.

So I call this sermon today "The two S's".

My first "S" is Struggle.

When Jesus said, *"I thirst"* it was not the physical thirst that you and I can experience. Everything that Jesus did had a purpose for our lives today and for the people who He was interacting with. The phrase *"I thirst"* was referring to the actions that had happened before to Jesus. Jesus struggled before He was arrested. On the Mount of Gethsemane Jesus struggled with the idea of dying. He asked His Father God if there was another way to do that. The Bible says that His sweat was like blood.

But unfortunately, there was no other way for Jesus to fulfill God's will than to die. So Jesus knew what was coming to Him, He knew that He would face suffering...He knew that the soldiers would beat Him and mock Him; He knew that nails would be hammered into His body; He knew that a crown of thorns would be placed on His head; He knew all the insults that He would receive from the people.

The second S is the S of "Shame".

After Jesus was beaten by the Roman soldiers, they gave Him a big and heavy beam to carry. The weight of this beam was more than 90 pounds. Imagine Jesus travelling 650 yards uphill, as I said, carrying the 90-pound weight of a heavy wooden beam. Jesus - the Prophet, the Messiah, the Redeemer, the person whom the disciples hoped would carry them out of Roman oppression, the great Leader (the revolutionary leader).

