

“The Living Water”
John 7:37–39
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December 31, 2017 • Evening Service

This is the last day of 2017 and it’s been a year of feasting for many and probably of famine for many as well. In this study I want to look at the last day of a feast in Jerusalem which is the Feast of Tabernacles, the Feast of Booths. We are going to hear the Word of Christ that He spoke to the people on that last day of that feast and hope we will hear Christ’s Word as He speaks to us on this last day of 2017.

John 7:37–39 says [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.*

Prayer:

Father, thank You for this opportunity to come before You in this study and lift Your Name up in praise as we lift our hearts up with prayer. Lord, 2017 has been a great year for so many and a hard year for many but as we come to the close of it we rejoice Lord that You have sustained us through it all. Lord, we look forward by faith to 2018 and believe that You will satisfy us. You are the One who is more immeasurably more than we could ever think or imagine and come and do a mighty work in 2018. Lord, that is what we desire and long for that You would do a mighty work in us and through us because we know people that need to know You, living in darkness, decay and will die an eternal death but Lord, You have given us life, light and eternal joy. We pray that You would do a great work in us this coming year and that You would speak mightily through us to all those we would come in contact with and that we would love them well with the Gospel of Christ. Lord, we pray now that You would speak mightily to us through Your Word that is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Bring us light, Lord and that it would be correctly handled so that You would be glorified and exalted. We pray this in Christ’s Name, Amen.

From this text in John we see Jesus stand up in the midst of a crowd and it was the last day of the Feast of Booths, the Feast of Tabernacles. What were they celebrating? They were celebrating how the Lord carried them through the wilderness. The Lord provided a cloud covering by day, fire by night, food from heaven, and water from a rock. So He guided them and provided for them through their wilderness wanderings. So Israel during this time of feasting would celebrate and remember God’s provision.

As you look back on 2017 it is a time to celebrate the provisions, even though it has probably brought difficulty to you as it has to me this past week in which the Lord laid to rest one of my uncle’s. I had the privilege to do his funeral but that was a difficult thing to say ‘goodbye’ to an uncle. Many of you have said ‘goodbye’ to those you love in this past year and I’m sure it was difficult. Many of you have said ‘hello’ in 2017 to a new life and new beginnings. I am about to say ‘hello’ in 2018 to my fifth son, Lord willing. Some probably think I’m crazy and I am crazy for it is crazy around my house.

Through it all the common theme is that the Lord has sustained you. So whether it was feasting or famine we have reason to rejoice as we look back on 2017. I encourage you to do

that. I encourage you to get together with family and rejoice in the Lord's provision, of how He took care of you in 2017. Rejoice in how He nourished you and nurtured you. He provided for you because of His love and His covenant faithfulness to you. He did a great work even though you may not completely see it. Know that He was carrying out the greatest work that He has done in you which is the work of salvation. For nothing else, rejoice in the work that He began as He will carry it out to completion.

As Israel celebrated and remembered God's goodness Jesus Christ stepped onto the scene and He had words of life for them. John 7:37a says [37a] *On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out...* Teachers back then would sit when they would teach but He stood because He had an important announcement for all of the people to hear and He didn't speak in a whisper for He cried out! This is what He would want us to hear today for He cries out through His Word announcing this truth so that the people would hear it and believe it. He did not want them to miss it and they wouldn't miss it. He was not sitting down and whispering but He was standing up and crying because He had Good News of great joy. As we go forward in 2018 God has given us Good News of great joy and we are called as well to stand with Christ.

During this particular feast they had a plan to kill Christ. They were pursuing Him to arrest Him to do Him harm. If I knew the bullies in the neighborhood were going to do me harm I would find a different route home or a different way to hide to get to my destination. I wouldn't want to walk right into the harm if I knew it was coming but because of the joy set before Him on the cross, the joy of glorifying God and fulfilling God's command with the mission upon His life He stood, even in the midst of difficulty, in the midst of those who wanted to harm Him and bring Him great pain. He stood and cried out because He had a great love. He knew that He would suffer great pain but His love was greater.

His love is greater today, for us and for the nations. Even though you might suffer great pain, is your love great? This was a great challenge to me as I prayed about this. I said "Lord, give me a greater love for people and that I would be willing to endure pain and hardship for their sake and that I would let go of my agenda for their sake." Jesus stood up and cried out!

John 7:37b says [7b] "***If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.***" The invitation went out to everyone and the invitation goes out today to everyone and anyone. If anyone is wandering in a dry land where there is no water or gone and dug a broken cistern that holds no water or has a thirst that this world cannot satisfy or has a longing and a dryness or is weak and weary because their soul is thirsty, then let them come to Me. Jesus knew that He alone could satisfy that thirst.

It reminds us of the words from Isaiah 55 and it's one of my favorite passages in the Old Testament. Isaiah 55:1-3 says [1] "*Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. [2] Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. [3] Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.*"

God says 'Come to Me, you have no money, no value, nothing of worth so come to Me.' That invitation given through the prophet Isaiah and through Christ here in John 7 on the last day of this feast is the same invitation that He wants to give, not only to us but through us in 2018 to those we come into contact with to call them to come to Jesus Christ because we know they are thirsty. We know this is a dry and weary land where there is no water. Many of us have

gone to those broken cisterns and sought out others things to satisfy our thirst but we have realized that in those things is brokenness and it's like drinking dust. So we responded because the Holy Spirit wooed us to Christ. Now the Holy Spirit wants to use us to call out to those who thirst, in 2018, this Gospel invitation that Jesus gave to those at the feast.

This invitation is 'if anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.' He said 'drink' and not 'sip.' We are to ingest, to take it down, to satisfy, to soak in the glory of Christ because He alone is worthy. He alone will satisfy.

I love to watch football and there is always Gatorade commercials during football. Gatorade is known as the thirst quencher. Here are these guys that are giving it all on the field as they are dripping sweat so they come in and drink Gatorade and their muscles are rejuvenated. They go back into the game and they conquer. A great glorious way is Jesus Christ as we come to Him weak, weary, and beat down from the world. He satisfies us and rejuvenates our soul. He is the spiritual, eternal, Thirst-Quencher that is not temporary. I don't have to keep going back to Him once He has come into my life. My salvation is never lost. Now I do go to Him daily but He satisfies immediately and daily.

It is the same words that Jesus spoke to the woman at the well. He said to the woman at the well in John 4:13-14, [13] *Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, [14] but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."* With this Water you will never have to thirst again and this is the same invitation that Christ gives in John 7 and the one He wants to speak through us in 2018. So drink deeply of Jesus Christ.

John 7:38 says [38] *Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'* Are you believing in Jesus for 2018? Are you believing that He will satisfy you? Are you believing that He will be in you living water? Are you believing that He has given you His Spirit and His Spirit will empower you to go and proclaim His goodness? Sometimes when I think about evangelism and certain people as I minister to them, I get nervous and think 'I don't have the answer for that person' or 'I'm not bold enough for that person' and might not be but He is. He is the One who indwells me.

God, through the wilderness wanderings in the Old Testament, gave them water from a rock that followed them. Now He gives us water from the Rock who is inside of us. This Rock is always with us. It is the Rock of Jesus Christ. It is the Rock of His Holy Spirit. It is in whoever believes in Him. Do you believe Him this year that He will empower you? Do you believe that He will satisfy you? Do you believe that He will provide for you? He will provide everything you need for life and Godliness. He will provide answers for the Hope that is within you. He will provide faith to proclaim His truth and He will provide the power and authority to go and do it.

'As the Scripture has said' is a key phrase in John 7:38 that tells us we don't believe in Jesus on our own fancy but as the Scripture has said so 2018 must be a year that we understand what the Scriptures say. If we are going to understand what the Scriptures say then we are going to have to listen. Faith comes by hearing and hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17) so let 2018 be a year in which you are in the Word. Listen to the Father as He speaks to you through His Word. Allow Him to equip you with His Word because we must believe in Him as the Scriptures say.

The Scriptures say [6] *And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ* (Philippians 1:6). [4] *Little children, you are*

from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world (I John 4:4). [37] No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us (Romans 8:37). [26] And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. [27] And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect (his saints) from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven (Mark 13:26–27).

The second time He comes He will come to judge the world and there is a heaven for those who believe and a hell for those who refuse to. The Scriptures tell us to go and love your neighbor and tell them the Gospel so that heaven can await them. Do we believe in Christ as the Scriptures say? Let 2018 be a year in which you seek the Lord through His Scriptures. It's you with your thirsty soul so go and drink deeply of Him and then be equipped to go and tell others about Him.

John 7:39 says *[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.* Jesus has been glorified now and has given you His Spirit now. He is a Spirit of power. He is a Spirit with all authority and that's the authority He gives His saints and the church. So we might be puny and in many regards I am puny. The uncle we buried this past week was 6 feet 7 inches tall and my other uncle who we call 'too tall' is 6 feet 8 inches tall. So whenever I stood in their presences I felt puny. One of my sons even said 'Dad, you look puny compared to Too Tall' yet I am 6 feet 3 inches tall.

In many ways I am puny but because of the One who is within me I am more than a conqueror. I am an overcomer, a warrior enlisted into the army of Christ, the One who is unashamed to stand and cry out that He was the Living Water, the One who still wants us in His power to stand in 2018 and cry out that He is the Living Water. We all have thirsty family and friends. So are we willing in 2018 to stand and cry out like He cried out for us? Let us pray.

Prayer:

Lord, thank You for an opportunity to come to kneel at Your feet to be empowered to stand. The glorious truth is in Your Word that You, Jesus, are the Living Water. You're not dead or stagnate or stale but You're living. As living water flows You desire to flow through us in 2018. Lord, the only way that You will flow through us is when we come and believe upon You as the Scripture has said. I pray that we would prioritize sitting at Your feet, in Your Word, under the preaching and teaching of Your Word, and the daily reading of Your Word in 2018 so that we could be filled up to overflowing so that these streams of life giving water would flow through us by the power of the Holy Spirit. Lord, I can't do this on my own. No southern charm or hospitality is capable of this but only You. Lord, please come and empower us this year to go and stand to cry out to neighbors, co-works, friends, family and strangers that You are the Living Water. Also that we would encourage people not to go searching in a dry and weary land and not to go digging broken cisterns but to come to You for life everlasting for I pray in Christ's Name, Amen.