

**Jesus is Fulfillment – Part 2**  
**Pastor Ty Blackburn**  
**John 7:37-39**  
**October 28th, 2012**

Please turn in your Bibles to John 7. We'll be looking at Verses 37-39. We began looking at this passage two weeks ago, and I appreciate Steven bringing the Word of God last week from Isaiah in our absence. I want to return this morning back to this tremendous passage where Jesus utters such a wonderful invitation to us. In John 7:37-39, what we have basically in Verses 37 and 38, is the utterance of Jesus that we really want to focus on today. We outlined this three-verse passage really in three broad points or really three messages. In the first message two weeks ago, we talked about the *setting* of Jesus' words, and then today we're going to focus on the *substance* of Jesus' words, and then next time, Lord willing, we'll focus on the *significance* of Jesus' words. We'll touch a little bit on the significance today, but I really think that needs a whole message, because there's so much here. In the significance of Jesus' words, we're going to see He's giving the Holy Spirit, and that's an area we really need to understand, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, one which is so misunderstood, and which John in his Gospel really lays out for us.

Today we want to focus on the substance of His words in Verses 37 and 38. Let's read God's Word together:

*John 7:37-39 ~ Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*

Let's pray together...

*Our Father, we come to You this morning asking that the entrance of Your Word might give light and that in Your light, we might see light, and we might behold the face of our Savior. We pray this in His Name, Amen.*

I want to quickly review the setting of Jesus' words which we talked about a couple weeks ago, and I had a couple of thoughts that I didn't share last time. We've seen that John is very emphatic that we not forget the setting of Jesus'

statement here. In fact, in six different verses in John 7, he's referenced the feast. He doesn't want us to forget that Jesus is speaking at the Feast of Booths or the Feast of Tabernacles. He wants us to hear these words in the context of that particular Jewish feast. It was one of the three great pilgrimage feasts or festivals that the Jews were given when they left Egypt and went into the land of Canaan.

God gave them three yearly events on the calendar that were really kind of like the structure of just their schedule. You had the Feast of Passover in March/April. You had the Feast of Pentecost in May/June. You had the Feast of Tabernacles in September/October. These were the regular feasts. There were other feasts that God added in, but these were the three that every male was supposed to go to the place of God's presence each year. They were called Pilgrimage Feasts. They were supposed to leave. If they lived in Northern Israel, they were supposed to make the trek down to wherever the tabernacle was.

Remember, the tabernacle was the tent, the portable place of God's presence, but then later, the portable place of God's presence becomes permanent, the temple in Jerusalem. God willed for every Jewish male, three times a year, to appear before Him in Jerusalem by these three feasts – one in March, one in May/June, and one in October. So this would have become a part of the regular way they framed their calendar.

You know how we think. I don't know about you, but I tend to think in terms of holidays that for me fall on my favorite times of year, because well, you have football season, you have the World Series, the end of baseball season, and the beginning of basketball season. I mean, just from a sports standpoint, what more can you have, right? But you also have the turning of the colors like we see today, the fall colors where you see God's glory. You have the lead up to Thanksgiving and Christmas, and don't you kind of think in terms of where we're going to be at Thanksgiving? Are we going to visit your family or mine? Where are we going to go? For Christmas, how are we going to do that? Easter is another holiday. We, of course, in the church build our lives around it. Well, in Jewish thought, they built their lives around these pilgrimages, and faithful Jews still today make these pilgrimages, but even more so, God intended them to frame their year with these festivals and the significance of these festivals.

So this particular festival, the third in the Jewish year, the third major festival, was to remind them continually of the 40 years that the Jews had God dwelling visibly among them. In all of their history, there was this 40-year period where they saw God's glory, the shekinah glory of God, visibly manifest. A pillar of fire burned

every day there in the center of their camp. God's presence was visibly present. It appeared as a pillar of smoke by day and a pillar of fire by night. So they saw God's glory. For 40 years, they had that visible testimony of God's presence, and in that 40 years, they were dwelling in tents. God's glory cloud dwelt over the tent of meeting. So the Feast of Tabernacles was about remembering that time, the time when God had delivered them from Egypt, dwelt in their presence, and was leading them into Canaan, into the land of plenty, the land flowing with milk and honey. So there's great joy around this feast because it was celebrating God's glory coming to dwell among them, and also it celebrated in His providence, His gracious provision.

We noted how in the calendar of Israel, the Fall, was the time where they had so much of the rich harvest that came in. There was the olive harvest, which meant olive oil. The pomegranate harvest, the citrus fruit harvest, and the fig harvest all happened right before the Feast of Tabernacles. The grape harvest and new wine, all of these things had come together at this time, and so it was also called the Feast of Ingathering in the Old Testament. The Feast of Ingathering is the Feast of Tabernacles. The idea was the presence of God came to dwell among us, and this feast celebrates the presence of God coming and the provision of God, because when you're in the presence of God, you have the provision of God. As God is kind of baby talking with His people in giving these pictures, the implicit message is that when you have the presence of God, you have the provision of God. All of your needs are met in the presence of God. This was the message of the Feast of Tabernacles.

As they celebrated, we talked about how they had one of the other things that developed in this, in God's providence. One of the images of the feast was the rite of water-drawing where there was a joyful, enthusiastic procession on the seven days of the feast. There was an eighth day where they didn't do this, but for the first seven days, there would be a procession that would start at the temple, and the high priest and the priests would lead the people in a joyful procession, singing and dancing before the Lord. They would go from the temple courts to the pool of Siloam, and the high priest or the designated priest would take a golden pitcher that was holy to the Lord, dip it in the pool of Siloam, and they would take the pitcher back in joyful procession to the temple grounds. They would circle the altar in this joyful procession, and then pour the water out as a drink offering before the Lord.

In fact, there was a Rabbi who said, "He who has not seen..." Listen to this, the kind of joy that was involved in this at this time. "He who has not seen the place of water drawing has never seen joy in his life." If you haven't seen the procession of

water-drawing, a first century Rabbi wrote, you have never seen joy in your life. Such was the joy of this, because remember, to an agrarian society, it meant the best of the food was here. It meant the fact that we are God's people and He dwells among us, of all the families of the earth. And another thing about this whole idea of the rite of water-drawing being so pivotal is that I mentioned last time there was six months basically of dry season. In Israel, in the dynamics of the geography there, there's a variance about how much rain different levels get. Some places get as much as 55 inches of rain a year. Some places get as little as 8 or 9 inches. So you go from desert areas all the way up to very fertile areas. But one thing that is uniform throughout all of those different ranges is they only get rain from mid-October to April. Now, think about that. There is no rain in Israel from May to mid-October. Zero. I mean, occasionally, it's one of the things they write down on the calendar, "It rained in June." Only, the last time it did that was 30 years ago. It never rains in California. I'm sorry. That just came to me. It's kind of like California if you've ever gone to California. I remember going out there some years back for my first Shepherd's Conference and it rained in March, and that's kind of the way they were saying it. "It never rains in March here." Anyway...

But think about if you're in an agrarian society, everybody lives by the amount of rainfall and the amount of flow of water in the river so they can irrigate their crops. It has not rained for 6 months. The Lord ordains this festival and this rite of water-drawing. It's not rained for 6 months, but you know God's going to give us water. God's going to give us rain. We're eating the bounty of this last year's crops, and we're trusting Him to give it. All of that was wrapped up into this joyful festival. For seven days, they make that procession. On the seventh day, they circle the altar not once but seven times. There's this great festival of joy. The eighth day, though, is a more solemn occasion. It's a solemn assembly. There is no water-drawing rite. It's a time for reflection, a time to think about what God has done. I think it's representative of the fact to think about going into the land. On that eighth day, the great day of the feast, Jesus gets up and says when there's no water-drawing rite, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink." He's saying He's the fulfillment of the feast. "Everything that the feast talked about, I am," Jesus is saying. "Everything that you need – you need the presence of God, you need the provision of God, come to Me, and I will give you the presence of God and the provision of God." That's what we bleed from the context or the setting of Jesus words.

## The Substance of Jesus' Words

Now, to the substance of Jesus' words, let's analyze these more carefully this morning. We're going to see there are really three points in this part of the message in the substance of Jesus' words. What we see that Jesus does is first of all *He Addresses a Need*, then secondly, *He Issues a Command*, and thirdly, *He Makes a Promise*. He address a need, He issues a command, and makes a promise. Let's look at this.

### 1) He Addresses a Need:

***John 7:37 ~ Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty..."***

The most fundamental and basic human need, the need for water, is astounding. I remember when I first heard how much of our body is made up of water – 60% usually. Sometimes it's as much as 70%. It varies from person to person, but 60% of our bodies is water. Isn't that astounding? More than half of all of us in this room is water. There's actually an interesting illustration of this in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Do you remember when Lot's wife looks back? Do you remember that? She looks back at Sodom with a sense of longing for the world. God had said, "Don't look back," and remember what happened to her? She became a pillar of salt. What happened? All of the water in her body evaporated, was vaporized, and all that was left were the minerals. That's the other 40%. That's how important water is to us. You can only live two or three days without water.

So Jesus says, "***If anyone is thirsty...***" Everyone is thirsty, but not everyone realizes it, and He's making the clear point that everyone who realizes that they're thirsty, "Come to Me." He's claiming to be able to satisfy man's deepest need, and He's using the image to address that deepest need, the image of the need for water. The need for water is in reality the need for the presence of God. The Old Testament picks up on this. Maria played a beautiful offertory this morning. Look with me at Psalm 42. That offertory contained these words from Psalm 42:

***Psalm 42:1 ~ As the deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for You, O God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; When shall I come and appear before God? 3 My tears have been my food day and night, While they say to me all day long, "Where is your God?" 4 These things I remember and I pour out my soul within me. For I used to go along with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God, With the voice of joy and thanksgiving, a multitude keeping festival. 5 Why***

*are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him For the help of His presence. 6 O my God, my soul is in despair within me; Therefore I remember You from the land of the Jordan And the peaks of Hermon, from Mount Mizar. 7 Deep calls to deep at the sound of Your waterfalls; All Your breakers and Your waves have rolled over me. 8 The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime; And His song will be with me in the night, A prayer to the God of my life.*

Psalm 63 says the same thing, which is that our need for God is expressed in our need for water:

*Psalm 63:1 ~ O God, You are my God; I shall seek You earnestly; My soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You, In a dry and weary land where there is no water. 2 Thus I have seen You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory. 3 Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips will praise You.*

What satisfies the heart of man is God. This is a need that all have. Everyone needs water and everyone needs God. That's the message of the Old Testament. We need God. We thirst for God. We need the presence of God. We long for a personal experience of the presence of the Living God. Every single person needs God like that. Saint Augustine said, "Thou hast created us for Thyself and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee." God made us for Him. So to be disconnected from Him is to be disconnected from the essence of life, what we were made for.

Pascal, the philosopher and Christian theologian said, "There is within the heart of man a God-shaped void, a God-shaped emptiness." There's an emptiness that yearns to be filled. All men long for God. All men long for His presence. The irony is that sin has so warped us that though we yearn for Him with every part of our beings, the Bible says no man seeks God, not even one. This is one of the illustrations of the insanity of sin. Sin is insanity. Why did Adam and Eve rebel against God who was the very fountain of life? It was insanity. It was ridiculous. They pass along to us this aversion to God, but God is the one thing that we need.

R. C. Sproul, commenting on this, says, "All men need God, no one seeks God, but all people seek the benefits of God without seeking God." Everybody needs God. They have within them a God-shaped emptiness that can only be filled in the presence of the Living God, and yet they run from Him. But they're trying to fill

up that emptiness. They're trying to find joy. They're striving to find love. They yearn for peace, but they try to find these things apart from God. Jesus is saying, "Your emptiness can only be filled by Me, and if you are thirsty, if you realize your emptiness, come to Me, and I will fill you." This image of water is something that John really draws on. He crafts his Gospel together in such a beautiful way. Remember we talked about the fact that of all the Gospel writers, he wrote the latest, about 85 A.D., probably some 20 years after Luke wrote, and almost 40 years after Matthew and Mark wrote. John is an old man having walked with Jesus during His earthly ministry. Probably 55 years after Jesus has ascended to heaven, John writes this Gospel as an old man reflecting on the wonder of Christ, the Spirit inspiring him, and he puts together a very selective account that fills in the gaps and illustrates some themes. One of the things that you see is he is putting some themes together that run from chapter to chapter in such a beautiful way.

One of them is the idea of thirst, water, and our need for God. Do you remember John is the only one that tells us about the Samaritan woman? None of the other Gospels tell us that account. What's the point of the account with the Samaritan woman? Remember, He goes to the Samaritan woman at the well and He says, "Sir, why do you being a Jew, ask me a Samaritan, for a drink? That's not appropriate. Jews and Samaritans don't have dealings together." She was surprised since Jews only had a racial hatred for Samaritans, and so how could he possibly want me, a dirty Samaritan, to give him a drink? And Jesus says, "That's not really the surprising thing, that a Jew would ask a Samaritan for a drink. The surprising thing is that you would not ask *Me* for a drink, because I am the One who has Living Water. That's the astonishing thing is that you're standing by the fountain of Living Water, and you're not asking Me for a drink." She's missing the point. Remember, He's using that image of Living Water to say something Spiritual, and she's like, "Hey, I want that living water. Show me how to get that living water so that I don't have to come all the way here to draw and get a bucket of water. I'd like to have living water flowing right into my house." He begins to talk with her about worship. What is Living Water? What is He talking about? He says, "Living Water is true worship."

In fact, turn over to John 4, and let's look at Verses 23 and 24.

***John 4:23 ~ But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.***

What He's saying is, "Listen, the Living Water I'm talking to you about is the ability to come into the presence of God to see Him as He is. This is the essence of worship is to see God as He is, to behold in reality and in truth the wonder of His attributes, to reflect back to Him the radiance of His worth. That's worship." Worship is to see Him and have a proper estimate of Him. It's to see Him and reflect back to Him. That is what you and I were hardwired to do. That is the only thing that satisfies the yearnings of the human heart, is to see the excellence of God and to reflect back to Him that excellence. That's what we are thirsty for. We're thirsty to worship. We're thirsty to see Him and to worship.

This idea of worship, like I said, is hardwired into us. Someone has said, "The only question is not whether you will worship, but whom or what you will worship," and that's right. Everybody worships. This is why people go nuts over rock stars. Isn't it amazing? I mean, I watched those old things like channel 8 talking about Elvis, and sometime back we were watching that, and you watch these girls. This was the 50's. Surely they had more dignity and sense back then than we do now, and they're going nuts over Elvis Presley. I mean, I think Elvis was a pretty good singer and everything. He's got a good voice obviously, but going nuts over him? What is that? They were falling down and swooning over him. People want to worship.

Why do people go nuts over athletes? Why do they idolize athletes? Why is there something in us that wants to lift people up? It's the desire to worship. It really is something that feels right. When we see excellence, when we see beauty, when we see someone do something really well, what do we want to do? We want to applaud. Isn't it wonderful to see something done well and to applaud it? Isn't it amazing how we will talk about it afterwards? It's in our wiring. We watch a ball game in which someone does something tremendous, and we say, "Did you see that play? Did you see how he dove, and he got up, and threw from his knees, and he got him out? Did you see that??" "Yeah, I saw that." The celebration of it brings joy. We see someone do something with excellence, and we want to talk about it. That's just a little inkling of an illustration, where God created us to look at all that is truly excellent and to praise it, and not to praise it in itself, but to praise it as a means to praising Him who made it. We yearn for that. There's something greatly satisfying in worshipping. You worship rightly any time you see something and ascribe the proper value to it.

I remember some years back being at the Olympics. I've shared this before. In 1996 Olympics, I saw Michael Johnson in person. One day we went to the Olympics and we saw him win the 200 meters and get a gold medal. He was the

heavy favorite, but I was there with a friend of mine, and we were sitting far enough away that I couldn't see that well, but this guy had a better eye for this kind of thing, and I heard him say to me as we watched the gun go off and the race starts, "Johnson stumbled." Now, I didn't see it, because it wasn't much of a stumble, but it was talked about after the race. "Yeah, Michael Johnson misstepped coming out of the blocks. This is the day that he's trained for all these years, and he missteps coming out of the blocks. He still won the gold medal. Not only did he win the gold medal, but he broke the world record. He broke the world record so far that that guy who came in second also broke the world record. What an amazing race. We sat there and watched that.

He came around that corner, and you know when you watch track and field in person you can see that they're coming around at an angle, because they're running so fast that they're leaning. It was unbelievable, and I remember the PA guy kind of got caught up, and he said, "Michael Johnson has just broken the world record! Shattered the world record!" He savored the moment. That's what the PA guy said. He got wax poetic and it was appropriate. I thought to myself, "It was appropriate to savor this moment." This guy on the most important day of his life rose to the occasion. Even with a stumble, he pulled up everything that he had, all of his training, and in that moment, he reached a zenith and he won the gold medal. There was clapping and yelling, and people were going nuts. Why? You can't watch that and not express, "That was excellent." And here, 16 years later, I'm getting a little bit excited talking about it now. Why? Because God made us to see excellence and affirm it, and there's something incredibly dignifying about that.

When we really see excellence and we affirm it, it gives us a sense of value. But how much more does it give us a sense of value to behold the One who is the Author of all excellence? We're created to see Him as He is in all of His majesty, in all of His beauty, He who never missteps, He who never falters, He who does all things well. To see Him in His glory is what you and I were created to do, to see Him with unveiled faces and from our hearts to affirm, "You, oh Lord. Not unto us, Oh Lord, but unto You be glory." That's what we were wired to do. Nothing is more satisfying. Nothing will satisfy the thirst of the soul like that. Jesus is saying to these people at the feast who are celebrating a typological expression of what He's come to do, "I am here. Now you who are thirsty, come unto Me, and I'm going to satisfy your thirst." So He addresses that need. The need is the need for God, the longing to worship. That's the first thing. Jesus addresses the need.

## 2) He Issues a Command:

In Verse 37, He says, “*If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.*” It’s actually a 2-part command. It could be translated more accurately as, “Let him come to Me, and let him drink,” because both verbs are parallel, and they’re both imperatives. The Greek language allows for third person imperatives. We don’t have that in English. We have second person imperatives. We say, “Come drink.” This says, “Let him come. Let him drink,” but it’s a command, not a suggestion. It’s a command. He issues a command. “Come to Me and drink.” It’s interesting also that not only is this a command, but both verbs are in the Greek middle voice. Verbs have tense. They have mood, which is imperative, and they have voice. Voice is usually active or passive. In English, we have active and passive voice.

Active voice verb: *The boy hit the ball.* You see in the active voice that the subject is doing the action. We could say, “The boy was hit by the ball.” That’s passive voice. The subject, the boy, received the action of the verb. That’s passive. The middle voice in Greek is where the subject does the action and receives it. He does it and he receives it. So what he’s saying here is, “Let him come to Me for himself. Let him drink for himself.” By putting it in that voice, He emphasizes in a deeper way the personal element here. It’s a command that must be personally responded to. So the idea of the command is it’s a commitment that He’s asking for, but it’s a personal commitment. “Come to Me and drink.” It’s experiential. It’s not merely intellectual. “I will meet your need. You are thirsty for God. You’re thirsty for the presence of God.”

Jesus is saying, “I am the way to God. There is no other. There is no other way to God. People think there’s another way to God. There’s not.” They may have found experiences. They may have found spiritual experiences. Certainly people find that. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 9-10 that when people worship and they worship not Christ, they worship demons. There are spiritual realities out there. So Buddhism has fulfillment in some way. Hinduism has fulfillment. Every false religion has fulfillment, but only the Gospel of Jesus Christ gives true fulfillment, because only Jesus is the Way to God. That’s what He’s saying here. “If you are thirsty, come to Me and drink.”

Now, in this idea of coming to Me and drinking, He uses the image here again to express that it’s experiential. It’s not theoretical. He doesn’t mean just accept who I am in a theoretical sense. He means, “Accept Me personally. Drink. Take Me into yourself,” as it were. “Give yourself to Me and let Me give Myself to you. I am his and he is Mine.” That’s what He’s saying. That’s what it means to be a Christian.

It's not theoretical. It is real and it's personal, but we see in the passage that, "Come to Me and drink," is paralleled by belief. Look what He says. "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink." You would then expect Him to say, "He who *drinks* of Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" But He doesn't say, "He who *drinks* of Me..." He says, "***He who believes in Me...***" So to come to Him and drink is parallel to 'believe'. He's giving an image to illustrate what belief is.

We said earlier that Martin Luther, in the Reformation, recovered the doctrine by getting back to the Bible, by having the Scriptures opened again and seeing it, by seeing what it really says. He came to understand that man's not justified by rituals and rites, and all of the various things like indulgences, and all the errors of medieval Catholicism. No, man is justified through faith alone, just as He's saying here. How do you get to God? How does a sinner come back to God? You come back to God through faith.

***John 4:38 ~ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'*** 39 ***But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; ...***

So the idea is faith. The command is, "Come to Me and drink." The command is really, "Believe on Me," but not in a theoretical way, yet in a personal and experiential way. If you thirst for God and His presence, you must go to Christ. He *invites* you to come? No, He *commands* you to come. So He addresses the need, He issues a command, and then He makes a promise.

### 3) He Makes a Promise:

In Verse 38, this is really the reason. He graciously gives a reason. "Come to Me and drink," is the command, and now He gives a reason for you to come.

***John 7:38 ~ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'***

He gives a glorious word picture in making this promise, and the promise is one of complete and utter fulfillment. Look at that. '***From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.***' In fact, the emphasis really is heightened even by the word order in the original. Really, Verse 38 says, "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, 'Rivers out of his belly will flow of living water.' That's the word order. Rivers of living water brackets this phrase. So the idea is emphasizing

by the word order 'rivers of living water' not just an abundance of water, but living water. Now this is instructive when we consider the setting again. I mean, we're talking about first century Israel, remember, where it doesn't rain but a little less than 6 months a year, and that's why for their water supply, they had cisterns that they would catch that rain water in, and the pool of Siloam was basically at the end of these cisterns, and so it flowed into the pool of Siloam, and they would go and draw water to drink out of those cisterns.

Imagine if that's what you had to do. Have you ever taken some water to bed at night, and you have a glass of water by your bed? The next night, you think, "I'm thirsty. I'm going to go get that water that I put here last night, or maybe it was three days ago. I think I'm going to drink that water." I don't know about you, but I like to go get some fresh water out of the tap. I like to have some living water, because the other water tastes stale, doesn't it? Well they lived in this society where they had stale water all the time. What's better than having living water, fresh water, flowing water that you can drink? He's saying, "I'm going to meet your need of thirst by giving you Living Water, flowing water, and not just Living Water, but I'm going to give you rivers of Living Water."

Did you get that? Not a river of Living Water. That would be enough, wouldn't it? I mean, I would be happy with a fountain of Living Water, but God says, "No, not a fountain. A fountain is not enough. I'm going to give you a river. No, a river's not enough. I'm going to give you rivers (plural) of Living Water, and it's going to come out of your innermost being," that is, your belly, literally. Or really the word comes from a word that means hollowness or emptiness. "Out of your emptiness, I'm going to make flow rivers of Living Water. You're thirsty. You are empty, but I'm going to fill you with such fullness that the only picture that you need to have in your mind is rivers of this Living Water.

What He's saying is that where there was emptiness and hollowness, now there is fullness and abundance. Not only is there abundance, but super abundance, indescribable, unimaginable satisfaction. Where there was yearning, and emptiness, and longing for God, now there is abundance. Think about like I said earlier, people look for the benefits of God, but they don't look for God. What are the benefits people are looking for? If you ask people what they're searching for, if you ask them, "What are the most important things in life?" people might say, "Love. That's what matters. Love. To have someone love me. That's what I want." God made us to need love. He made us that way. He wired us that way. Where do you really find love? You only find love in God. I mean, after all, God is love, and what does He give to Christians?

Paul says:

***Ephesians 3:18 ~ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.***

That's the kind of love. Do you see that? It's rivers of love that flow into the heart of the Christian. What do you need? What are you searching for? Well, joy. We codified that in our Declaration of Independence: *We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.* The idea is everybody wants to pursue happiness. They want to pursue joy. Where do you find joy? You find joy in God. The Psalmist says in Psalm 16:11, "In Your presence, O Lord, is fullness of joy; at Your right hand, there are pleasures forever more." Where do you find joy? You find joy in the presence of God.

Jesus says, "I'm going to be that for you. I'm going to give you the presence of God. I'm going to give you joy." This festival was all about joy. Jesus is there to give real joy. Peter gives us something of the total fulfillment that comes to the Christian when he talks in 1 Peter 1 about our suffering. When we look at Christ, when we see God at work in our lives, we're filled with joy inexpressible. That's what the Christian experience is about – joy inexpressible. People need love. They need joy. Where do you find those? You find those in God.

Well, what about peace? *I just want peace. I'm anxious. I'm fearful. I want peace.* God will give us peace. God is the God of peace. He calls His Son the Prince of Peace. Where do you find peace? You find peace in God. The Christian life is to be characterized by peace. Even though we come to drink and we truly know God, isn't it amazing how we forget and we stop drinking? And then we wonder why we're thirsty. *Why am I so anxious? Why am I so depressed? Why do I feel so unloved?* It's because I'm not abiding in God. The Christian life is about learning to move from emptiness to fullness continually, and to realize that the fountain of rivers of Living Water is already in your heart if you know Christ, if you've repented of your sins, and if you've seen the sufficiency of Jesus Christ that He came and lived a perfect life. God became man in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth at a point in time, and He lived a perfect life. He walked the trails of this sin-sick world, was tempted in every way, and yet He was without sin, and was able to offer Himself as an unblemished sacrifice fulfilling all of the imagery of the Old

Testament. There He is, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, and on the cross, God made Him who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. God poured out His wrath upon the sin-bearer, and He gave the punishment for every sin that everyone who would ever believe would ever commit – every sin – past, present and future, laid upon Christ, and God poured out His wrath upon His Holy Son in our place, so that we could be clean.

If you believe in Him, then you are clean forever, and then God grants you His Spirit. He gives you His Holy Spirit. That's what He's saying here. The Spirit is that which Jesus is talking about. Rivers of Living Water, this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive. He gives His Spirit, and then the Spirit dwells in you. You need love. So then there is the Spirit in you already to confirm to you God's love. He's the Spirit of adoption who reminds you when you feel unlovely that you have a Heavenly Father that you can say, "Daddy," to. He's not a distant, remote Judge anymore. If you are in Christ, if you've repented and believed, He now invites you to cry out, "Abba, Father! Papa!" That's the idea. You can go to God like that at any moment. Any time you find yourself in sin, and you're remembering, "Oh no, what am I doing??" the Scripture says you are to come boldly into His presence. You come into the presence of the King like a child of the King. You can come into the study or into the throne room of the King at any moment. "Papa, I need You." That's how we're to come. You need peace. He gives that peace. You need joy. He gives that joy.

I mentioned earlier we forget. We get anxious. I love that promise in Philippians 4:7, which tell us to be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving,... every time you're anxious, lay it before God. Cast all of your anxiety upon Him, all of your cares, for He cares for you. What's the promise in Philippians 4:7? Cast all your cares upon Him. Make your requests before Him with thanksgiving, and the peace of God which surpasses comprehension, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Did you see that? That's the infinite way God meets our need for love. It's the height, the width, the length, and the breadth. It's four dimensional. It's peace that passes comprehension. It's joy that is inexpressible. Those are the birthrights of every child of God, and you have that because He gives you His Spirit. When you're a Christian, He makes His presence to dwell within you. This is the wonder of it. Now we don't need to pitch a tent around the tent. He comes to take up residence in you. When you're born again, the Spirit of God, the infinite God, comes to live inside of you. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6:19...

***1 Corinthians 6:19 ~ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?***

Your body becomes the temple. The Spirit comes to live inside of you all because of Jesus Christ. Jesus says, “You’re thirsty. I can meet your need. There’s no other place to meet your need but in My presence. Come to Me. Believe in Me. Receive Me to yourself, and I will give you My Spirit without measure, and you will have fullness upon fullness.”

Let’s pray together...

*Our Father, we thank You for the promises of Your word, which are yes and amen, in Jesus Christ. We thank You that You do satisfy and only You satisfy the needs of our hearts. Lord, how quick we are to forget that You are everything that we need. How grateful we are that You are determined through our circumstances, through our lives, to teach us that Jesus is all that we need. Sometimes we have to see that He’s all that we have so that we can realize that He’s all that we need. Thank You for Your faithfulness. Thank You for doing everything necessary to make it possible for sinful, dirty people like us to be made holy and fit as dwelling places for the Holy One of Israel. God, we pray that you would help those that are here that have not repented and believed. Grant them repentance today. Grant them faith. Help them to run to Christ, to obey His command to come to Him, and to drink of Him, to place their faith in Christ. We pray this in Jesus Name, Amen.*

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