

Rivers of Living Water

We have learned in our previous lessons in John 7 that Jesus is the Master Teacher, and from Him we must learn and believe about ourselves that we are sinners and about Him that He is of divine origin with a divine mission and a divine destiny. We also know from Jesus, in, for example, the Sermon on the Mount, that the Christian life consists not only of doctrine that must be believed, but also ethical standards to which we must conform. We make a big mistake, however, if we think that the Christian life consists only of doctrine and ethics, for it also includes profoundly spiritual experience. That is what Jesus teaches us in today's text.

John 7:37-39

37 On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. **38** Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" **39** Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Perhaps the most obvious biblical example of deep spiritual blessing in the Christian life would be that of the Apostle Paul. Consider these two excerpts from his writings:

"I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter."

-2 Corinthians 12:2-4

"...for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me."

-Philippians 4:11-13

But here the Lord Jesus describes the deep spiritual blessing available to every believer:

I. **Jesus is the source of every spiritual blessing (v. 37)**

Jesus was making these remarks on the last day of the Feast of Booths, a week-long celebration during which the Israelites lived in booths, remembering and celebrating God's grace toward them as they lived in booths for 40 years in the wilderness. Each day the priests would take water from the Pool of Siloam and pour it upon the altar, as they all recalled how God had provided water from the rock in the wilderness (see Exodus 17 and Numbers 20). During the last day of this very week, Jesus arises to say that He is the Rock and from Him we are to satisfy our thirst.

How often we look to wealth or success or popularity or human acceptance for our satisfaction, rather than satisfying ourselves in Christ alone.

II. **The blessing of Christ overflows to others (v. 38)**

Jesus surprises us with verse 38. We would expect Him to say that if we believe in Him we will receive rivers of living water, but He says that out of us will flow rivers of living water. As Abraham was told, we are blessed in order to be a blessing. If Christ is the Rock from Whom flow refreshing waters, we are little rocks from whom also flow rivers of refreshment for others. We are not only satisfied in Him, but also fortified by Him in order to satisfy others in their deep spiritual thirst.

5. How do we receive the fullness of the Spirit? What keeps us from being filled with the Spirit?

Going Deeper

1. Do you constantly seek the fullness of the Holy Spirit? If not, why not?
2. What do you find yourself seeking, other than Christ, for your satisfaction? What can you do to tame your appetite?