

John 7:37–39

³⁷ On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.

³⁸ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”

³⁹ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

“A Word for the Spiritually Thirsty” John 7:37-39

INTRO:

Have you noticed how many times in the Bible Jesus calls to those who are aware of their need to come to Him? For example, in **Matthew 11:28-30** it says, ***“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”*** Our text here in **John 7** is much like the text in **Matthew**. Here also our Lord calls for those who sense a need to seek Him out for the fulfillment of that need.

As we look at this paragraph together, we will see two things John wanted us to know about our Lord’s statement in this paragraph. First, to understand that those who know we have a need can come to Jesus. Second, we need to recognize that if we will come to Him, we will find the answer to our need. His provision of that need is through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. These then are the stops on our road map.

I. The Needy Should Come (v. 37).

II. The Seeker Will Find (v. 38-39).

I. The Needy Should Come (v. 37).

A. We read in **verse 37**,

“On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.”

At the culmination of the celebration, Jesus cried out with a call that crystallizes His ministry at the feast.

B. The setting is helpful for us to visualize the scene. Beasley-Murray sets the scene for us.

“At the break of day priests processed from the temple to the pool of Siloam. There they filled a golden pitcher with water and bore it back to the temple. On approaching the watergate on the south side of the inner court the shophar (trumpet) was sounded three times—joyous blasts which were explicitly related to Isa 12:3, ‘With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.’ The priests bearing the water then processed around the altar, watched by the pilgrims, while the temple choir sang the Hallel (i.e., Ps 113–18). When the opening words of Psalm 118 were reached, ‘Give thanks to the Lord,’ every man and boy

shook the lulab (a bunch of willow and myrtle tied with palm) with his right hand and held aloft citrus fruit in his left hand (a sign of the harvest gathered in), and the cry 'Give thanks to the Lord' was repeated three times. The same thing happened at the cry 'O Lord save us!' of Ps 118:25. Since all this took place at the time of the daily offering, the water was offered to God in connection with the daily drink-offering (of wine). A chosen priest mounted the altar on which stood two silver bowls, one for the reception of the drink-offering and the other the water. Then the priest had poured the wine and the water into their respective bowls, they were then poured out as offerings to God."

C. While this is very helpful to us in visualizing the scene when Jesus cried out, we need to remember the Gospel of John was written to Gentiles. They would not understand the drama recorded here. John wanted his readers to understand how ready the Lord Jesus was and is to receive us if we come to Him. So, at a high point in the ceremony, Jesus cried out loudly, ***"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink."***

1. The first requirement from the human perspective to find salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ is to understand our need: ***"If anyone thirsts."*** No one comes to Christ for salvation until he or she feels his or her need of salvation. Jesus made this clear in the discussion with the Pharisees in **John 9:39-41**.

"And Jesus said, 'For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.' Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, 'Are we blind also?' Jesus said to them, 'If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains.'"

Only those who recognize they are ill will seek out the Lord to heal them. This is a real problem today. We are not aware we are in need, so we do not seek to be healed.

"T'was grace that taught my heart to fear and grace my fear relieved."

2. The second requirement for us to be saved is that we come to Him and drink.

"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink."

When we recognize our need and we learn the Lord Jesus is the supply for our need of forgiveness, we come to Him by faith and find salvation in Him. Remember what our Lord said to the Samaritan woman in **John 4**.

"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.'"

We come recognizing we have nothing to offer Him and He gives to us life eternal freely.

II. The Seeker Will Find (v. 38-39).

A. What do we find when we come to Him?

"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

B. The first thing we will find is an abundant supply for our need of salvation. Obviously, the one thing a thirsty person needs more than anything else is water. Our Lord promised us that as a believer we will have a supply living of water in us which will overflow us. We will find what we need and much more than what we need.

1. Our greatest need is to be restored to fellowship with God whom we have wronged and made our enemy. Our Lord made peace for us through His cross. We are those who have all gone astray, turning everyone to his own way, and the LORD laid upon Him our sin. And in His cross He has reconciled us to Himself.

2. He not only forgave us and restored us, He made us a part of His family. **1 John 3:1** says:

“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.”

3. Even more than this, He has given us a future with Him.

“Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” 1 John 3:2

4. He also promised to never ever leave us or forsake us forever and ever.

“Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, ‘I will never [under any circumstances] leave you nor [under any circumstances] forsake you.’ So we may boldly say: ‘The Lord is my helper. I will not fear. What can man do to me?’” Hebrews 13:5-6

C. But Jesus is going way. Didn't He say that earlier in this chapter? How can He provide these things for us? How will we have an abundant supply of what we need? This will come through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

“But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”

1. I am very glad the Apostle John included this divine editorial comment. I can only imagine what we would do with this text had not John told us what it meant. John here recorded this statement to foreshadow what he is going to teach us about the New Covenant ministry of the Holy Spirit. Jesus, Himself, detailed this for us in **chapters 14-16** of this Gospel.

2. There is a new ministry which the Holy Spirit will have in our lives. Let me just give you a tiny peek ahead. In **John 14:16-17** the Lord Jesus told us:

“I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever, the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.”

After Calvary, every person who is thirsty and comes to Christ, receives salvation and the indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit in his life. He never leaves. He also changes us from the inside out!

Have you and I recognized our need? Have we come to Him for the forgiveness and salvation which He offers us?

We who are saved, are we living our lives out in awareness of His presence in our lives?

All my life long I had panted
For a drink from some clear spring
That I hoped would quench the burning
Of the thirst I felt within.

Hallelujah! I have found Him
Whom my soul so long has craved!
Jesus satisfies my longing
By His blood I now am saved.

Hymn# 206 *There is a Redeemer*