

COOL (FREE) WATER

Eddie Arnold made the song, "Cool Water" famous. It's the story of a cowboy and his horse, Dan, traveling through the burning desert in search of water. As they travel through the desert they are tempted to veer off course and detour toward a mirage that can only lead to certain death, as the chorus below laments;

Keep a movin' Dan, don't you listen to him Dan
He's a devil not a man and he spreads the burning sand, with water
Dan can you see that big green tree where the water's running free
And it's waitin' there for me and you?

Water is the fountain of life. Without it there is no life. In this desert of a world broken by sin there are many things that masquerade as life giving water, but they are just mirages that would have us drink sand and die. You find them connected to words like, "The meaning of life is . . ." fame; power; glory; riches; more stuff; independence; personal autonomy; freedom from responsibility; freedom to love who I want; freedom to do what I like with my body; freedom from commitment; freedom from emotional discomfort . . .

"Don't you listen to him Dan
He's a devil not a man . . ."

. . . But the cost of all of this "freedom" and "free stuff" is death. Death to relationships; death to order; death to other human beings . . . and death to our very souls. That's because nothing is really free. There is always a cost. Somebody always has to pay something.

And yet, in this desert, God offers us free "water". Through the prophet Isaiah in chapter 55 He says, "*Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters ...you who have no money eat and drink without cost! Why spend your money on what is not food and labor for what does not satisfy?*" God calls us to drink at the REAL well of life, not the mirage.

Jesus repeats the idea with a Samaritan woman at a well in John 4:13-14, "*Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.*" The operative word in His statement to the woman is "give". The water that Jesus gives is FREE to us. We don't have to work for it. We don't have to pay for it. In fact we can't even AFFORD it! But Jesus offers it to us TOTALLY FREE OF CHARGE! He can do this because He has already paid for it . . . bought and paid for with his own life and blood shed on the cross for all of us.

The "water" (and not the mirage) that we need; the only thing that can quench the thirst of our dying sinful souls is what Jesus freely offers us through His Word of sure and certain promise of the forgiveness of our sin and the real and eternal life which follows and flows only in and from Him.

Back in Isaiah chapter 55, God uses the image of His provision of earthly forms of water to illuminate the provision of His Word . . . even that "Logos" Word, His Son, Jesus.

"As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it."