

## **“The Waters From The Waters”**

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Texts: Genesis 1: 1-8 and 2 Peter 3: 1-5

Just in case you forgot from last week, Michigan is an incredible place to live.

That is especially true if you like water. I remember learning as a kid that in Michigan you are: never more than 6 miles from a lake, river or stream; never further than 85 miles from a great lake; in a state with 11,037 inland lakes; bordered by Lake Superior, the world’s largest freshwater lake...and the list goes on. There is water everywhere.

That is especially true here in northern Michigan, where I’m able to hike near streams all over the area, and we’re not far from the UP, where waterfalls are plentiful. Needless to say, there is a lot of water around our state. That is a blessing. But with blessing comes responsibility. Water is central to life, and has been part of creation since the beginning, yet humanity seems to take it for granted with the way we treat it. Let’s dive in!

Daniel Cooperrider, in his book *Speak With the Earth And It Will Teach You*,

reminds us of several other facts about water:

Both scarce and abundant, the water element can hold and transcend contradictions and dualities. Clean drinking water is essential to us humans and to all other animals and plants, and yet it provides nothing by way of energy or calories or organic nutrients. Water is odorless and tasteless in its pure form and yet it can quench and satisfy our deepest thirst. ‘The universal solvent, water can cleanse and dissolve and disintegrate almost every other substance – and yet it’s also the most generative and nourishing substance. Water can destroy and create, break down and build up. The rain of a thousand years that carves out the Grand Canyon is the same rain that powers the growth of the 400-foot California Redwood, the ‘Thousand Year Pine.’

Put succinctly, water is amazing. There is no other substance more necessary to life for all on the planet. Water covers seventy-one percent of the earth's surface. And even you are mostly water – from about 80% at birth to a minimum of around 50% as we age.

Water is critical to life. It always has been.

The Bible agrees, “before there was an earth, before there was light, the only thing that existed was water, and God’s breath, which hovered over and started to stir the dark liquid like an artist starting to stir and mix their paint pallet (Cooperrider, p14).”

Genesis says it this way, “When God began to create the heavens and the earth – the earth was without shape or form, it was dark over the deep sea, and God’s wind swept over the waters.” On the one hand it’s hard to imagine that according to the creation narrative, water existed before anything else, except for God. In Chapter 2, which we’ll talk about on Father’s Day, it’s about the great rivers. Water – it was there in the beginning according to the Bible.

Evolution agrees:

In the beginning, the earth was not yet, and as the surplus of the sudden flaring forth was settling, one of the massive clouds of dust and gas collapsed to form our solar system. At the center, the sun-ball formed into place like a gemstone, and as the dusty halo spun around it, a molten earth cooled into shape. Ice-filled and water-logged asteroids bombarded the young planet, and hydrogen from the solar cloud joined with oxygen in the atmosphere, and water, the liquid of life, arrived in abundance on earth...(Cooperrider, 13)

Water, the central element to life, is present on the planet. From the evolution perspective, life emerges from the water. From the creation perspective, it is in short order that God separates the waters from the waters, and then life begins to emerge.

I think you'll agree that water is the source of all life, and it is equally important to the sustaining of life as it was to creating it in the first place. With all the heat we've had over the past couple of weeks in the Midwest, what's the first thing that the weather man, or the doctor, or mom or dad, or anyone else in authority tells you to do? You got it, hydrate. Yesterday morning, we were reminded to even drink water *before* we're thirsty. Any athlete will tell you the same thing, that you can't perform without being adequately hydrated *before you being* let alone while you're competing. And even though we have many other options of how to hydrate, the medical community still recommends water.

If water is this important, then it is a no-brainer that we'd better protect it.

While the earth is some 70% water, much of it is undrinkable. According to some, only about 3% of the world's water is drinkable. A precious resource in short supply. Therefore, we have even more responsibility to ensure that we take good care of it. We necessarily use it for everything, but how we use it is critical. I don't think I need to tell you these things, because they're facts you can readily find in your phone, or perhaps even by common sense. Knowing this, all I want to do this morning is ask you and ask myself, how do we use water? How do we care for our water? How much of it do we use? Could we use it more efficiently? Could we find new and better ways to treat our water as precious as clearly is?

I have no doubt that humanity will have more and more conflicts – even wars – over water. The American southwest is one place where that is becoming clearer every

day. Climate change is impacting our world water supply. We can do our part to curb that effect. But the one thing that every single one of us can do is we can consider our own use of water. Whether we come from a faith perspective, a science perspective, or both, it is clear that water is central to all life. To a person of faith, do we honor God with our use of water? To a person of science, is it logical or efficient to use water the way I do? The result is the same: we use water smartly and faithfully.

In the beginning was water everywhere. God separated the waters from the waters. And from the waters came life. "By the word of God heavens existed long ago and an earth was formed out of water and by means of water."

Water is life. Water is precious. May we all treat it as such.

In the many blessed names of God. Amen.