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Here's Hope
by Rev. Jerry Rea

It's Hot

Some would say it's not just hot it is absolutely unbearable. It's hard to get a good deep breath of air. We watch the news with a focused attention asking ourselves, "when will this break?" Some have begun to desperately pray. It shouldn't be a surprise to Alabamians that this moves in during July and August. It happens every year. There is something, though, about that August heat that is particularly *desperate* feeling. I've begun to watch the trees for any sign of a breeze. By lunch time, we're already on our fourth bottle of water. Lawn mowing slows down. Whatever there was left in the garden has burned up. Many are using their sprinklers on parched dirt. Most people stay inside after about 10:30 in the morning (with the virus we really don't need any more encouragement to stay inside). Yeah, it's hot.

There are a lot of suggestions for dealing with the heat. As we long for fall, we limit our activities. Anything that requires bodily movement is kept to a minimum. Staying indoors is a no-brainer. Shorts are a given. Have you seen people with cooling scarves? Sunglasses and hats are on every head. Parking in the shade becomes a lifestyle. Here's my favorite. "Drink plenty of water."

The idea is that you need to stay well hydrated. Of all the "solutions" this is the one that works best for me. Water inside helps to deal with the heat outside. It helps stand up the oppressive pressure from the sun, and lack of breeze. My experience has been that I can take the outside heat if my insides are wet. What is *within*, deals best with what is *without*. There's a sermon in that.

Life gets hot. Like the August sun, the troubles and trials of day to day living seem to pile up. Just when you think there will be a let up in things we have to "handle," here comes ten more. Life can be tough. In fact, one might make the argument that life is always tough. Are the senior years easier than the teenage years? Don't you think that every life season has its burdens, and hurdles, and... *heat*? When I finished my teen years I was so very glad to see them in my rear view mirror. But, then there was college. Just about the time my wife and I were really getting adept at being married, God gave us children. Each child is different. Each child has their own set of blessings and trials that mom and dad need to help them work through. Families go through seasons. Some stages of life are more trying than others. Each stage can be hot. Here I am a senior adult now and the challenges have not stopped. Some would argue that senior adulthood is a transition that is the most challenging of all.

Life does get hot; however, there is a way to stay hydrated. Jesus even called Himself the "Water of Life." Two things stick out in this title. All people on the earth need water to live. Jesus is just that essential. For life to have meaning, we need that for which our souls were designed. We need the water of life. Second, in life's heat it really matters if you have the water of Jesus in your life. Just as the sun pushes our body back on its water reserves, just so the normal heat of living call for something within us. If Jesus is within, we can better handle the heat without.

It's Hot, but Jesus is the Water of Life
Jerry Rea