

Good morning, church.

Good morning.

Today's scripture reading is from the book of John, chapter 4, verses 7 through 26.

A woman from Samaria came to draw water.

Jesus said to her, give me a drink.

For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

The Samaritan woman said to him, how is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?

For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

Jesus answered her, If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, Give me a drink, you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.

The woman said to him, Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep.

Where do you get that living water?

Are you greater than our father Jacob?

He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock.

Jesus said to her, everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.

The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water, welling up to eternal life.

The woman said to him, sir, give me this water so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.

Jesus said to her, Go call your husband and come here.

The woman answered him, I have no husband.

And Jesus said to her, You are right in saying I have no husband, for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband.

What you have said is true.

The woman said to him, Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet.

Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.

Jesus said to her, Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

You worship what you do not know.

We worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.

God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

The woman said to him, I know that Messiah is coming.

He who is called Christ.

When he comes, he will tell us all things.

Jesus said to her, I who speak to you am he.

Thanks, Jason.

Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, we just ask that you would meet us

with your word this morning, that you would allow your word by the power of your Holy Spirit to penetrate deep into our hearts.

Lord, that your word, the good news, the gospel of your son would well up in us as a spring of living water.

Lord, I pray for those of us who have been born again, for those of us who

have experienced this reality, Lord, that you would stir up the spring, Lord, that you would wake us up afresh with just satisfying words and realities of the gospel.

Lord, we're thankful again for who you are.

We ask that you would be honored and glorified in our hearts today as we listen and as I preach.

We pray all this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Just a random fact for you this morning.

Nobody has ever won the Super Bowl three times in a row.

There's been multiple teams that have won the Super Bowl three times.

The Browns are not one of them.

Spoiler alert.

That's my team.

We've won a lot of championships.

I think we even won three championships in a row.

They just don't call them Super Bowls.

But I think that they just recently voted to bring those into the official statistics of the NFL.

So we hung like six banners or something like that overnight, which was amazing.

But nobody's won in the Super Bowl era three Super Bowls in a row.

The Chiefs got close last year, but got stuffed by Nick Sirianni and the Eagles.

The question is why?

Why hasn't anybody?

There's been a lot of good teams, a lot of documentaries on good teams in the past recently as well.

Why hasn't anybody won three Super Bowls?

in a row.

Well, I think there's lots of reasons, but one of the reasons that a lot of players cite when they're asked about the difficulty of making it back to the championship and winning it again,

is that it's hard to maintain the hunger and the drive and the thirst to win after you've been there.

After winning one, and especially two, players begin to realize that winning the Super Bowl isn't all it's cracked up to be, and they kind of have a hard time manufacturing the drive and the hunger that it takes to do it again.

Even when you talk to freaks like Tom Brady, who won six Super Bowls, seven Super Bowls over his career, six with New England, one with Tampa Bay,

he talks about the need to come up with a new and a fresh reason to go after winning the Super Bowl again the next season.

So-and-so really disrespected me.

I've got to stick it to him.

And that was his motivation for the year.

It's hard to maintain that level of hunger and drive for something.

Have you, let me ask you this morning, have you lost your hunger?

Have you lost your thirst for something more in life?

Have you lost your thirst for something

Great.

Maybe not.

Maybe you're saying, nope, I'm hungry, I'm thirsty.

I'm very driven.

I'm getting up in the morning, bouncing out of bed in the morning, ready to go and ready to achieve great things.

Well, if that's you, then what is driving you?

Have you thought about it recently?

What is that drive, the motivation, that hunger and thirst for?

We're all driven by something.

We're all looking to satisfy a deep-seated longing and thirst.

And it may come out, that deep-seated longing and thirst may come out in different ways in each of us, but it's there.

We have an ache, we have a longing, we have a thirst for something more.

And we've been hearing from Jesus here in this passage that this longing is spiritual in nature.

And by God's grace, the good news is that spiritual longing that each of us have can be satisfied.

Not just one time, not just in a service, not just at a concert, not just at a one-time experience, but for forever.

It can be a spring of living water overflowing to eternal life.

So today we see here that that spiritual thirst is not... We're going to look at the negative today.

Next week we'll look at the positive.

But that spiritual thirst is not ultimately quenched through what we worship.

It's not quenched through where we worship.

It's not even quenched in how we worship, but it's ultimately quenched in who we worship.

Not the what, the where, or the how, but it's ultimately quenched in who we worship.

You'll notice that your notes in the bulletin do not reflect that statement.

I changed it somewhat, not last minute, but later in the week.

So the same material...

It's just worded a little differently.

So actually, the notes in the bulletin should help flesh out what we're saying here.

I've kind of included it in the slides, so you shouldn't get too lost.

First off, first thing we see in this passage is that our spiritual thirst is not quenched in what we worship.

In other words, we're prone to worship things, right?

And not just tangible things, but like even emotional and psychological things.

And these things are called idols.

And Jesus kind of points them out here at the beginning of the passage.

Look back at verses 16 to 18.

Jesus said to her, the Samaritan woman here, go call your husband and come here.

The woman answered him, I have no husband.

Jesus said to her, you are right in saying I have no husband, for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband.

What you have said is true.

The woman said to him, sir, I perceive that you are a prophet.

So here we see right in the middle of this discussion between Jesus and the Samaritan woman that Jesus knows the heart.

Jesus sees to this woman, and he knows not only circumstances that she hadn't told him yet, but he also sees to the heart of the matter,

and the kind of unseen spiritual nature behind the circumstances.

So again, we're picking up mid-conversation here.

We've already heard Jesus offer the Samaritan woman in the verses previous to the passage we're looking at today.

We're zooming in on verses 16 through 26.

And in verses 15 and prior,

we're seeing that Jesus had offered this woman living water, which she has misinterpreted as physical water.

So what you can understand, she's around a well, he asked her to draw her some water, and then he starts talking about this living water, and she's a little confused, and misinterprets the living water for just like actual water from the well.

And to help her see, right, to help her see that he's talking metaphorically, and he's talking about spiritual satisfaction, not just her having her thirst quenched, Jesus kind of

abruptly changes the subject, right?

They're talking about living water, and then all of a sudden he's talking about her husbands, right?

Just kind of out of the blue.

It seems like an abrupt change, but really Jesus is the master spiritual surgeon, and he's going to help her see her spiritual thirst and the fact that she needs this water, right?

So he switches the subject to the husbands and the

how thirsty, spiritually thirsty she really is.

Jesus doesn't need her to inform him about how many husbands she's had.

Jesus knows exactly how many husbands she's had, and he also knows that the guy that she's currently sleeping with is not her husband.

That's why he asked, right?

That's why he asked her.

He knew her situation and her past, and he wants her to discuss it with him, right?

He wants to help her see what's underneath those circumstances in the past.

You can tell, though, too, that Jesus isn't bringing up this past, this really sinful, rough past, just to beat her down in condemnation.

We know that God condemns this sort of behavior.

We know that the past five husbands weren't just necessarily five guys dying because she's still currently in an immoral relationship, sleeping with this guy out of wedlock.

So we know that God condemns this behavior, but Jesus doesn't bring it up just to throw it back in her face and condemn her.

he brings it up and you can hear it in his affirming tone.

Like look back at verse 18.

It says, for you have had, I'm sorry, verse 17.

You are right in saying, he affirms her at the beginning and then he reiterates her situation.

You're right in saying I have no husband because you had five and the one that you're now with is not your husband.

And then he ends with an affirmation.

What you have said is true.

You can hear the gentleness, right?

You can hear the affirmation in Jesus's tone.

He's not bringing this up to just beat her down, but he's bringing up the reality that she's in to show her who she is, right?

To force her to reckon with her heart.

He's bringing up the unwise and the sinful behavior to help her see her thirst, right?

This unsatisfied desire that she's tried to fill with men.

Her five husbands and her current boyfriend here

They're just symptoms, right?

They're symptoms, sinful symptoms that she's accountable for, but they're symptoms of misplaced worship.

As we said before, and what Jesus is driving at here, is that we're all created with deep-seated needs and longings, right?

Deep needs and longings.

And there's a couple things that we need to keep in mind about these deep-seated needs and longings.

First thing we need to keep in mind is that all of our longings,

both deep and shallow.

All of our desires, both deep and shallow, are meant to be most profoundly satisfied in God.

The psalmist puts it this way.

Whom have I in heaven but you?

There's nobody else I need.

Nobody else I need but you.

And there's nothing on earth that I desire beside you.

There's no person, there's no thing that I need or desire but you.

My flesh, even my health, my flesh and my heart, my psychological health, my mental health, may fail,

but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Nothing, right?

Nothing I need other than God.

All of my desires and all of my needs are ultimately met in God.

The other thing we need to keep in mind here is that there are, and I don't have time to preach a whole nother sermon on this.

Maybe we'll do a Sunday school class in the near future.

But there are levels of desires and longings within us, right?

It's kind of like a hierarchy of longings and desires.

sometimes there are desires behind the desires.

Tim Keller, in his book, Counterfeit God, discusses the difference between surface idols and root idols.

He identifies four root idols.

That's Tim Keller's thing.

That's not necessarily like, thus says the Lord.

He identifies four root idols, and he makes a biblical case for them.

So I do think it's a good observation.

The four root idols that he identifies are power, approval, comfort, and control.

over circumstances, right?

So power, control over people, and then also just like control over my circumstances and wanting to be able to manipulate my environment.

In other words, you may have identified an idol or a disordered desire for money in your life.

I'm just saying money, right?

So I love money too much.

I'm willing to do bad things and hurt people to get money.

But really, that's like the surface idol, right?

So I desire money.

I want money.

and I'm willing to do bad things that hurt people to get money.

So that's like a surface level idol or desire.

But really beneath that desire for money could be any of those four things.

You could want money so that you have a little more weight to throw around with people.

So I want a lot of money so people think I'm important and they listen to what I say and I have more power and control over other people.

Or I want money so I can buy a nice car

and cool clothes and so that everybody will tell me how great I am, right?

Because I made a lot of money and I look cool.

Or you can want money because, you know what, when I have a lot of money, I can buy a nice house, I can buy like a nice comfy car, I don't have to work, I can hire other people to do stuff for me, right?

Or you can want money so that you can build up a nice big nest egg and you never have to worry about the future, right?

Or, you know, I can just get things exactly the way I want it with the more money I have, right?

So

Money is a surface-level desire, but really what drives us to do bad things to get money is a deeper desire, right?

It's a deeper, more fundamental desire.

The reason I'm talking about this is that Jesus brings up the husbands, right?

He brings up the husbands and the boyfriend here to show the Samaritan woman that she's trying to meet

a longing, a deeper root idol with men, right?

A longing for affirmation and affection or security, or who knows?

We don't get into the details there, but she's trying to meet this deep-seated longing that comes to the surface in the symptom of serial marriages.

There's nothing on this earth that will quench that thirst.

That deep-seated longing, that deep-seated desire is not meant to be quenched or satisfied with anything or anyone in this earth.

And some of us are trying to satisfy our longing with counterfeit gods, with water from any old well.

Our spiritual thirst isn't quenched by what we worship, a thing, isn't quenched by a thing that we worship, nor is it quenched by where we worship.

So there's another shift in the conversation here in verses 19 to 20.

She says, the woman said to him,

Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet, which is like the understatement of the year, right?

So Jesus tells her all these things about her that he had no way of knowing.

And she's like, I can tell you're a prophet.

And then in verse 20, Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.

So by you, he's meaning you, a Jew, right?

You, a Jewish person, say on this other place is where you're supposed to worship.

So some people...

Some people interpret this change in the direction of the conversation.

So Jesus confronts her with her husband and her boyfriend, right?

And then she starts talking about worshipping on this mountain or that mountain.

Some people interpret this as a change of subject on the Samaritan woman's part to avoid having to talk about this embarrassing subject, right?

So Jesus brings up like her deepest, darkest secret that she doesn't want anybody to know.

And she, you know, that's kind of like the indicator that she's a flawed and broken person.

And she's like, I don't want to talk about that anymore.

Let's talk about mountains and worship, right?

And I think there's a little bit of that happening.

But I don't think that she's primarily trying to evade the discussion.

And I think we see that because of the way Jesus responds to her question.

So I don't think she's trying to evade the discussion.

Actually, I think she's pressing deeper into the discussion.

She sees her need.

She sees her sin, and essentially she acknowledges, I've done wrong.

These five marriages and my current boyfriend are bad.

I shouldn't be doing this.

I've got to get it right.

So I'm wrong.

I've done wrong.

I've got to get it right.

What's the way, this is the Samaritan woman thinking now, what's the way I know to get it right?

Well, I've got to offer sacrifices.

That's what we do.

We burn animals.

We offer sacrifices to God.

That's how we get right.

So this seems to be a prophet, somebody of God in front of me.

He's known some things that he shouldn't have known without me telling him.

So let me ask him.

I want to get it right, right?

I want these sacrifices to count.

So where do I go?

Should I go to this mountain?

Should I go to that mountain?

You're from God.

You tell me, how do I, you know, what religious things do I need to do to get right?

So bottom line, I think it's a genuine question.

I don't think she's just deflecting.

I don't think she's just trying to get out from under the husband's question.

I think it's a genuine question.

And Jesus treats it as a genuine question by giving it a serious answer.

But the problem is that the question itself is essentially flawed, right?

She says, she's essentially asking Jesus, what religious ritual do I need to perform to fix my problem?

Okay, I get it.

I'm broken.

I've messed up.

Tell me what to do.

Give me something to do to fix this problem, right?

To make me right with God so that I'm not broken and sinful anymore.

I know I need to repent.

I know I need to turn to God, not more husbands for satisfaction.

So do I burn animals on this mountain or do I burn animals on that mountain?

I just want to make sure I get it right so I get credit for it, right?

Is that how you're relating to God this morning?

You know, you sense deep down something's missing.

So, you know, why don't I go to church?

You know what?

I'll even give my 10%.

I'll volunteer.

I'll do some stuff.

You know, maybe I'll even read my Bible 15 minutes every day, and we'll see if that fixes it, right?

I know something's off.

I know something's wrong.

Let me get the checklist out and start knocking things off the checklist to see if it fixes it.

All good things, right?

All great things on my checklist, but I'm just going to start checking them off
and to see if that fixes it.

Is that how you're relating to God?

The problem is, Jesus answers her, and he tells her that there's nothing magical about religious ceremony.

There's nothing magical about doing religious stuff.

Look at verse 21.

Jesus said to her, "'Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.'"

So you got to understand, this is how they worship God, right?

This is how God told them to worship him, was to bring animal sacrifices and to perform the religious ceremonies on these mountains.

And Jesus is saying, there's a time coming, there's an hour coming when you're not going to worship God that way because it was never about the religious ceremonies themselves to begin with.

So again, just want to point out, Jesus acknowledges the woman's question is legitimate, but he gets to the heart, right?

In particular, he gets to her heart.

Again, at that time, that's where they offered sacrifices.

That's where they did the religious ceremonies.

But Jesus is saying that there's an hour coming.

And that word hour is really important in the book of John.

We talked about this last time we were in John, at the beginning of John, but I'll mention it again.

Every time Jesus, John, whoever in the book of John is talking about the hour, they're talking about Jesus' death and resurrection.

So he's saying there's a change coming, and there's a change coming at my death and resurrection, the work that I came to do.

when you're not going to worship on this mountain or that mountain anymore because it was never about the mountains in the first place.

It was never about the religious ceremonies in the first place.

Wrote, heartless, religious performance and sacrifice will not save you.

And it certainly will not satisfy you.

Coming to church, giving your tithe, serving the Lord will quickly become a burden if it's a means to make God happy with you.

It'll be another thing you've got to do.

It'll be a heavy burden on you to make God happier with you.

It'll just be one more thing on the list.

Are you bitter this morning?

I would ask yourself if you're bitter about your giving or about serving at church.

I would ask yourself if you really are.

Bitterness and anger comes out in weird ways.

Sometimes it comes out in depression.

Sometimes it comes out.

and just kind of being snippy with people.

There's a lot of different ways bitterness and anger can come out.

But if you lack joy in your church attendance, in your giving, in your serving, that's not pleasing to God.

God loves a cheerful giver.

He doesn't want a begrudging giver.

He doesn't want a depressed giver.

He loves a cheerful giver.

So check your heart.

That's a symptom.

Check your heart.

Are you trying to feel good about yourself by your performance?

Is your self-image tied to your performance?

Are you trying to quench your spiritual thirst by just mindlessly and heartlessly doing what you're supposed to do?

Say, something's missing, let me get the checklist out and start doing stuff so I can feel better about myself.

Now, as we said earlier,

I don't want to dismiss the Samaritan woman's question because Jesus answers it, and then he answers it in more depth here just a couple verses later.

Because even though we know and we see here that cold religious performance is bad, just doing stuff so that God will be happy with you is bad, God still gave specific instructions and truth, and theology still matters.

So in other words, if I lost you there, our spiritual thirst won't be quenched in what we worship or where we worship, and it even won't be quenched in how we worship, or it won't be quenched with their correct theology, even though theology matters.

Look at verses 21 to 22.

Jesus said to her, woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

You worship what you do not know.

We worship what we know for salvation is from the Jews.

All right, what does that mean?

At first, it sounds like Jesus is throwing out all religious and theological activity.

Like, no more mountains.

There's a time coming.

No more mountains.

All this stuff that God told you beforehand isn't really going to matter a whole lot.

But then he zooms out in verse 22, and that's not what he's saying.

He's like, don't misunderstand me here.

To get verse 22, you've got to recognize that the Samaritans only acknowledged the Pentateuch.

So their Bible was the first five books of the Bible.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

They were the only books that they acknowledged as being inspired by God.

The Jewish people, however, accepted what is now our Old Testament.

So from the Pentateuch, the first five books, all the way up to Zechariah.

So they included Joshua to Zechariah as their scripture as well, including a couple more later, but that's another discussion.

Jesus is saying that you Samaritans,

don't know all that you could and should know about God, right?

Because you're only acknowledging the five books, and I gave you way more than the five books.

So you worship what you don't know, right?

You could have known more about me.

I gave you more, but you only are limiting yourself to this small little window of revelation.

You refuse to accept what I continued to say through the kings and the prophets.

The Jews have received God's word in full.

Therefore, they know and worship him more rightly.

Also, the Samaritans were looking for a type of Messiah.

They called him like the second Moses.

They had another word for it.

And the Jews were looking for a Messiah as well.

And he's saying that that Messiah, that person you're looking for, is going to come through the Jews.

The Messiah is coming through specifically the tribe of Judah.

So the mountains, the ceremonies, they don't matter anymore, but God has been and is doing something that we need to know and understand rightly, right?

So the past matters.

God was doing something in the past and he's doing something now.

Theology or what we know and think about God matters.

But one last time, Jesus clarifies that the bare facts, right, the bare facts won't satisfy.

Look at verses 23 to 24.

We're going to spend a whole week on this next week.

But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

For the Father is seeking such people to worship him.

God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.

Those who worship God must worship in spirit and truth.

I might have missaid it because I've got a very bad habit of saying it incorrectly.

It's spirit and truth, not in spirit and in truth.

Spirit and truth is actually one thing.

It's not two different things.

It's one thing together.

We'll talk about that more next week.

There's only three must statements, three must statements in John.

John 3.7, you must be born again.

John 3.14, the Son of Man must be lifted up.

And then here in 4.24,

God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

It's really important.

That's why we're going to spend a week on it next week.

How we worship, the theology around how we worship is very important.

The must, though, is rooted in the character of God.

God is spirit.

Therefore, those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

So this way we worship and the way that we're called to worship, the fact that we have to worship this way is rooted in the person of God.

It's not rooted in bare theological facts or just a body of knowledge.

It's rooted in a person, a person of God.

Because we don't worship facts, because worshipping facts will not quench our spiritual thirst.

Our spiritual thirst is quenched in the person of God, namely in the person of Jesus.

Look at verses 25 to 26.

The woman said to him, I know that Messiah is coming.

He was called Christ.

When he comes, he will tell us all things.

Jesus said to her, I who speak to you am he.

Again, this isn't an abrupt change of subject.

The Samaritan woman finally sees, right, she finally sees that

She wasn't longing for surface idol boyfriends.

She finally sees that even to know and to do her religious duty in a theologically correct way will not ultimately satisfy her deepest longings because she was longing for her creator.

You are longing for your creator.

And could this possibly be him right here in front of her right now?

And Jesus confirmed what she already knew deep down in her heart, right?

I who speak to you am he.

And Jesus is saying the same thing to you right now.

What you long for, who you long for, is your creator who's come in the flesh, in the person of Jesus, to die for you, to take your place

on the cross and to bring you to resurrection life with him.

So what are you going to do?

Well, I would encourage you this morning that if you're hearing the voice of Jesus say to you, I who speak to you am he, I want to encourage you to diagnose the symptoms, right?

To look at your life.

Is there a pattern of sinful thoughts or actions in your life that you've noticed that

Have you considered that those sinful thoughts and actions might be symptoms of a deeper, more rooted sin and desire?

Believers, have you confessed that deeper rooted sin and desire to a godly friend?

Or maybe invited a godly friend into the diagnosis process, right?

Like invited them to ask you tough questions?

that you can answer honestly, invited someone into your life who will know you more intimately.

And I would encourage you to work down to the level of desires and longings, right?

Not just, I do this, I say that, I find myself in this situation, but get down into what you really love and long for, the things that really drive you, and then satisfy those needs and longings in Jesus.

Listen, you weren't made to live for shooting big bucks, right?

You weren't made to live for your kids' affections, to have your whole life hang on whether or not your kids like you and want you around.

You weren't made to numb yourself with whatever quick fix or distraction you can find.

You also, and this is important,

were not made to just be around God's people, feeling better about yourself because you did some good things and because you sang some songs that you like.

It's possible to come to church every week

and to sit under the preaching of God's word and to not have your thirst quenched by the one who gives us living waters, right?

It's possible to come week in and week out and truly not be born again.

It's possible to come and share the good vibes, the spiritual power of God's people, and not truly be one of them.

Hebrews 6 puts it very concretely, very abruptly in verses four to six.

It says,

That warrants a whole sermon by itself, but he's not talking about born-again believers here.

He's talking about people who have been amongst God's people, have seen the Holy Spirit working in people's lives, have experienced the Holy Spirit's work in other people's lives, who continually sit under the Word of God.

He's saying those people who turn away hardened, right?

This is not my words, this is his.

It is impossible to

to return them to repentance, that there's a hardness of heart that comes over them that does not allow them to repent.

Where that line is, I don't know, but it's dangerous, right?

There's a stark warning throughout the book of Hebrews.

Don't mess around with God.

Don't mess around sitting underneath the preaching of his word.

Don't expect that the Holy Spirit will bring you back tomorrow when he's calling you today, because he might not.

That's his prerogative.

You were made to know and experience Jesus, and the more you lean into him,

and to pursuing him and the things that he loves, the more you will experience the spring of living water welling up in your soul.

Not just that happening around you.

Again, let me make this really clear.

The more you lean into Jesus himself, we would love to have you lean into church and get more involved in church and do stuff with us.

But you have to lean into Jesus himself in prayer.

in reading the scriptures, knowing that he's there with you, speaking to you through the word, that he has given you other believers around you to help you walk with him and to like be a voice for him because they're indwelt by the Holy Spirit into your life as well.

If you're not doing, if you're not participating in church in a relational way with the Father and with Jesus, you're missing it.

I gotta give it, this really hit me when I was,

reading this week in 1 Samuel.

I already read the passage to you earlier, but I just want to give you a little background and how it kind of fits in.

Hannah, in the first couple chapters of 1 Samuel, she's one of two wives to Elkanah.

So Elkanah was her husband, and he had another wife.

Hannah was barren.

She couldn't have any kids.

Elkanah's other wife was having loads of kids and was making fun of Hannah.

She was mocking her, really putting her down.

and making her feel terrible for not having kids.

So Hannah, after this happens for a while, goes to the temple to worship, and she just kind of breaks down.

In fact, Eli, the priest, thinks that she's drunk because she's just pouring her heart out to God, kind of silently moving her lips.

And what she does in that prayer, after she breaks down, after this long, hard, difficult time,

is that she turns that desire and that longing over to God.

She says, Lord, if you give me a son, he's yours, right?

I just, you've given me this longing and this desire.

I'm giving it back to you, right?

If you give me a son, he's all yours.

I'm not gonna hoard him for myself.

And so then the Lord blesses her and gives her a son.

And she names him Samuel.

And she raises him for a little while till he's able to be on his own.

And she brings him back to, she keeps her promise to the Lord,

And she brings him back to the temple there and gives Samuel back to serve the Lord, to temple worship and to set him apart for God's service.

And, you know, we read that prayer and that song that Hannah gave.

You know, if you would have asked me, you said, okay, that's the story.

That's Hannah's story.

You know, she prays for her son, she gets the son, and then she has to do this really hard thing of giving him back to God at an early age.

and then you read that song to me where she praises God and she's just full of joy, if you had to ask me where that song came in the story, I would have put it after Samuel was born, right?

Like after God gave her what she had longed for and what she had wanted for so long.

That's not where the song comes.

The song comes

after she gives Samuel back to the Lord, after she lets Samuel go, right, after she releases this thing, this person, right, that she had longed for and prayed for for so long, right, it was only after she gave back and gave up the thing, right, that desire, that thing that she had longed for for so long and recognized that her real longing and desire was

was for the Lord, right?

That the need, the thirst behind the longing was the Lord himself, that she was able to say this, my heart exalts in the Lord.

My horn is exalted in the Lord.

My mouth derides my enemies because I rejoice in your salvation.

There is none holy like the Lord.

There is none beside you.

There is no rock like our God.

I don't know what God is calling you to let go of today.

I don't know what he's calling you to turn back over to him.

But that longing will not find its proper place and be satisfying to you in the way that it should be unless your deeper longing, right, and your deeper desire for the Lord takes over and you give it back to him.

Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, we all want a spring of living water welling up in us to eternal life.

Lord, we want to be satisfied.

We want joy forevermore.

Would you teach us this morning that in your presence there is fullness of joy and at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Lord, none of us know what that means.

And Lord, I pray that you would

Bring it home to us a little more deeply today.

We pray all this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

You're dismissed.