

# “LONG AND THIRST”

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I will never forget the first time I went on a hike. Perhaps because of our call time at 2:00AM, or due to my excitement, I could not sleep well. After a two-hour drive, we reached our destination. As we fixed our stuff before leaving the van, I took a cursory look at the things we thought we would not need for our hike and might just add to the weight of the bag that we would carry. I looked around and realized that I forgot to bring an important item - a water flask! Of all the things I should not have forgotten to bring, it had to be my water flask!

If you know me, I am very sensitive when it comes to drinking water. My stomach easily reacts even with purified or mineral water. As we started our hike, having no water did not bother me. Why? Because I had two bottles of Coke and one bottle of Gatorade. I thought to myself, “I still have something to drink”.

On our first rest stop, as my friends drank water eagerly, they told me teasingly that I would not be able to finish the hike without water. I raised my Gatorade bottle to them confidently, saying, “Electrolytes ito”. Little did I know what was about to happen that day.

We kept on moving, exerting more energy than before as the climb became steeper and steeper. The sun was also up, and it contributed greatly to our exhaustion and thirst. We stopped for a third time, and I realized that

my Gatorade was almost gone. I then decided to drink my Coke first and leave the Gatorade as my last resort since it would quench my thirst more than Coke.

When we reached the mountain peak, I only had a half bottle of Coke and a half bottle of Gatorade remaining. To be honest, I was restraining myself from drinking since I knew that the drinks I had were not enough. True enough, after lunch, I only had less than half a bottle of Gatorade left.

My friends were kind enough to offer me water. But due to my medical condition, I refused their offer. O When one of my friends offered his extra bottle of Gatorade, I gladly accepted.

As we hiked down the mountain, halfway through, I finished all my drinks. My friends could not offer me any of their drinks because they only had water. I was sooo thirsty for the duration of the hike. I kept on saying “water” every now and then. My mind kept on thinking of water as I took every step. I kept on telling myself that the greatest reward I would get after the hike was to drink ice-cold water once again. I will never forget how I longed and thirst for water that day.

When we got back, I ran towards the nearest store to buy water. I did not even think whether my stomach would react or not, nor whether the water was ice-cold or not. All I wanted was to drink

water! I was so thirsty that all I wanted to do was drink and quench my thirst.

As I so eagerly drank my water, and as it quenched my longing and great thirst, I tried to remember when the last time was when I longed for water so much. Since I wasn’t deprived of it, I had the chance to drink every time I wanted to. I then realized that I took many things for granted.

As I continued to reflect that night, I felt guilty that I came to the point of longing for water immensely, but never of God. As the Lord rebuked me, I prayed for Him to make my heart thirst and long for Him more and more each day. Years passed and I still pray that prayer every day.

I believe that we cannot long nor thirst for something that we haven’t experienced before. It is with the experience that we once had that we long to experience and thirst to have it once again. Our thirst for the Lord starts with cultivating our daily spiritual disciplines, and just being in His presence. As we grow deeper in love with the Lord, we will long to be in His presence and thirst for Him with much more passion.

It’s never too late! Make a difference today and choose to grow a loving relationship with the Lord that will result in your thirst and longing for the One who loves you the most! Long and thirst for the Lord! ✱