

An invitation to thirsty souls (Quality: Very good)

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Preacher: Jarvis, Leslie

- [0 : 00] The word which the Lord has laid in my heart to bring before you this afternoon you will find in the seventh chapter of St. John, verses 37 and 38.
- The seventh chapter of John, verses 37 and 38. In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.
- He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.
- This word was spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ. We understand in the temple, or in the locality of the temple, and it was spoken at a time when there were many Jews gathered together in Jerusalem to worship God.
- It was that time which we read of as being the feast of tabernacles. The time when the Jews, according to the old law, gathered together to thank God for the harvest that he had given.
- [1 : 35] If you like, it was equivalent to our thanksgiving services, only it was a very grand affair which took a considerable number of days.
- And we read of this in the prophet Malachi. He says that the Jews were to go up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord, and to keep the feast of the tabernacles.
- And it was said that those that did not go up to worship God at that time, that even upon them there should be no rain.
- And it shall be that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.
- So we see that there was a great incentive for these Jews to go up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord, particularly at this time.
- [2 : 43] Now, this instance which we have before us was on the last day of the feast. In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying.
- Now you will read in the account previous to this last day of the feast that the Lord Jesus Christ had spoken before.
- And much of what he had said the people had fallen out with, and they did not receive him. To a large extent, their attitude was, we will not have this man to rain over us.
- We desire not the knowledge of thee, nor thy ways. And we read here that at the end of this incident that there were some that would have taken him.
- But you see, his hour was not yet come, and God did not permit that any hands should be laid on him. Well, now that's the context in which this word is found.
- [3 : 50] But I want to notice that the words which the Lord spake at this time were a blessed invitation. A blessed invitation for those to come unto him.
- And I want to notice this, to whom the invitation is given. Because, you see, there are many gospel invitations in the word of God.

And we know that the word of God says that whosoever cometh unto him he will in no wise cast out. But you'll find that all of these invitations have a qualification.

Even that one that I've just quoted, whosoever cometh will not be cast out. In other words, the qualification is one that is coming, one that is bound unto Jesus.

And if they come unto him, then they will in no wise be cast out. Now the qualifying word is here, if any man thirsts.

[4 : 59] In the original it is, if any man is thirsty, if any man is thirsty, let him come unto me and drink.

You know, I want to think of this thirst for a few moments. This thirst which is something which can only be born of the Spirit of God, the thirst which Jesus is speaking of.

You see, there is a thirst which all men know, that is everybody upon the face of the earth. There is a thirst which they know. I don't mean just that thirst when we need water to drink.

I mean there is that within them, which is ever thirsting for something, which they can never lay hold of. You see, man is an immortal being.

The soul which is within him will never die. Although the body is laid in the grave, yet the soul goes on living. And it is that within him which will never find satisfaction in this world.

[6 : 16] You know how it is, many of you who have been in the world and tasted the pleasures of the world, how they do not give satisfaction.

And some of you who are still in the world, if you're honest with yourself, although you may go out and have a good time, as we say, yet there is still that within you which is dissatisfied.

And you'll find this, that the more you have of a thing, the more you want of it. And so you see, there is this thirst. And you know, there is a time in the experience of every child of God when God begins to deal with them when this thirst is changed.

Oh, my friends, can you look back to a time in your experience when you did thirst after the things of God, after the things of the world.

You said concerning these precious things that you didn't want anything to do with them. There was a day coming when you would go your own way. Oh, and you sought to drink of the pleasures of this world, but you found that they were but row consistent.

[7 : 45] They were pools without water, wells without water. And then the Lord came and you began to work in your heart on what happened.

Oh, there was created in your soul a thirst which the world could never fill. You began to have a thirst which the things in the world, they no longer satisfied you in any way.

You began to realize that there was nothing in them, that they were empty, that they were void of any depth. of anything of a permanent nature.

Oh, and this thirst was created which the world, I say, could not fill. My friends, that is the character that is addressed here in the first instance.

Those in whom the Spirit of God has created a thirst. A thirst which cannot be met by the pleasures of this world.

[8 : 56] A thirst which can only be quenched by spiritual things. Oh, my friend, I would say to you, if there be any in such a position, oh, you thirst, you realize that there's nothing in this world that can ever give you any pleasure that is real, lasting pleasure, and you are thirsty after spiritual things, then the Lord Jesus Christ's word is this, come unto me, let him come unto me and drink.

And then, you know, this goes a little deeper. There are those who maybe are beyond that experience and they have been enabled to drink of those life-giving streams.

And maybe they've been granted the assurance of their sins forgiven. They realize that they are in Christ and once in him, in him forever.

Thus the eternal covenant stands. And they realize that living and dying, it shall be well. And yet, my friends, there is something which will always mark out the lively child of God.

There will always be a thirst. There will always be a thirst after him. There will always be a thirst after the word of his grace.

[10 : 35] And you know sometimes what the psalmist said, As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee.

O Lord, O there is that thirst after the deep things of God. You know, this is a blessed thought.

And oh, how we need more to have this thirst created within our hearts. You know that hymn which says in one line, Revive thy work, O Lord, create soul first for thee.

Oh, my friends, if there was something which, anything which the church needed now, it was this, that they might have a greater soul first after the things of God.

You know what I mean? When, as the psalmist said in the word, he says that he desired the word of God, the words of his mouth, more than his necessary food.

[11 : 55] You know how it is spoken that there is that desire for these spiritual things above any temple good, anything that is of an earthly nature.

But oh, if only we could live more in that position with more of this thirst, more of this desire. then there would be a difference, I do feel, in our spiritual lives.

You know, the professing church at large, they need this soul first to be created within them. And it can only be brought about by the Spirit of God because they are a whoring after all manner of things rather than the truth as it is made known in Jesus.

Well, no, the character then addressed is those that thirst. Those that thirst who are yet seekers in the way, but seekers that are seeking after the things of God, that are going after the things concerning Zion, and they are going after them with their faces with the ward.

I would say this to you, let us, may the Lord help you to remain in that place because the word says this, I being in the way, the Lord met me.

[13 : 27] Oh, if we are found in the way, then the Lord will meet with us. and oh, there will be a blessing for us. So then, those that thirst and the invitation is this, come unto me and drink.

Come unto me. Oh, my friends, I would say first of all that there's nowhere else that we can go to. If the Lord has created in your heart a thirst after him, a thirst after eternal things, then you'll find no satisfaction anywhere else.

There's nowhere else that you can turn to. Oh, this thirst which is a spiritual thirst can only be satisfied with spiritual food.

It can only be satisfied with things concerning the kingdom of God. by the word of his grace, by meditation upon it, by prayer, by coming unto Jesus.

You know that those that have been quickened into life, they sometimes look hither and thither that they might find satisfaction. There are those that try and improve themselves.

[14 : 57] they say, well, I know I'm a sinner, I must try and do a little better. I must try and improve myself. And they look this way and they look that way, but they find no satisfaction.

Why? Because their answer is, come unto me, Jesus only. Jesus is the way to bliss.

He is the only way. But there is none other name, my friends, given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved.

He is the only way. Come unto me and drink. Come unto me and drink. I want to consider for a little while this drinking.

What is it to drink? Well, I would say first of all that this word is not just a coming and taking a sip as it were.

[16 : 01] It's not that we come and take a sip of this blessed water of life and then go away again and forget about it. The drinking that is spoken of here is something which is continuous.

Let him come unto me and drink and go on drinking is the thought. Let him keep coming to me and let him keep drinking of me and then that thirst shall be blessedly satisfied.

But you say to me, I know it has been a great problem to me in times past as to what this drinking means. when the Lord says unless a man shall eat my body and drink my blood, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven, he cannot be a part of it.

What do you mean? It's something which is difficult to understand. What does this drinking mean then? I'll seek to show you a little as the Lord has opened it up to me.

First of all, you know, the object of our drinking is to be the Lord Jesus Christ and who he is. He is to be the fountain head at which we drink.

[17 : 23] And you know, first of all, this drinking will be a drinking in of those things which he is, his blessed person.

You see, the drinking is by faith receiving those blessed things that we're taught in the word of God concerning him.

This drinking is meditation upon the Lord Jesus Christ. You know how the prophet says in the 41st chapter of Isaiah, the last verse, he says this, that they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

They shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. They that wait upon the Lord. It doesn't mean just waiting upon him, shall we say, for a minute or two.

It's something which is of a continuous nature. It is a blessed occupation which the child of God must find himself in whenever he is free from the things of this time state.

[18 : 44] Waiting, drinking, the terms in many ways are synonymous. To drink then is this meditation upon the Lord Jesus Christ and who he is.

There will be a drinking in, first of all by faith of what he is in his Godhead and in his majesty. You know, the popular conception of Christ is that he was just a good man who set an example.

But my friends, that's not what the word of God teaches. The word of God teaches that he is the son of God, that he is co-equal with God, that he is a blessed person, part of the Trinity.

Oh, the Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ. When the Lord spoke on earth, when he was here upon earth, he spoke with all the authority of Almighty God.

And we need to remember that these blessed words which have been recorded concerning him have the authority of Almighty God behind them. Oh, there will be a blessed drinking then of Christ in the meditation upon his Godhead and his majesty, that he is king.

[20 : 09] He is the king of kings and the Lord of lords. He is the one before whom every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that he is Lord of lords.

whether they have believed it on this earth or no. He is the one before whom every man, every person that has been born on this earth shall stand and every eye shall see him.

Some shall see him as their blessed saviour and their lord and their king and others shall see him as their judge. this is the one of whom we speak.

I say there will be a blessed drinking in of Christ in his Godhead and his majesty and then there will be a drinking in of him when you consider his love.

When you meditate upon the love that the Lord Jesus Christ has made manifest towards his people. That love of God which passeth all understanding.

[21 : 25] That love which is eternal in its nature. That love which began before us we said this morning the worlds were framed. That love which has been manifested towards his people.

Such love that he was willing to come down from that place of highest bliss down to such a world as this or the love of God.

That love of the Lord Jesus Christ that could love such a character as you. When you were yet dead in trespasses and sins yet he loved you and he loved you with an everlasting love.

that love which could behold us in our lowest state. That love which made him willing to go to the cross despising the shame why?

For the joy that was set before him all what love. A meditation upon the love of Christ my friends it will quench your spiritual thirst.

[22 : 37] Or if you are enabled by the spirit of God to truly meditate upon him in that way. Oh it will quench your thirst I say. And then you know there are many other things of which we could speak.

There will be a meditation upon his death. All that he did on Calvary's cross. All of which I was trying to speak this morning a meditation upon those things.

Oh it will quench your thirst. Christ. Oh you will indeed drink in of Christ. And then you know when you think of his rising again and his glorification.

When you think how he ascended to the Father and he's there now at the Father's right hand to make intercession for us. Therefore me the Saviour stands.

Wesley said shows his wounds and spreads his hands. When you meditate upon that my friends you'll drink in a cry.

[23 : 43] Come unto me and drink. Oh when you think how he is there as your advocate with the Father pleading your cause day and night.

Bearing your name upon his hands. Oh my friends these are blessed things and this will enable us to drink in of him.

You see the word goes on to say in this 38th verse he that believeth on me. Want to notice that word believeth for a moment he that believeth on me.

For are there some of you that would say well I would fain no whether I'm a child of God or not. I feel this thirst but I want to feel that I'm accepted with him.

My dear friends if you have this real thirst after him then be you well assured of this you're accepted with him because he's bid you welcome and he would never bid you welcome if he would spurn you and turn you away.

[24 : 54] But this will be one of the marks. he that believeth on me. What does believe mean? I may have mentioned this before but it will bear repetition.

It means this. He that relies on he that trusts in he that cleaves to. Or who do you rely on?

On whom is your faith fixed? Poor sinner. Is it upon yourself? Is it upon your chapel going? Is it upon something else?

Or is it upon Christ? Are you relying on Christ? Are you believing in him? Relying upon him? Then my friends it is well.

In whom is your trust placed? In whom who is the object and the centre of your faith? Is it Christ?

[25 : 55] Is Christ all and in all to you? Do you realise that he is the only saviour? He is the only one that can ever do you any good and save you from your lost estate?

Then my friends if your trust is there in his finished work, in his blessed atoning work then you're secure. And then my friends consider this, believe it means cleaving to.

Do you cleave to Christ? Do you cleave to Christ? Oh I know there will be those times when the things of the earth will seek to drag you away and you will have to say I thirst but not as once I did the vain delights of earth to share.

Oh there will be this continual coming back to the Lord Jesus Christ and all that he is. I say do you cleave to him?

My friends if that principle is found in your heart then be you well assured you're a child of God. You're one upon whom he has set his love. Why do I say that?

[27 : 08] Because the preaching of the cross and all concerning Christ is to them which perish foolishness. but unto those which are saved there's something beautiful about it.

It is the power of God it is something which they cleave to. Oh my friends God grant that we might indeed believe in him that we might cleave to him.

You see the word says this we've considered the character we've considered what this drinking is and ere we come to a close I want to consider the blessed outcome of this drinking I want to consider what is the blessed out working of this in the life of a child of God because we have it before us and it is the words of the Lord Jesus Christ if any man thirst let him come unto me and drink I said it is that drinking that continual drinking that continual coming and drinking in of all that he is in his blessed person and then what will be the gracious out working he that believeth on me as the scripture has said out of his belly in the original out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water these tenses here in the original are in the continuous tense it means him that believeth on me out of his innermost fleeing shall continue flowing rivers and streams rivers and springs of living water now then if you relate this to the passage that we read concerning the woman at the well what is it that the

Lord Jesus Christ said to her and you'll find that the two passages are parallel in their thought but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst but the water that I shall give him shall be in him shall be in him out of his innermost being you see the two phrases are the same that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life out of his innermost being shall flow and continual flowing rivers of living water now my friend you may say well that's a high thing that's a high experience can this really be so of the children of God I submit you that it is on the authority of the word of God it says he that believeth on me out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water how do you feel to measure up to such a word as this

I would say this first of all for your encouragement because we all verily come short but I would say this I love this thought out of his innermost being that water shall be in him it's something which is of the work of the heart it's something which finds it springing up in the heart how do you find your religion my friends is it something which is of an external nature is it something that you can put on as you put your Sunday clothes on is it something that you can put on as you come into the house of God or is it something that's with you every day of your life and as you are freed from the things of the world may I say every moment of your life you see that's the test of the heart work that's the test of where the root is it must be in the heart it must be in him out of his innermost being oh my friends if you find that it is in the heart and if you're honest with yourself you must agree that it is you know you can't go home can you after the service on a

[31 : 53] Sunday and put down your Bible and leave it there until the end of the week you can't go home and forget all about praying can you until the next Sabbath morning comes you can't go home and close your mind to the thoughts concerning Christ and his blessed ways no of course you can't because if you're a child of God!

then this is in your heart it's in your innermost being or my friends it's a blessed thought this or that we might have more heart work but notice that this is not only in the heart but it is to proceed from the heart it's to flow forth from the heart it's to spring up from the heart the thought is in that fourth chapter of John of the well of water which springs up it's got a spring at the bottom there's a continual supply of water and it will flow over and it will flow out that's exactly of the child of God should be you know how are these things how can they be well the Lord Jesus Christ said this not long before Calvary's cross he said the spirit is with you but shall be in you these things are all of the spirit of

God the spirit is with you but shall be in you and then you know we haven't time to turn to the references but you know in that first chapter of John's gospel how John the Baptist sees Jesus coming to him and he says that he had that witness that upon whom he should see the spirit of God ascending the same as he who should baptize with the Holy Ghost he is the one that should be the blessed dispenser if you like of the Holy Ghost and you know how Peter so blessedly says in that second chapter of the Acts when they were accused of being drunken men he says that the Lord Jesus Christ when he was exalted and glorified at the Father's right hand he received the promise of the spirit and he said this is that which he now see and hear that was the promise concerning the

Lord Jesus Christ and this is the blessed outcome of it that we have been filled with the Holy Spirit of God and how they were in power and you know I would refer you to one other word which Paul writes to the Ephesians in his epistle and he says this be ye not drunken with excess of wine but be ye filled with the Spirit be ye filled with the Spirit or you see the thought is this being filled up with the Spirit which is that Spirit which will exalt Christ blessed thought the operation and the work of the Spirit you will read is to glorify!

Christ and my friends it is when we are full up with the love of Christ when we are so filled with the love of Christ and overjoyed with Christ and all that he is it is then that we are filled with the Spirit and there is a flowing over out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water oh these are blessed things but remember that word Paul says to the Ephesians be filled with the Spirit it is something which the child of God should know something about because these blessed promises are to him but you know I remind you of one more word which Peter spoke on that blessed day as he was speaking he said for the promises to you and to your children speaking to the Jews and to those who are far off the

[36 : 21] Gentiles even to as many as the Lord our God shall call and my friends that means you if you're a child of God even to as many as the Lord our God shall call the promise of the Holy Spirit is to you be filled with the Spirit you say how the Lord Jesus Christ says let him come unto me and ring he that believeth on me as the scripture said out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water let me give you just this one last thought and then we must leave it you know blessed thought this whatever is the spring the source of the spring at the bottom of a well and the thought is here that the soul of each believer the heart of each believer is likened to a well with a spring at the bottom whatever is the source of that spring whatever it draws its supply from that is what it will manifest in the waters that flow out from it and so it is with a child of

God and my friends if you drink in of Jesus if Jesus is the blessed source of your joy and your bliss if Jesus is the blessed fountain head at which you drink then it will be of Jesus which you flow over oh there will be that blessed radiance there will be that blessed flowing over that men may take knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus but my friends if you fill yourself and your mind with other things if you fill your thoughts with other things with time things then that is what you'll be most concerned with!

and forever bless his name from whence these streams of mercy came drink for the
fountains open still drink for he says whoever will

Amen to Thank you.