

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message

October 12, 2025 "Let's Sing!! Finding God in the songs we sing." "Holy Water"

I Intro.

We're moving through fall, and have big things planned. You'll see more opportunities for you to participate in the life of NCC. Stay connected to our social media to keep up with everything that's happening. Welcome to our companion devotional to Sunday's message. It's just a part of all we have to offer to you. Whether you were able to participate in this service or not, this devotion is free-standing. We hope you find this tool helpful on your spiritual journey. We don't want you to miss out on anything. We consider you part of our community. We have many ways you can plug into life at NCC. You can find all those through our website, app, and social media sites. Our app is the best way to livestream our services, but you can also livestream on FaceBook and YouTube. You can revisit past services, sign up for events and even give. We're encouraged by your presence when you gather with us. New and familiar faces join us every Sunday. If you join us online, we appreciate your presence. We are 100% committed to our virtual attenders. We are your church family, and if there is anything you need, prayer, or anything else, please let us know.

II Recap.

This series is to get us to see worship as not only a time to be with God. The songs we sing are; a promise of God's presence, our testimony, our theology (personal experiences with God), and an act of resistance. But it's also to find and experience truths that we can apply to our own personal lives, that grow us in our regular daily walk with God. And to grow our ability to be Christ-like in our walk. So, when you sing these specific, and other, songs, it's not just focusing on what you like or maybe don't like about the songs. We believe that in every song, you can find something in the song that helps you meet God. Praise and worship is such an essential element in worship. We want to help expand your connection to God through worship.

III Sunday.

Lots of questions to start this.

Okay...are you an ocean or a lake person? Do you actually get in the water?

Would you rather just be in a boat or sit and stare at the water from the land?

We all love the water. Ocean, lake, streams, waterfalls, creeks, even rain. But it hasn't always been this way. So, since it's baptism Sunday, we're going to do a little walk through scripture about water. And we're going to be using a lot of scripture today...so brace yourself.

An O.T. understanding of water. Water used to represent chaos, danger, something to avoid. Water in any form, lakes, the sea, the ocean was considered the wilderness. No one wanted to go into the water. All through the O.T. people were afraid of bodies of water because it was dangerous and foreboding. It represented storms, disappearing, and weird things that swam under the surface.

1. The chaos before God's presence. From the very beginning water was chaos.

Genesis 1:1-2 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

God testing people required them to pass through what they were afraid of.

2. Moses crossing the Red Sea. If water was chaos, and seen as a real threat, imagine what it felt like to be Moses and God asking him to do this. The Egyptians had caught up to the fleeing Israelites who were camped at the edge of The Red Sea. The Israelites panicked. They felt trapped, and cried out to God; *“Did you bring us out here just to kill us?!”* They were trapped between two enemies. The Egyptians who wanted to kill them, and the menacing chaos and fear of the water.

Exodus 14:13, 16, 21-22 But Moses told the people, **“Don’t be afraid. Just stand still and watch the LORD rescue you today. Pick up your staff and raise your hand over the sea. Divide the water so the Israelites can walk through the middle of the sea on dry ground. Then Moses raised his hand over the sea, and the LORD opened up a path through the water with a strong east wind. The wind blew all that night, turning the seabed into dry land. So the people of Israel walked through the middle of the sea on dry ground, with walls of water on each side!**

See the reference to creation here?

A huge movement for the people in their understanding of water. A test of their faith. This pushed them to be courageous. And began framing their understanding of what would eventually become baptism. Passing through the waters, as a symbol of God’s work of rescuing and redemption. And the work of ‘new creation’.

3. Joshua crossing the Jordan River. At the beginning of the Israelites journey towards freedom was crossing through the water with Moses. We see the same challenge at the end of their journey towards freedom. God is constantly testing his people to trust him. But this time God is making Joshua cross the water differently.

Joshua 3:3-4, 8, 13-17 Early the next morning Joshua and all the Israelites left Acacia Grove and arrived at the banks of the Jordan River, where they camped before crossing. Since you have never traveled this way before, they will guide you. The LORD told Joshua, **“When you reach the banks of the Jordan River, take a few steps into the river and stop there.”** The priests will carry the Ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth. As soon as their feet touch the water, the flow of water will be cut off upstream, and the river will stand up like a wall.” It was the harvest season, and the Jordan was overflowing its banks. But as soon as the feet of the priests who were carrying the Ark touched the water at the river’s edge, the water above that point began backing up a great distance away at a town called Adam, which is near Zarethan. And the water below that point flowed on to the Dead Sea until the riverbed was dry. Then all the people crossed over near the town of Jericho. Meanwhile, the priests who were carrying the Ark of the LORD’s Covenant stood on dry ground in the middle of the riverbed as the people passed by. They waited there until the whole nation of Israel had crossed the Jordan on dry ground.

THIS is how chaos often works. Not only did they have to pass through the water again, (still threatening and terrifying) they had to do it differently this time. It’s NEVER the same way every time. **Have you noticed that?** This keeps us from becoming complacent about the work of God, and our relationship with him. It keeps our fellowship from becoming routine. Another act of new creation.

4. God’s promise when encountering struggle and chaos. Because of all of these stories, God had to promise his presence in the midst of the chaos of ‘water’.

Isaiah 43:2 When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown.

Using water as a symbol for struggles and difficulty. So, water has this historical understanding as a scary dangerous place. But we had baptism today. It can be kind of intimidating to walk down into the water. But it's such a courageous way to be obedient and begin that journey of seeking God. And the work of becoming a 'new creation'.

III Scripture.

Talked about the O.T. understanding of water. It represented chaos, confusion, struggle, difficulty. Scary, full of storms and monsters, all things to avoid. But it's not now. We made people walk into it. Get dunked under. In front of a bunch of other people. We celebrated, cheered, some had tears in their eyes. Many of you may have been reminded of your baptism, or a child, or family member.

So, what changed our understanding of water?

A N.T. understanding of water. What was once terrifying and chaotic and to be avoided. Water itself became a sign of newness, being reborn, and life.

1. Baptism of Jesus. Here is Jesus signifying a significant change in our understanding of water. **Matthew 3:13-15. Then Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. But John tried to talk him out of it. "I am the one who needs to be baptized by you," he said, "so why are you coming to me?" But Jesus said, "It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires." So John agreed to baptize him.**

The same river Joshua stepped into, Jesus entered into.

2. Jesus said; anyone who is thirsty. After continuing the change in the understanding of water, Jesus offers this to us.

John 7:37-38 On the last day, the climax of the festival, Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds, "Anyone who is thirsty may come to me! Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! For the Scriptures declare, 'Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.'"

Not only do you see water as life. You become a source of this new life. It calls us to examine ourselves. To see where we might be in our relationship with God.

Let's look at the song we're doing today; **"Holy Water"**. The lyrics are incredibly intense. This is a person in full desperation. At the pinnacle of lostness and need. Back in May I talked about; *"The Art of Desperation"*. Desperation is the gift of getting to the end of ourselves. You may have never felt this before. Or it's been a long time since you've been at this point spiritually. Or you may be secretly and silently in that place now. No matter whatever place you're in with your relationship with God, it's okay. The intent, purpose, isn't to judge your current relationship with God. To guilt you into some confession, or action, or admission against your will. This song **"Holy Water"** is another invitation into a relationship with God. To come into the water...no matter how scary it may feel.

1. Recognize your need. The recognition of need is lost in Christianity today...but we see it here.

God, I'm on my knees again God, I'm begging please again

I need you Oh, I need you

Walking down these desert roads Water for my thirsty soul

I need you Oh, I need you

This is a central truth at the heart of following Jesus. Sadly, acknowledging our need has become equated with weakness. We want to understand it as: “I recognize **your** power”. Recognizing our need is a continual, constant process of letting go. And it's the heart of this song. Admit to any chaos, fears, uncertainty, and more in your life. You're not where you wanted or hoped to be. And you may be embarrassed or ashamed of where you are. But in this confession of need, desperation, there is literally no shame.

2. Ask for the living water. Then whatever place you find yourself in...ask for what only can satisfy that need. This is such a simple, humble, non-threatening ask. Born out of recognizing our need, we have to know what we really need.

Your forgiveness Is like sweet, sweet honey on my lips

Like the sound of a symphony on my ears

It's like holy water on my skin It's like holy water on my skin It's like holy water

We ask the candidates to say what they're looking for in being baptized. Not as a test, but so they can rejoice and celebrate this gift. To know that as the waters are separated you are being made anew.

3. Receive the water. The “living water”. And then all you have to do after you recognize your need, ask, is receive.

So, take me to the riverside Take me under, baptize

I need you Oh, God I need you

We see this in the story of the woman at the well. You honestly examine your life as it is...no judgment, just confession. Then BEGIN to receive the work of the “living water”. The invitation into this new journey following Jesus. Not having it all figured out. Just wanting to walk with Jesus.

IV Challenge.

Water, the sea, the ocean, chaos, disorder, has been captured and tamed. It is now a new and vibrant life. Something that was chaotic, wild, uncontrolled, something you avoided, maybe a monster or two, has now become something you seek. Water is now life, cleansing, newness, rebirth, redemption. This is the same journey our life follows when we begin to recognize our need and turn towards God.

What can this say to us today? How can this speak into our lives wherever we are?

The three movements for us to receive this “living water”.

1. Recognize your need. The chaos of the waters can often be seen in our own lives. Even if our lives aren't radically out of control, we're fairly decent people, there still are areas we need to have sacred intervention over. And in whatever our lives look like, God's spirit is still hovering over it.

2. Ask for the living water. The understanding of water moving from chaotic, orderless, confusion, to this wellspring of life, order, the source of life. Jesus says he's offering “living water”.

3. Receive the water. The “living water”. Woman at the well. “Give me the water so that I won't have to come to this well any more.” This water is being offered to us.

Would you be willing to receive this “living water” today?

Please contact us if you are and we would love to have a conversation with you.