

Thanksgiving

November 26,27, 2014 at St. Matthew, Port Washington, WI

Give Thanks for Water

Water. It is odorless, tasteless, color-less. It has no calories and yet doctors explain that you need to drink 8, 8oz glasses (about half a gallon) each day to stay healthy. If we go three days without it, we will die. It makes up, on average, about 60% of your body weight. If that percentage drops just one percent, your brain struggles to function and your body starts to shut down.

Who of us would guess that when you combine two standard gasses – hydrogen and oxygen – you end up with a liquid. And not just any liquid – a liquid that is absolutely essential for life on earth. A liquid that is in every living organism, as well as above, on and in the earth. I chuckled to read a scientific report which explained, “discovery shows that water has been prevalent in the universe for nearly its entire existence.” Well, of course, water has always been around. God made it when he created the world. The Bible never says exactly when God made water. In the second verse of the Bible, we hear that the Holy Spirit was hovering over the waters. In verses 6 and 7 of Genesis 1, we hear that God separated the waters above from the waters below. That’s the atmosphere. In verse 9, we learn that God separated the seas from the dry ground.

71 % of the earth’s surface is covered by water. Only 2.5% of all the water on the earth is freshwater, and 98.8% of that fresh water is in ice and groundwater. Less than 0.3% of all freshwater is in lakes, rivers. That means that all the water in the Great Lakes is not even 0.0075% of all the water on the earth.

Not only did God make the water, but he is still in control of it. Twice, he made water come out of rock for Moses and the Israelites. He divided the Red Sea and the Jordan River so the Israelites could get through. Jesus changed water into wine and, at another time, walked on water. God’s control of water is seen every day in the hydrologic cycle. Water falls to earth in the form of rain, snow, hail, fog or dew. Some water soaks into the ground where it waters the plants and then settles into springs. Some water flows into the rivers, lakes and oceans. From there, water evaporates into the air where water molecules form into clouds which return the water to the earth.

All known forms of life depend on water. It is essential to the many chemical processes that are constantly taking place inside your body. Water is fundamental to photosynthesis and respiration of plants. Tiny chemical factories inside each leaf use the sun’s energy to split off water’s hydrogen from oxygen. Hydrogen is combined with CO₂ to form glucose and release oxygen, which we need to breathe. Even the air we breath comes, in part, from water.

Nearly everything in the world shrinks as it gets cold, except water. God designed it so that when water freezes, it expands 9%. Since ice is not as dense as water, ice floats. Since ice floats, when rivers and lakes freeze, there is a layer of ice on the top. If water didn’t expand when it froze, then rivers and lakes would freeze from the bottom up. Then all the fish would die. But the fish stay healthy because God designed water to expand when it freezes.

Just think of the many ways that you will use water for your Thanksgiving celebration – to wash your hands, to baste the turkey, to mash the potatoes, make Jell-O, steam the vegetables, brush your teeth, wash the dishes, and on and on. Water is absolutely essential for our life.

I think that God also designed water to teach us something important. Just like we need water for our bodies to live, we need Jesus for our souls to live. Just as water is essential to life on earth, Jesus is essential to life in heaven. It makes perfect sense that the Bible talks about water as an illustration for salvation. “Water of life,” and “Water of salvation,” are common phrases.

- In Isaiah 12:3, God said, “With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.”
- In John 4, Jesus explained to the woman at the well that he wanted to give her living water. “Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”
- In John 7, Jesus announced in a loud voice, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.”
- That echoes Isaiah 55, “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters.”

- In Revelation 21, the Apostle John heard Jesus say, “To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life.”

And yet, for as important as water is for life, the Bible most often speaks about water in the sense of washing. The Old Testament priests had to wash themselves and their clothes before they could work at the temple. If an Old Testament believer became ceremonially unclean, part of the purification process was taking a bath. You can also think of Naaman washing in the Jordan River to get rid of his leprosy. Our sins are often described as dirty stains. We even talk about immoral acts as being dirty deeds. Without a doubt, we are dirty with sin. Our thoughts and our words are far from pure. Our actions aren't perfect either. We sin every day. Because of our sins, we are dirty to God.

- No wonder King David prayed in Psalm 51, “Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.”
- In Ezekiel 36:25, God said, “I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities.”
- In Hebrews 10, we are encouraged, “Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.”

Is it any surprise to you that God told us to use water for baptism? God promises that when water is applied to someone in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, he will bless that person.

- Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3, “No one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.”
- In Titus 3, we hear, “God saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.”
- In Ephesians 5 the Apostle Paul said that God is cleansing the church “by the washing with water through the word.”
- In Romans 8, St. Paul explained that in baptism, we are connected to Christ.

Baptism is like an unbreakable rope that ties you to Jesus. What happens to him, happens to you.

- Jesus died on the cross. Since you're connected to Christ, you also died. That means that through Christ, you were already punished for your sins. You are washed clean. Your dirty guilt is gone forever.

- Jesus rose from the dead. Since you're connected to Christ, you also will come back to life after you die.
- Jesus went into heaven. Since you're connected to Christ, you also will go to heaven.

It makes perfect sense that some of the last verses of the Bible say, “Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.”

On this national day of thanksgiving, and every day, thank God for the many, many blessings you enjoy everyday. May our worship this day fill us with such gratitude and appreciation for all that we have that we stop complaining so much. As you give thanks for your many, many blessings, say a special prayer thanking God for the often overlooked, taken-for-granted but essential blessing of water. Without water, we couldn't exist. Water is also a perfect reminder of the most important blessing of all – the forgiveness of sins and eternal life through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. For all of our blessings – for family, friends, clothing, shoes, shelter, turkey dinners, etc. – give thanks to the Lord for he is good; his love endures forever. Amen.

From LSI, Dec. 17, 2014 blog:

Astronomers associated with the European Space Agency's Rosetta space probe have been studying Comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko and have come to the conclusion that Earth's water couldn't have come here by way of comets. They found water on the comet, but it was the wrong kind.

Many scientists believe the Earth had water when it first formed but that it all boiled away, meaning the water we now have had to have come here from an outside source. The question is what brought this water. "Was it comets or was it something else?" asked Kathrin Altwegg of the U. of Bern in Switzerland, lead author of a study published in the journal Science. Altwegg thinks the "something else" may have been asteroids, but others disagree.

The Rosetta mission findings complicate not only the question of the origin of water on Earth but also what scientists generally believe about comets. Most astronomers have been sorting comets into two types: near ones they think came from the Kuiper Belt just beyond Pluto and far ones coming from something far away they call the Oort Cloud.

Previous research suggested that water on far-comets, such as Halley's comet, was too heavy to have been the source of water on Earth. But three years ago water on a near-comet was found to be just like Earth's water. Thus, astronomers assumed they had an answer to where Earth's water may have come from--from near Kuiper Belt comets. However, the comet the Rosetta mission studied is a Kuiper Belt comet, and the water on this comet proved to be heavier than Earth's.

That leaves scientists puzzled as to the origin of Earth's water. A NASA scientist thinks this study pretty much rules out comets while a U. of Maryland astronomer, although admitting to be startled by the findings, doesn't believe they eliminate comets completely. Other possible explanations--asteroids may have had more water on them "4 billion years ago" when the Earth supposedly formed or maybe Earth didn't really lose all the water it originally had.

So, here we have another illustration of how desperate main-

stream scientists are to explain nature and its origin without God, and yet nature keeps frustrating them. They are desperate enough to invent things like the [Oort Cloud](#), for which there is not the slightest molecule of evidence for its existence. The Oort Cloud can be found in the vocabulary of secular scientists only because something like it has to exist to account for the fact we still see comets, which are relatively short-lived phenomena, in a solar system of supposedly 4 billion-plus years in age. In truth, our most powerful telescopes have detected no evidence of this imagined birthplace of new comets. As for the [Kuiper Belt](#), some objects called KBO's (Kuiper Belt Objects) have been seen in the area which lies beyond Pluto, but these objects are too big to ever become nuclei of comets.

The easiest answer for why we see comets and why we have water on Earth is that they were created by God. Why should we believe that water and comets are merely accidents of nature? Creationists and other Bible-believers inappropriately continue to be the objects of sarcasm for maintaining their belief in a Creator. This is nothing new. The psalm writer once wrote, "**We have endured no end of ridicule from the arrogant, of contempt from the proud**" (Psalm 123:4).

But all this contempt will be forgotten when believers in Jesus welcome the Savior back on the Last Day to take us all to heaven. He came the first time to die for our sins and give us the promise of eternal life. He will come back the second time to make eternal life a reality for all believers. "**See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind**" (Isaiah 65:17).