

LIVING AN EMPOWERED LIFE

Scripture used: [Psalm 42:1-2 \(NKJV\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Just in the last few days, Pastor Hurmon counseled three women from our congregation who are grieving the deaths of their beloved adult daughters; from cancer, COVID, and a car accident. This was yet another reminder for Pastor Hurmon of just how much trauma, tragedy, and challenge we are facing across our New Beginnings community, and the importance for all of us of learning how to be sustained and renewed in times of great difficulty. In today's Scripture, the image is that of the deer longing to drink from the water brooks (streams of water). What do we do when we discover that our water brook has run dry? This is reminiscent of the extreme California drought. We go from being full of life (enjoying abundance, vitality, creativity, good judgment, joy, dreams, high hopes) to a season of emptiness. We get no replenishment, and depression and despair tempt us.

KEY POINTS

- 1) **Sometimes the brook is empty but we're not aware of it**, because we're not in touch with our souls. In the past 18 months, various leaders and regular folks have had to come to terms with this season of drought. Non-profit leaders, clinicians, people managing complex family relationships and real-life issues, have found themselves "running on empty", and having to wake up and refocus on finding ways to have the thirst in their souls quenched.
- 2) **There is clear and present danger in quenching one's thirst with toxic stuff.** We often mistakenly try to find solace in the accumulation of material possessions or other distracting coping mechanisms (entertainment, drugs/alcohol, sex, etc.), when we really yearn for spiritual connection. We have to listen carefully to the subtle call that may be an invitation from God, sometimes expressed through others.
- 3) [John 7:37-38 \(NLT\)](#) – **the powerful image of Jesus as the provider of living waters.** Jesus is the fullness of God, the reason for life itself. We are invited to return to the source: the original brook. We pour our time into His presence and the pump of living water is primed, and rejuvenation takes place. Our energy and capacity grow. We have a quiet feeling of empowerment.
- 4) **Often times the step of spending time with Jesus needs to be scheduled.** [Genesis 2:2](#) speaks of God resting, being with Himself, after engaging himself on the work of creation. The seventh day of Creation is blessed, declared holy, set aside. It's a day of contemplation and remembrance, and through this Sabbath day, God modeled and prepared the Israelite people to have a schedule of renewal with Him. Pastor Hurmon issued a challenge to his team: carve out time to spend with Jesus for spiritual renewal, not just days of rest, but also Sabbath moments each week. Model it for others. Carve out a moment each day – quiet invitations to drink from the rivers of living water. Find a place, and know there isn't a perfect approach. You may choose to read sacred texts, and be in dialogue with Jesus, and engage Him. You may listen to Christian music, worship songs, and hymns of the church. You may write in your journal, or walk in nature in spiritual awe and gratitude. Don't forget the power of waiting, creating space. Don't jump into activity, but wait in silence and focus.
- 5) The hymn "In the Garden" has inspiring lyrics: "And He walks with me, and He talks with me, And He tells me I am His own, And the joy we share as we tarry there, None other has ever known.". This is the testimony of a person living a high-capacity life, as they have learned to pour their time into Jesus.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - What is the pace of your life like right now? If you were to compare yourself to a body of water, are you more like a reservoir, a pond, or a puddle? What is your soul thirsting for, and are you quenching your soul with good things or with something that doesn't really slake its thirst?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider [Psalm 42:1-2 \(NKJV\)](#) and [John 7:37-38 \(NLT\)](#). Do you identify with the deer, thirsting after a drink? Do you identify with the water brook, trying to meet the needs of so many others in your life, and you need to be replenished? What does it look like to bring your situation to Jesus, and to hear his promise that all are welcome to come to Him and that rivers of living water will flow from our heart? When have we experienced this promise from Jesus as coming true? When have we experienced it as not yet true?
- 3) **DO** - Schedule 30 minutes each day this week to spend time with Jesus. Come next week for the beginning of a new series on "Winning the Battle in our Mind: utilizing our faith to fight confusion."