

THE WATER OF LIFE
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John 7:37-39

1. To date we have covered about two and one half years of Jesus' three year, earthly ministry.
2. Due to the hostility of the Jewish leaders He had spent the majority of His time in Galilee.
3. Now we find Him in Jerusalem during the Feast of Booths. (See Leviticus 23:33-44)
4. In our last message in this series we discussed that the people could not understand Him and comprehend His message because:

- a. He and His teaching were from God, and they neither knew nor understood God.
- b. He came to do God's will, and they had their own agenda.
- c. He came to glorify God, and they were interested in their own glory.

5. In verses 25-39 we see the people voicing their confusion, and Jesus' response to that confusion.

NOTE: In the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the Temple, and began to teach.

- a. Isn't this the man that the rulers want dead? 25
 - b. Could the rulers believe that He really is the Christ? 26
 - c. He could not be the Christ. (He did not conform to the popular Messianic teaching of the day.) See 40-44
 - d. Jesus stated that their confusion was based on their ignorance of God. 28
6. Then in verses 30-36 we see:
 - a. The reason He was not immediately arrested. 30
 - b. The positive response of some. 31
 - c. The response of the Jewish leaders. 32

NOTE: Those who were sent to arrest Jesus were arrested by Him. 45-46

- d. An important statement of fact spoken by Jesus. 34, 36

NOTE: Ultimately Jesus was going to the Father, and apart from Jesus no one can come to the Father. John 14:6

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

7. Water is essential for physical life, and here Jesus presented Himself as the Water of Life from a spiritual perspective.

8. This event took place on the last day of the feast (the final and most important day of the feast).

- a. At some point the Jews added a tradition to the Feast of Booths.
- b. For the seven days of the feast the priests would bring an ornate pitcher filled with water into the Temple while reciting the Hallel (Psalms 113-118)
- c. Then the water would be poured out on the altar as they recited Psalm 118:25.

"O Lord, do save, we beseech You; O Lord, we beseech You, do send prosperity!"

- d. The ritual was in recognition of God's provision in the wilderness and His promise to restore the land to them.

- e. On the eighth day, the Sabbath, they did not bring water into the Temple in recognition of the fact that God had settled them in the land, but the land had not yet been restored to them.

NOTE: It is not clear which day is referred to here; the final day of the feast or the Sabbath that immediately followed the feast.

9. Jesus used the occasion to present Himself as the answer to our spiritual need.

10. We will deal with this passage this week and next.

I. A case supposed. "If any man is thirsty."

A. Bishop J.C. Ryle has an excellent comment on this statement.

"The thirst before us is of a purely spiritual kind. It means anxiety of soul...conviction of sin...desire for pardon...longing after peace of conscience. When a man feels his sin, and wants forgiveness—is deeply sensible of his soul's need, and earnestly desires help and relief—then he is in the state of mind which our Lord had in view when He said, 'If any man thirst...'"

B. Two examples would be:

1. The Jewish people when they responded to Peter's message on the Day of Pentecost.

"Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart (wounded in conscience), and said to Peter, 'Brethren, what shall we do (what are we to do)?"' Acts 2:37

2. The Philippian jailer when he addressed Paul and Silas. "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Acts 16:30

C. We do not see many examples of this thirst today, but those who have experienced it know what I am talking about.

1. This thirst is a byproduct of the Holy Spirit at work in a person's life. John 16:7-11

"But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. 8 "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; 11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged."

2. This thirst is what Jesus was referring to in Matthew 5:3-6.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5 "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth. 6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

D. Again quoting Bishop Ryle, "The very first step toward heaven is to be thoroughly convinced that we deserve Hell."

II. A remedy proposed. "Let him come to Me and drink."

A. This statement implies that we are to drink and keep on drinking.

"If anyone is thirsty, let him keep coming to Me and let him keep drinking."

B. The water Jesus offers us transforms our existence. John 4:7-14

There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." 8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. 9 Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) 10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." 11 She said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water? 12 "You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?" 13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

NOTE: Jesus told the Samaritan woman that living water was hers for the asking, and that, once received, it would constitute an ongoing reality in her life.

III. A promise held out.

A. Jesus promised that those who drank of the water He offered would become fountains of living water.

B. We are plainly told that He was talking about the Holy Spirit and His ongoing work in and through our lives. Gal 5:22-6:1

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. 26 Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

APPLICATION

1. A true child of God hungers and thirsts for that which only God can supply.

2. They constantly look to Jesus as their source.

3. They respond to Jesus' invitation and admonition. Rev 22:17

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.