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Beverly E.C.C., Chicago, IL

**“COME THIRSTY”**  
**Psalm 42:1-2**

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**“As the deer pants for streams of water,  
so my soul pants for you, O God.  
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.  
When can I go and meet with God?”**

Water comprises 70% of our body by weight. For every 100 lbs. of us, 70 is water.

H<sub>2</sub>O is essential to health and survival. Lose 4 or 5% of your water, and you will begin to suffer significant symptoms of dehydration. Lose 15% or more, and you will most likely die.

Thank God, he has blessed us with the sensation of thirst. It is the trigger we need to rehydrate ourselves.

We are born thirsty. As newborns we begin crying for sustenance minutes after our birth, and we are not satisfied until put to the breast or given a bottle.

{[linkagesproject.org](http://linkagesproject.org)} Breast milk is approximately 88% water and 12% solids.

We wake thirsty. The coffee we drink is roughly 98½% water and 1¼% plant material. A cup of orange juice or apple juice is about 88% water. The milk we pour on our cereal is approximately 87% water and 13% solids.

We keep getting thirsty. In our climate the average person loses between 1 and 2% of their water every day

through their lungs, skin, kidneys, and intestines. People who live in hotter regions, do physical labor, or exercise hard lose a higher percentage. No wonder bottled water and sports drinks like Gatorade (which is 96% water) are such big sellers.

But what if we were unable to figure out how to satisfy our thirst? What if you could not think to get up from our chair *and also* go to the cupboard *and also* get a glass *and also* turn on the faucet *and also* place the glass under the tap *and also* fill it *and also* put it to our lips *and also* pour it in our mouths *and also* swallow it?

And what if we did not recognize the signs of thirst? What if our bodies craved water but our minds were unable to interpret the sensation as thirst? What if we simply forgot to drink anything, ever?

People in the advanced stages of Alzheimer’s do not have to imagine this, they live it. The disease has so ravaged their brains that they have lost the ability to interpret and act upon their thirst. Without care givers to hydrate them they will die of thirst.

We have been talking about physical thirst, but there is also spiritual thirst: **“As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God.”** Scripture repeatedly speaks of our desire for God as thirst, and his life-giving presence as water.

This raises a question: ***How thirsty are we for God?*** Do our souls crave him the way our bodies crave H<sub>2</sub>O?

To the best of my knowledge, I have never in my life said “I do not need God.” Yet there are seasons when I do not *feel* very thirsty at all: seasons when I act as though salvation depends more on my striving than on God’s grace; seasons when I think I can manage 95% of life on my own, if only God would take care of the other 5%; seasons when I go through the motions of worship and prayer and study, as though they are not all that important.

In those seasons I fail to recognize the signs of my own thirst. My soul craves spiritual water, yet I am somehow unable to interpret the sensation as thirst. It is like I have spiritual Alzheimer’s!

In contrast, these last months have for me been a season of desperate thirst. AmyLynn’s pain has stripped away the pretense of self-sufficiency. Time and again it has literally brought me to my knees. I often catch myself saying, “O God, I need you. *We* need you.”

My family and I need God to refresh us, renew our faith, restore our vision, carry us through the day, forgive our sin, help us in our weakness, and enable us to love.

We would be thrilled if God physically healed our firstborn, but this isn’t just a desire that he will do things for us. It is a thirst for his very presence above, below, before, behind, between, and within us.

If only it wouldn’t take a crisis! If only we would thirst for God even when life is comfortable and easy!

Let’s put that behind us. God is ready and able to fill us up – even those of us who have forgotten our thirst, even those of us who have tried to satiate ourselves with things that do not satisfy.

- This morning the Lord is inviting us to drink deeply of his goodness. He says, {Lk 22:20} **“This cup is the new covenant in my blood,”** {Mt 26:28} **“drink from it, all of you.”** And he says, {Rev 21:6} **“To the one who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life.”** He says, “Come.”

- Hear once again the Word of the Lord in Psalm 42:1-2:

**“As the deer pants for streams of water,  
so my soul pants for you, O God.  
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.  
When can I go and meet with God?”**

Let us come thirsty.