

Don't Drink the

Water

BY DAN BARKER

As a young forest technician recently graduated from college, I was working with the project forester in the Porcupine Hills of Alberta, Canada. We were assessing what had happened in the forest over the winter in regard to the mountain pine beetle infestation.

As the two of us prepared for our day's activities, the forester noticed I had failed to pack water. I justified my decision by explaining to him that since this was early spring, there would be plenty of water from streams and creeks flowing in the hills. By not carrying any water, I'd be saving weight and room in my day pack. He seemed to accept my reasoning just fine, and off we went for an exhilarating day of work in the bush.

After we had worked for a few hours, I was starting to get thirsty. I could hear a creek flowing not too far distant from where we were, so I headed off through the forest to the creek. What I saw

intensified my thirst: crystal clear water flowing over white, pristine sheets of ice. It was beautiful to the sight, and I knew I was in for a treat. As I knelt by the creek's edge and cupped my hands, the forester said, "I wouldn't drink that if I were you."

I didn't pay any mind to him as I had a thirst to quench. The second the water wet my tongue, I knew I'd made a mistake. I immediately spit the water out. The forester had been right, and now he was having a pretty good laugh at my misfortune. What should have been pure heaven to my taste buds left me with the rancid and putrid flavor of cow manure. I might as well have been chewing on a cow patty!

In the years since this incident, I have seen that same creek disguised in various settings throughout my life. You see, this is how Satan works. He makes sin appear pleasing. He uses various media, such as magazines, TV, the Internet, movies, and even some of our associations. He can make wrong look alluring and stimulating. It isn't until he fools us into partaking that we are then left with a stale and rotten aftertaste, which sears our souls with regret and anguish. **NE**