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## The Thirst John 1:35-42



What is the core of Christianity? Being good? Christian morality – including the Ten Commandments? Love? Faith? The core of Christianity is Christ himself. Yes, it is God in the person of Jesus Christ! It follows then that the objective of Christianity is to experience God in the person of Jesus Christ.

Our reflections are about this experience God in the person of Jesus. I summarise this journey in 7 steps.

1. The thirst
2. Pointers (signs)
3. Journey (search)
4. Invitation
5. The Encounter
6. Transformation
7. Proclamation and mission

The two disciples, Andrew and his companion, were already disciples of John the Baptist (Jn 1:35). They somehow thought that there is more to life than just fishing in the Sea of Galilee. They left behind a flourishing fishing industry in Galilee to follow something more profound. They were perhaps responding to their inner thirst.

The Samaritan woman came to the well (Jn 4), because she was thirsty. The well becomes for her the locus of the experience of God in Jesus. Zacchaeus wanted to see who Jesus was (Lk 19). This desire is the thirst that I am talking about. It is not mere curiosity. He climbs the tree. The tree becomes the locus of encounter. The Magi (Mt 2) come from the East. They follow a star because there is a longing in them.

There is an inner thirst in every one of us that makes us challenge ourselves to transcend the contingencies of daily life. Whether we are aware of it or not, we long for a relationship with the Greater Power beyond ourselves. In Christianity we call this Greater Power, 'God'! The origin of this thirst, I believe, is the religious truth that human beings are created in the image of God (Gen 1:27). Being in the nature of God, we want to discover our true nature. We want to pour ourselves into the source of our own flow. This is the beginning of the Christian life journey.

Psalms express this sentiment of longing & thirsting repeatedly and very powerfully: "Oh God, my God, for you I long. For you my soul is thirsting. My body pines for you" (Ps 63:1). "As a deer yearns for running streams, so I yearn for you, my God. 2 I thirst for God, the living God; when shall I go to see the face of God?" (PS 42:1-2). "It is your face, Oh Lord, that I seek. Hide not your face from me. (Ps 27:8). It is also expressed in the longing to be in Holy of Holies of the temple: "One day within your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere" (Ps 84: 10).

We can easily mistake this thirst – that emptiness within; that restlessness. We try to fill it with wealth, pleasure, fame, comfort... what is it that you are filling it with? But have you found the satisfaction. St Augustine of Hippo after having searched for satisfaction in the pleasures of the world, comes up with that deep awareness and acknowledge: "Our hearts are made for you Lord, and they are restless, until they rest in you".