

Jesus replied, “Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life.” (John 4:13–14 NLT)

Proper hydration is essential to athletic performance, particularly in hot environments. The body’s thermoregulatory mechanisms require replacement of water and electrolytes, a well-documented physiological practice that reduces the risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Imagine an athlete working at high capacity during a sports contest (likely you have even experienced this yourself). Consuming water prior to activity prepares the athlete for losing fluid with exertion (because thirst is actually too late an indicator of fluid requirement). Then, at some point during the activity more water must be ingested in order for performance to continue safely.

Though it is equally essential, spiritual “water” works a little differently. In the well known interaction with a Samaritan woman next to Jacob’s well, Jesus compares spiritual water to earthly water. Once a person has consumed the water He offers there is no need for rehydration. Unlike with exercising, refreshment for journeying with Jesus is supplied fully by a “fresh, bubbling spring” that quenches even the most desperate thirst and provides eternal life. This spring is found in God’s Word. It is freely available to everyone. So, drink up!

—Jeff Russell

Exercise Physiology