

# Returning To The Well

Have you ever tried carrying water in a bucket with a hole in it? The bigger the hole, the more trips back to the well you have to make. Today we are talking about returning to the well.

## Introduction

The last time we discussed how God restores, He does not destroy. We shared some of the many instances where God restores us, mind, body, and spirit. This week we are following up and talking about getting into a place where we can be restored, refilled, and replenished by God.

I asked the question, "Have you ever tried carrying water in a bucket with a hole in it?" I have. I was out camping as a scout when I was a boy and we needed water for our campsite from the nearby lake. Our only bucket had a small hole in the side of it. If I filled the bucket up all the way water would start to leak out of the hole in the side and I had to move very quickly to get as much water to camp as possible. If I only filled the bucket halfway water would not leak out and I could go more slowly, but I had to make more trips to and from the lake. This took a lot longer. Regardless of the method I used, I had to keep returning to the lake for more water.

Our lives are like a leaking bucket. As we serve others, live life, and face personal difficulties, we use some of the living water that is welled up in our souls. This water must be replaced. The only way we can replenish that water is by returning to the well of living water. That well of living water is Jesus Christ.

Let's look at part of one of my favorite interactions Jesus had. Let's read John 4:7-14

## John 4:7-14

(7) When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" (8) (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) (9) The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) (10) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." (11) "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? (12) Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?" (13) Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, (14) but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

We see in this passage that Jesus is the well with a never-ending supply of living water that leads to an abundant life. We do lose this living water as we go through life. Let's look at three ways we share or lose this living water and have to replenish it.

We must continue to return to the well as we share with others when we serve them.



## Returning To The Well as We Love Others

Jesus tells us the second greatest commandment is to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. He is telling us that after loving God with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, we are supposed to love others. This takes energy. It has to be intentional. He doesn't give us any wiggle room to get out of loving others. As we love others, especially those that are not easy to love, we use up some of the living water we receive from Jesus.

Think of it this way. You are on a trip through a hot desert. You have planned out your trip and know you need to bring plenty of water to drink as you travel. You even plan for the unforeseen and bring some extra water with you. Four or five hours into your trip you come across someone who did not plan as well as you. They are sitting on the side of the path and are thirsty. So thirsty that they are not seeing clearly. They are going to die if they do not get some water and receive some help. You give them some of your water and start to help them along, sharing your water and other provisions as needed to help them.

When we serve others, we expend some of what we have received from Jesus. Sometimes it is more and sometimes it is less, but we always are expending what we receive from Jesus to serve others. This is directly tied to Jesus' instructions to his 12 disciples just before sending them out for a season of ministry. Let's read Matthew 10:8.

Matthew 10:8

**(8) Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.**

These instructions are for us, as much as for the twelve disciples 2000 years ago. But, as we have freely received and we freely give, we can't continue to give unless we return to the well and refill our own soul with that living water. This way we can continue to fulfill the mission we each have been called to.

Another way we lose water from our bucket, so to speak, is by getting sidetracked by the busyness of this world.

## Returning To The Well as Get Sidetracked

Getting sidetracked is so easy. When we get sidetracked we lose focus on the task on hand and start to focus on something else. The task at hand suffers. Often the thing we get sidetracked from most is returning to the well. We know we need to return to Jesus and refill our souls regularly. The living water that refreshes our inner being is leaking out constantly, but we get distracted. Before too long we have run dry and our desire to fulfill our call has dried up.

There are so many things in life that can distract us. Issues going on with family, sickness, work, unhealthy habits, and more. All of these things are small holes in our bucket and the living water of Jesus is leaking out. Losing focus on Jesus is one of the devil's biggest and most used tools to draw us away from God. The devil knows this, too. If our bucket goes completely dry and we don't refill it soon enough, we are in trouble.

Jesus alludes to this in Luke 9:62 which says:



Luke 9:62

(62) Jesus replied, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

We have to stay focused on what is ahead which is the mission that God has called and equipped each of us for. When we lose focus and get distracted we cannot do what he has called us to. However, we are not perfect and we get distracted. We give up bits of time here and there that we should be using to pray or read the scriptures. We allow less time to sing the praises of God and worship him.

We must keep our focus on Jesus and the call God has placed on our hearts and minimize the amount of living water lost and wasted to the distractions in life that simply do not matter.

The last way we are going to look at losing water from our bucket of life is by facing personal difficulties.

### Returning To The Well as We Face Personal Difficulties

We all face personal difficulties. Sometimes it is a personal tragedy and sometimes it is working through the consequences of personal choices that distracted us from God's call on our lives. In any case, we all face personal difficulties from time to time and we must have a full bucket to make it through that time.

One such example of this in scripture is one of Jesus' original twelve disciples, Judas. Let's read John 12:1-5.

John 12:1-5

(1) Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. (2) Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. (3) Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. (4) But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, (5) "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages."

Judas was more concerned about the money that could be raised by selling the perfume than the act of love and worship Mary showed when anointing Jesus' feet. Judas was distracted from the true mission.

We are often distracted by the logic of what we see and think we need to do instead of what God is calling us to do. We also allow personal difficulties, or in this case, personal sin, to distract us and allow our souls to run dry. If we continue to read John 12: 6 we read why Judas was so focused on how expensive the perfume was and the money that could be raised by selling it.

John 12:6

(6) He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

We must not get distracted from the call of Jesus on our life, even when we believe we are doing good things. Water is leaking out of our bucket of life, and we must replenish it by being with Jesus and focusing on Him.



## Conclusion

Jesus is the living water that quenches our thirst forevermore. He is the well we must return to refill our souls. We refill our souls with the living water of Jesus Christ by focusing on him in all we do, whether it is at work, in school, or while we have fun with friends.

We must never cease praying and asking the Lord to continually fill us with His living water from Jesus' well. Worship is also a key component to returning to the well. Not just the worship when we all gather together once or twice a week, but singing or whistling the song that Jesus puts in your heart.

Return to the well, friends. Return to the living well of Jesus Christ often and refill your bucket, because these lives we have here in this world have a lot of holes and Jesus' living water is leaking out of us. That's not a bad thing. It can spill out unintentionally sometimes on people that need it desperately, but it is better to be intentional with it. In either case, we must refill ourselves with Jesus every day.

