

Lessons for the Third Sunday in Lent

March 8, 2026

Psalm 95:1–9 ~ *This call to worship, praises to the God of creation and calls for our faithful response.*

Exodus 17:1–7 ~ *Even when the Israelites doubted God's care, he provided water in the desert.*

Romans 5:1–8 ~ *When we needed it the most, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

John 4:5–26 (27–30, 39–42) ~ *Jesus provided living water to the woman and many others in the village.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: God is With Us in Our Trouble.

The Israelites had crossed through the Red Sea on dry ground and found themselves in an arid land. Without water they would soon die, but even though they complained and blamed God, He provided water miraculously from a rock. God sent his Messiah to rescue us from the greatest trouble of sin and death, and by his death for us turns even our suffering into hope! At a well outside a Samaritan village, Jesus was thirsty, but in his asking a woman for help, he gave her, and many of her neighbors, the living water of faith and life.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: Lord Jesus, you are an ever-present help in time of trouble, always more ready to answer our needs than we are to ask. Your ready help is like a drink of cool water to me, giving me life in place of death, and hope instead of despair. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: We give, and choose to give even at a cost to ourselves (which is to say, sacrificially!), not to receive a reward, but because it is our loving response to Christ's love for us.

OFFERING PRAYER: In all Your gifts, O Lord, we see Your gracious love
And find Your greatest love in Jesus' powerful name!
Accept the gifts we bring and bless them from above
That all we say and do may glorify Your name. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: We have an ongoing emptiness, a need to be filled and refreshed. It is represented by our thirst and dependence on water. It is experienced in our sufferings. It is a result of our sin and alienation from God, but it is restored and reconciled by Jesus' death for us while we were still sinners. Jesus is the source of our life and the means of our access to the Father.

Questions to Consider: What is your greatest physical need?

- What is the obvious contrast between crossing the Red Sea and crossing the desert?
- How does God provide for our greatest spiritual need?
- What thirst did Jesus uncover in the woman at the well?
- What did the woman do with the water of life she received from Jesus?

Bonus on next page: A reminder that droplets of water with the Spirit's touch bring Life!

In Memory of Alex

My little child, today my heart is torn!
So many plans and dreams already lay
Before you in my thoughts when you were born!
Those hopes would never know the light of day.
As glistening droplets fell upon your breast,
And God spoke words of promise to your soul,
The grace of Christ too quickly gave you rest
From your short struggle in this sinful world!
But even if for just a moment's span
Your little lungs inhaled the breath of life,
I thank the Lord, I took you in my hand
To touch with water and the Spirit's Life.
You are a gift from God, so willingly
We give you back to Him who set you free.

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