

KAILUA CHRISTIAN CHURCH
SUNDAY, MARCH 23, 2025
SERMON: WHAT IS THE LEGACY OF WATER?
SCRIPTURES: PSALM 63:1-8 & 1 CORINTHIANS 10:1-13
GUEST SPEAKER: DARBY MCMONAGLE

Psalm 63:1-8

Comfort and Assurance in God's Presence
A Psalm of David, when he was in the Wilderness of Judah.

¹O God, you are my God; I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you;
my flesh faints for you,
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.
²So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,
beholding your power and glory.
³Because your steadfast love is better than life,
my lips will praise you.
⁴So I will bless you as long as I live;
I will lift up my hands and call on your name.
⁵My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast,^[a]
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips
⁶when I think of you on my bed
and meditate on you in the watches of the night,
⁷for you have been my help,
and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.
⁸My soul clings to you;
your right hand upholds me.

1 Corinthians 10:1-13 "Our ancestors crossed the sea; they drank from Christ, the rock."

10 I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. ⁵Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness. ⁶Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷Do not become idolaters as some of them did, as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." ⁸We must not engage in sexual immorality, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹We must not put Christ^[a] to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. ¹⁰And do not complain, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹²So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. ¹³No testing has overtaken you

which is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing, he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

Sermon: WHAT IS THE LEGACY OF WATER?

Good morning, Kailua Christian Church. Let us pray. Lord, may these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight. Let this time we share together be blessed Amen.

Aloha! For those of you who don't know me, I am a master's student at Boston University AND I had the honor of being an intern here last summer. Before I begin, I want to recognize the life and legacy of Auntie Terumi. I only met her a few times this summer. Still, I know she was a pillar in this community whether it was being a magnificent wife, founder and leader of the preschool and children's ministries, or the founder of the original KCC Fellowship program that I had the privilege to continue that legacy.

My heart is with you, Kailua Christian Church as we mourn her loss and celebrate her life's legacy together. During this Lenten season, we are also mourning and celebrating the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

The idea of legacy has always been intriguing to me. Who is responsible for leaving a legacy? How does someone do that? And What are the ingredients to leaving a legacy behind? I don't know about all of you, but when trying to answer big existential questions I like to use imagery to ground me a bit. So, today I am going to talk a bit about water. Like I have heard about the legacy that Auntie Terumi made on KCC's, I want to invite us to dive in to see how we can be like water that gives energy, changes daily, and creates masterpieces.

When I was watching Planet Earth with one of my friends, I learned some facts about water. Fun fact #1) water makes up 70% of our body weight, #2) When water mixes with sulfuric acid it turns white and untouchable and can cause burns to the skin, #3) Stalactites are created because water and minerals, most notably limestone, drip slowly from the ceilings of caves.

Alright, let's dive into fun fact number one. We are made up of 70% water. One time I remember when I felt like David in the wilderness from our reading of Psalm 63 today. When we deplete that supply, our bodies can feel uncomfortable. I remember a time when I was incredibly dehydrated and uncomfortable. I spent a summer as a camp counselor in Baltimore City. One week, one of my teammates said, "Be careful when drinking from these water sources because they don't look up to code." I didn't know any better than to listen to this co-worker, so I reduced my water intake, limiting myself to Gatorade and whatever water bottles were available.

I left camp that week feeling like a raisin. My body could barely move, and my head was pounding. My parents had a day and a half to nurse me back to health before I was out the door again, serving another community of Keiki. Only when I was poured into by those who genuinely love me was I able to serve in the good and faithful legacy of my camp.

A good and faithful legacy does not always stem from depletion. A good and faithful legacy stems from yearning for something more for oneself and for others. Like water, a good and faithful legacy is a continual running stream, not a dam that is stationary and confined to a space or time. When we have people in our lives, like Auntie Terumi, who invested so much into growing the KCC community, it is our responsibility to keep that going.

Just as I had to be nursed back to health by my parents, Mom and Dad, if you are watching, you remember the copious amounts of coconut water that it took to bring color back to my face. A good and faithful legacy stems from the recognition that we cannot go through the wilderness on our own.

A theologian named Jerome L. Skinner is a professor at Andrews University talks a bit about the use of imagery in Psalm 63 when he writes:

“The Psalmist opens the prayer with a familiar expression “my God,” (Pss 3:8, 18:3, 29) and associates his life with a dry and thirsty countryside by pointing to the aridity of his surroundings (cf. Ps 42). The comparison points to an ideological perspective with theological nuance. By using drought imagery as a metonymy of effect, where the intended cause is suffering on account of some judgment of God (Ps 107:33–34), the Psalmist used geography as a figure of his physical distance as well as his emotional trauma as unsettled, uncultivated, and desolate. References to dry (Joel 1:20; 2:22) and parched land (Ps 143:6) are typically used as symbols of judgment or alienation. The physical setting and the memory of past visions of God’s glory and strength prompts the Psalmist to thirst and yearn for God.”

Now, looking at history has its pros and cons, right? Which is what brings me to my fun fact #2: When water mixes with sulfuric acid it turns white and untouchable, deadly. In 1 Corinthians 10: 1-13, we learn about the history of the Israelites. We learned about their struggles with idols and testing Christ. The author of 1 Corinthians goes so far to universalize our experience of the waters of our life coming in contact with sulfuric acid, in other words untouchable when they wrote, “¹³No testing has overtaken you which is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing, he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.”

In other words, God won’t give us more than we can handle. But what about the days when it feels like it is more than we can handle? What do we do then? I remember hearing this verse differently when I was in my last year of undergrad. I had just finished my year of disaster relief service and I was mad at God. How could a good and faithful God take away people’s homes? How could He test me by taking me away from my faith-filled community? How could He let me get so far?

I will never forget one class when my beloved professor, Dr. Smith, referenced Luke 9:23, it says, "take up your cross daily." He talked about this practice as an invitation to reorient our hearts to the trials of life. This invitation is not to say that the temptation to let the idols, or sulfuric acid of life slip into our Spirit is easy to deny. Dr. Smith never sugarcoated the difficulties of life, but he always, always pointed me back to the recognition that we have to choose daily to hold onto the one good and faithful legacy maker, Jesus.

Finally fun fact # 3) The millions of consistent drops of mineral water over thousands of years have created pillars that the Greeks and Romans would be envious of! Whether we like it or not, foundation takes time. It is not about making an impact on millions, but what would it look like if you left a legacy for one person? This is where you come in, KCC. As someone who came to this church knowing no one, I was on a holo holo with my faith, and I was scared (even if I didn't look it). A lot of you have left a good and faithful legacy on my life, one drop at a time.

One drop, Uncle Paul picked me up from the airport and giving me my first lei. One drop, Uncle Aaron and I put up the security cameras together. One drop, Auntie Debbie drove me to the grocery store to get toilet paper when we were low. One drop, Auntie Diane brought us to Zumba and cooking class. One drop, Auntie Myra got me my first pair of slippas. One drop, sitting with Auntie Kammy and talking story. One drop, Uncle Dennis made the step stool for us. Another drop, when Auntie Jennie told us about her lei making. Four drops, when Matt, Pie Pie, Katelyn and Reyn took us interns for food and adventures around the island. One drop, when Pastor Irene trusted me to come back to be with you today.

My prayer for you all this Lenten season is this: I want to invite us to dive in to see how we can be like water that gives energy, changes daily, and creates masterpieces. I pray that you all get to see the Spirit that lives within you. When life brings its sulfuric acid, you choose to pick up your cross, and even offer to help remind someone else about their good and faithful legacy. Finally, I pray that you see the drops of water that are leaving a good and faithful legacy for the future generations. May God bless you and keep you with love and joy. Amen.