

Sermon File # 1069

Scripture Text: John 7:37-39; Scripture Reading: 7:37-44

Sermon Title: *I Believe in the Holy Spirit, the Living Water* (7th in a series on the Apostles' Creed)

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Sermon preached at International Baptist Church, Brussels, Belgium

On Sunday morning 5 September 2010

Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the New International Version.

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I Believe in the Holy Spirit, the Living Water

Introduction:

Open your Bibles with me to our text, John 7:37-44 as we continue our series on the Apostles' Creed. We have thus far considered the first six statements this summer:

- 1) *I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.*
- 2) *I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,*
- 3) *who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,*
- 4) *suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.*
- 5) *On the third day he rose again;*
- 6) *He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and the dead.*

Today we consider the seventh statement of the Creed: *I believe in the Holy Spirit* (Modern English Version of the Apostles' Creed).

Before I read our Scripture for today, let's look at the context for Jesus' words to the people gathered for the Feast of Tabernacles/Booths. This 7-day feast was a celebration of God's provision for the nation of Israel. It was a time to give thanks for and to pray for harvest rains. Also, it was a thanksgiving celebration of God's provision for the Israelites during the wilderness

experience of 40 years prior to entering the Promised Land. It was an occasion of remembering how the Lord provided water from the rock in the wilderness (Exodus 17). The Feast of Tabernacles/Booths celebrated Israel's salvation in three dimensions of time: the historic salvation of the Exodus, the present salvation of God's faithfulness in sending harvest rains, and the hope of a future glory when Israel would be blessed with God's perfect abundance.

On each day of the feast, the priests would fill a golden pitcher with water taken from the Pool of Siloam, and then would carry in procession the golden pitcher around the altar with the high priest leading the way. With great pomp and fanfare, and shofar-trumpet blasts and choral singing of Isaiah 12:3 and perhaps Isaiah 55, the priests would then pour the water into a silver bowl. By so doing, they were recalling God's provision of water from the rock in the 40-year sojourn in the wilderness. This ceremony was repeated all seven days of the feast. But on the last day of the feast, "the great day" (ESV), this water processional was repeated seven times. And at the close of the seventh processional, a climax of excitement was reached when the high priest would lift his hands to signify the completion of the rites of this seven-day feast.

In this setting Jesus stood poised to make a stunning announcement and invitation. Usually the posture for teaching and preaching was to be seated, but Jesus stood. And he "cried out" (ESV). New Testament scholar George R Beasley-Murray said "the effect of the cry on the multitude would have been like a thunderclap from heaven. Everybody would have known whose cry it was, and its significance, namely that everything embodied in that rite of past experience of salvation, present prayer, and future hope was available and offered through Jesus" (John, vol. 36, *Word Biblical Commentary*). When the religious procession, with the priest holding the golden pitcher of water, came into the temple, Jesus, who was already under attack from the religious leaders, had the temerity to lift up his voice and proclaim what is in our text for this morning. Jesus dared to tell the crowd about and then give an invitation to streams of Living Water, none other than life through the Holy Spirit.

Follow as I read Jeremiah 2:13 and our text **John 7:37-44**.

Without the Holy Spirit, all that we have asserted in the Apostles' Creed thus far has no meaning in our lives today. The Holy Spirit is God himself in us, "Christ in you, the hope of glory," as Paul the apostle asserted (Colossians 1:27). The Spirit of God is the creative, life-giving power of God in the very beginning of time (Genesis 1:2); and he is the Third Person of the Trinity who created God the Son within the virgin, Mary; he is the power of God who raised Jesus from the dead (Ephesians 1:19f), and is the One who gives us the insight and will to believe in Christ and experience transformation into his likeness (John 16:5-15; 2 Corinthians 4:6).

Those of us who were privileged to be here in worship last Sunday were delighted by the children who participated in the previous week's Vacation Bible School. A group of the VBS kids collected a special offering in the amount of 2.000 Euro, which is being sent to Malawi to provide for the digging of two wells that will bring clean water to a thirsty and needy people. Well-

digging projects are an effective way to minister to the physical needs of the thirsty and also provide an opportunity for God's servants to share the message of Jesus as the one who satisfies a deeper and even more desperate thirst—the thirst for God's Spirit, the Living Water.

Pastoral counselor Selwyn Hughes tells about an atheist who once said to him, "I don't believe in God, but I would like to, if only to satisfy the desire that seems to be within me for transcendence" (page 190, *Christ Empowered Living*). Humankind shares a common thirst for what God alone can satisfy. God has created us in such a way that he alone can satisfy the deepest yearnings of our hearts.

Today, as we affirm our belief in the Holy Spirit, we are asserting far more than a propositional truth. We are saying that we not only believe in the objective reality of God the Holy Spirit, but that we believe he has become for us what Jesus in our text says he is—God the Living Water.

Let's note that in our text Jesus tells us, first of all, about...

The thirst for living water

In John 6, when Jesus presented himself as the Bread of Life, he was addressing, not the pagan, but rather the religious world. His opposition came from religious leaders, who had missed the entire point of their elaborate observances and the Scriptures they had mastered intellectually but not personally and spiritually (John 5:39-40). Those religious leaders, who should have known better, were the ones who had become oblivious to their real need.

So, Jesus was addressing a...

Universal thirst

By "living water" Jesus meant the spiritual life from God that would be provided by faith in him, the Son of God, who had come to save us. He was aware that all mankind had fallen victim to a universal thirst.

Jesus was speaking about the Holy Spirit as the Living Water. We know that Scripture presents God as One in three persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Jesus was speaking of the Living Water as God himself, the Spirit who is God within the believer. God has created us for himself. No other creature has the capacity to be given a relationship with God, who desires to live within us by the Holy Spirit. No human being on the face of the earth can be satisfied and have his/her spiritual thirst quenched apart from the Holy Spirit, who is the Living Water.

When Jesus said, "If anyone is thirsty," he knew all were in desperate need, but not all were aware of or willing to admit to their thirst for God.

As Augustine said some 1600 years ago, God has made us for himself, and we are bound to be restless until we find our rest in him. He has made us to drink from him as our Living Water, and we are bound to be thirsty until we drink from him the Holy Spirit, who is the life of Holy God within us.

I was captivated by a recent documentary on great marathon runners. The commentator noted the importance of runners in a marathon keeping themselves from becoming dehydrated. He said runners must take fluid before they become thirsty, because then it is too late to replenish needed body fluid for a big race.

In my younger years I frequently participated in mini-marathons as a jogger, a social participant and not a viable contestant. In the last one I jogged in the US, the front-runner of the 10-kilometer race was well on to his way to victory when he became dehydrated and disoriented. He was way ahead of the second place runner, when he turned onto the wrong bridge, about 300 meters from the finish line. Race officials had difficulty getting him back on course, and even so, he collapsed about ten yards from the finish line. I talked the other day with a friend of his who is also a veteran runner. He said his friend who became dehydrated has always had this tendency because he refuses to interrupt his running with drinking water.

A lot of folks refuse to interrupt their living with pausing to drink the Living Water of a personal relationship of trust and faith in Jesus Christ. Yet all have a thirst for Living Water that only he can satisfy. Our need for God is greater than our awareness. This need is endemic to mankind, regardless of religion or lack thereof.

Jesus was saying only he, the source of Living Water, the Holy Spirit, can give life and satisfaction to this universal thirst. And apart from Jesus, the source of Living Water is an...

Unquenchable thirst

I think the greatest physical thirst I have ever known was during summer two-a-day American football practices in college on the practice field in the hot August Kentucky sun. And in those days, before *modern* medicine, they thought drinking water during competition was bad for you, and so they gave us salt tablets instead of water, and made us wait till our break between morning and afternoon practice to drink fluids. Imagine, salt instead of water!

In John 4, we read that Jesus offered the woman at the well the life giving, soul-satisfying Living Water of a relationship with himself. She had tried, as Jesus made all too clear to her, to find satisfaction in human relationships. She had been married five times and was currently living with another man who wasn't her husband. Marriage as a commitment to one person meant nothing to her. She was thirsty for a satisfying relationship with someone, and was desperately and futilely looking for someone or something that could give her satisfaction, could fill the void in her heart. This woman was taking salt instead of Living Water! God alone can fill the void in the human heart

because it is a God-shaped void. He alone can quench the thirst in our hearts because it's a thirst for God himself.

Eternal hell is described as a place of thirst in Jesus' parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31. The rich man is in hell and in torment. He begs Abraham to have pity on him and send Lazarus to dip his finger in water and cool his tongue, "because I am in agony in this fire," he cried. Hell is a place of tormenting thirst because those who will be in hell will realize they have spurned the saving grace of Jesus, the source of Living Water.

Jesus provided for our salvation through his agonizing substitutionary death on the cross. When he was experiencing our hell for us, Jesus cried, "I am thirsty" (John 19:28). Conversely, heaven, the home of all who receive God's grace through faith in Jesus, is described as a place where we will never again thirst (Revelation 7:16). The grace of God gives us an awareness of our thirst and our desperate need for God. It is grace that calls us to find in him the quenching of otherwise unquenchable thirst. Some need to be painfully aware of their thirst.

Selwyn Hughes spent most of his 50 years of active ministry as a counselor, and wrote *Christ Empowered Living* as the culmination of his life's work, assessing his observation of the greatest need of the thousands he counseled over those 50 years. He noted that, apart from illnesses with a direct physical/organic cause, most disorders were the result of spiritual thirst left unquenched. He noted how that even good church people, much like these religious leaders to whom Jesus announced himself as the source of Living Water, tried to find satisfaction in the wrong places. Says he, "We simply can't go through life thirsty. We have to get our thirst quenched—if not with God, then with something else" (page 133). And he adds that any attempt to satisfy that thirst outside of a relationship with Jesus Christ will lead to problems. Many are trying to find their life satisfaction with job success, or even with their marriages, and other relationships, and are coming away dissatisfied and even disappointed, disillusioned, frustrated, depressed and even angry. Hughes talks about even a good man whose goal was to become a minister, and he failed miserably. He became frustrated and even angry with God, whom he thought would be "proud" that he wanted to be his minister! Yet, God never gave him that goal. That's why he was still thirsty. He needed to seek God himself to find lasting satisfaction.

Hughes notes that several years ago, when he was on the verge of retiring from active counseling, he began to think of a common denominator that had become evident in the lives of Christians who had sat in his office asking for spiritual help. It did not take him long to conclude that the thing that stood out above all others was a lack of spiritual passion. He noted that a number of these were ministers "who saw themselves more as performers than as desperately thirsty servants needing to drink daily from the spring of Living Water" (page 194). He writes, "The only satisfying relationship with God is a passionate one." The only way to satisfy our deep thirst for God is through passionately pursuing God himself, and not by being religious and just good folks who learn the right talk and go through the motions of respectability.

It was not often that Jesus shouted, but here something moved his soul so deeply that he stood and shouted. He saw religious people and priests (today they could be pastors and church folks) depending on ritual rather than on a personal relationship with the living God who alone satisfies our deepest longings. He was moved to shout, "Come to me and drink!" He said, "Come to me," and not come to your wife, or husband, or friend or therapist. And I can tell you of countless "miserable Christians," what Sewyn Hughes says is "an oxymoron if ever there was one" (page 145). In my 43 years of pastoral ministry I have met many frustrated and angry Christians who were indeed miserable inside. They were still trying to please God in the wrong way, and God simply wanted them to come to him and love him and drink from his abundant life.

Have you ever been cotton-mouthed thirsty and then come across, not just lukewarm tap water, but cold, mountain spring water that was so fresh and exhilarating it literally took your breath away? John Eldridge says that if Christianity doesn't take your breath away, then something else will." That's why people look to substitutes that often are self-destructive behavior and often are marriage-destroying relationships. Jesus stood before the festive crowd, many of whom were oblivious to their thirst for God. Their religious observance would never satisfy. Jesus only could satisfy their thirst for Living Water.

In this invitation at the festive celebration Jesus was addressing also...

The source of the streams

Jesus knew the universal and unquenchable thirst, and that he was the answer. In verse 37, we note that...

He is the source

Jesus spoke of himself as the source of the streams of Living Water, the Holy Spirit, and as the only one who can satisfy our spiritual thirst.

The reason Jesus faced mounting opposition from the religious leaders of the Jews was his claim to be the divine, unique and eternal Son of God. Now he claims to be the source of the streams of Living Water, of eternal life itself. Jesus is God the Son, and through his death on the cross he would provide for the salvation of all who believe in him.

When Jesus died he suffered our spiritual thirst and the thirst of going to hell for us, as I noted earlier (John 19:28). We read that after Jesus died on the cross, that the Roman soldiers did not break Jesus' legs as was customary. Instead, they pierced his side with a spear, "bringing a sudden flow of blood and water" (John 19:34). Because Jesus suffered and died, he is the source of Living Water for us. When we repent and trust in Jesus and follow him as

Lord, he gives us the indwelling Holy Spirit, who is the Living Water within us. The third person of the Trinity, God the Holy Spirit, comes to live within us.

Notice, in our text we read that Jesus was proclaiming a gift that had not yet been given, as we see in verse 39. After Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven, he was glorified before the Father and the heavenly hosts. And, on the Day of Pentecost there were gathered in the Upper Room the 120 disciples who had been waiting obediently and expectantly for the coming of the Holy Spirit. The 11 had experienced a foretaste of this gift, but on the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the church in fullness (Acts 2:1ff). And since that day, everyone who trusts Jesus is born again by the coming of and dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus is the source and...

He gives the supply

Jesus, in verse 38, speaks of his being the supply for the streams of Living Water for those who believe in him and who keep on believing in him (Greek present tense). In his conversation with the Samaritan woman, Jesus spoke of the new life he could give her as "a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:14).

Upon believing in Jesus what was true for the first believers on the Day of Pentecost is true for us immediately. He, Jesus, gives us the supply of the Holy Spirit, who flows within us as a never-ending stream. He, the Holy Spirit, is nothing less than the life of God in us. He is the greatest blessing we can ever receive, for which we can ever pray, as Jesus says in Luke 11:13.

The believer receives the Holy Spirit, the life of God himself. Paul describes his presence as "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). He is God in us to be our helper, our teacher, and our comforter. He is God in us to teach us God's truth, and to begin to make us daily more like Jesus. The Holy Spirit is God in us to begin, at the moment of our conversion, the life-long work of becoming more like Jesus as he produces in us the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). One aspect of the fruit of the Spirit is joy, the joy of being fully satisfied with Jesus as the source of Living Water.

He, the source of Living Water, gives us the power we need to fulfill his commandments, not legalistically, but according to the spirit and full intention of the Law/Word of God. He, the Holy Spirit, gives us life in its abundance and fullness, life the way God created and intended it.

Once you receive his supply of Living Water, you discover life with joy and purpose, but not complacency. In fact, the life of God in you, the source of Living Water, makes your heart hunger and thirst for more of him (Matthew 5:6). Just like a growing baby, as you grow in Christ and in the life in the Spirit, you are no longer satisfied with the amount of Living Water that satisfied you a year ago. You desire more of him, and to go deeper into his word and in fellowship with him.

In arid places, water supplies may be depleted. But we never have to fear the depletion of God's supply in our lives. He is the source of grace that is enough to meet any and every need in our lives. But note that we are to keep on believing in him (verse 38). As evangelicals we often emphasize the past dimension of salvation at the expense of an emphasis on this ongoing relationship with Christ and our constant dependence on him and our need to find delight and joy in him. We must every day come to him as our source and depend on him and draw grace and blessing from him. Ephesians 5:18 says, "be filled with the Holy Spirit," or "keep on being filled with the Holy Spirit," who alone satisfies and empowers. The believer grows in his and her capacity for the streams of Living Water. We are blessed if we hunger and thirst for righteousness, for we will be filled (Matthew 5:6). We grow in our capacity for spiritual power, blessing and joy the more we come to the Fountain and the more we grow in our relationship with him. We are evermore being filled with all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:19). Without this ongoing and daily "drinking from the Fountain," we are doomed to be miserable Christians, what Selwyn Hughes says is the "ultimate oxymoron."

The Jews at the feast acknowledged Israel's ongoing dependence on God to satisfy the nations' need for water, just as God gave water in the wilderness. But they failed to recognize that Jesus was the source of Living Water, and indeed they were spiritually dry and barren.

Notice, finally, that Jesus addresses...

The course of the streams

Jesus speaks of the streams of the Living Water flowing from within all who believe in him (verse 38). The course of the streams is...

An unending flow

In speaking of himself as the source of the Living Water and as he does in John 6 as the Bread of Life, Jesus is speaking about an ongoing relationship with him.

It is possible to taste the Bread of Life and even hold the Living Water on your tongue, and still not receive Jesus as the Bread of Life and the source of Living Water. Hebrews 6 warns us about the danger of sampling and not drinking and living on Jesus. Obviously, these enemies of Jesus, who were carrying these golden jars of ceremonial water, had missed the point that the ceremony was pointing to Jesus as the source of Living Water. These enemies of his could tell you about Moses and the Israelites drinking the water in the wilderness, yet they couldn't believe Jesus was the source of Living Water.

Just as there were people who ate the bread Jesus multiplied at the Feeding of the 5,000 and yet who were not interested in a personal relationship with

Jesus as Lord (John 6), so there were those at the Feast of Tabernacles who were impressed by his prophetic powers yet who refused to believe in him and to follow him. These were all religious people, yet they were missing the whole point. They wanted the benefits Jesus could provide, but not Jesus himself. When Jesus called out to invite the people to the streams of Living Water he was inviting them to himself—to a life changing and even a dangerous relationship.

Pastor Kent Hughes says this life-changing relationship with Jesus, the source of Living Water is illustrated for us by CS Lewis:

In Book 4 of Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia, The Silver Chair*, Jill, after running at the sight of a lion, comes to a beautiful stream of sparkling, pure water. This talking lion, from whom Jill has been desperately running, is named Aslan. And Aslan, who is symbolic of Christ, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, is between Jill and the water, and invites her to drink. She hesitates, and the lion asks,

"Are you not thirsty?" said the Lion.

"I am dying of thirst," said Jill.

"Then drink, said the Lion.

"May I—could I—would you mind going away while I do?" said Jill...

"The delicious rippling noise of the stream was driving her nearly frantic.

"Will you promise not to —do anything to me, if I do come?" said Jill.

"I make no promise," said the Lion.

Jill was so thirsty now that, without noticing it, she had come a step nearer.

"Do you eat girls?" she said.

"I have swallowed up girls and boys, women and men, kings and emperors, cities and realms," said the Lion.

It didn't say this as if it were boasting, nor as if it were sorry, nor as if it were angry. It just said it.

"I daren't come and drink," said Jill.

"Then you will die of thirst," said the Lion.

"Oh, dear!" said Jill, coming another step nearer. "I suppose I must go and look for another stream then."

"There is no other stream," said the Lion."

Jesus is the only source of Living Water, of eternal life. Yet we must come to him on his terms, repenting of sin and following him as Lord, and going wherever he leads us in a life of obedience. It's a life that is sure to destroy our old, unconverted nature, and one of constant dependence on his grace.

To receive the unending flow of Living Water, we must come to Jesus as Lord, and accept his presence and gifts on his terms. We don't receive his life and blessing as an add-on to our lives. Christ becomes our life, and the Spirit is the one who is in charge of our lives. The Spirit-filled life is the Spirit-controlled life.

The course of the streams is an unending and also...

A directed flow

The streams flow within the believer but also flow out from us. We become a source of the Spirit's flow to touch the lives of others who are thirsty and in need of the Savior. This is what Jesus did for the woman at the well, and is what we are commanded to do—to share eternal life with those who are perishing.

A missionary family serving in Niger, West Africa, told a group of us visitors to their mission meeting about how they are sharing their water with a neighbor. Their mission house is bordered by a vacant lot, where a single woman lives in a grass hut on the other side of the wall that surrounds the missionaries' house. This woman is poor and has no access to water apart from carrying it in jars from a water source, which would be a long walk away. The missionary connected a water hose to his water tap, and threw the hose over the wall, and every day he turns on the water so this woman can receive a daily supply for her family.

We have the opportunity to lead others to faith in Jesus as the source of Living Water. Like the well drilling teams that our VBS kids supported in the recent offering, we are not just giving a cup of cold water in Jesus' name, which Jesus said would yield a reward (Mark 9:41). We are introducing people to Jesus, who will then become to them the source of Living Water. That Source changes their lives and enables them to become life-changers. We don't just offer them the end of a hose. We offer them their own streams of Living Water that flow from within them.

The church of the Lord Jesus is to join him on mission to offer the Living Water of eternal life to the entire world (Revelation 22:17). The church is the only entity that can be truly worldwide, dispensing the source at home and around the world. We are part of a kingdom work of taking the Source of Living Water to a thirsty world.

As we join God in his mission through the directed flow, we find the course of the streams to be...

A satisfying flow

The Jordan River is a precious and nearly depleted river that runs from Galilee southward, ending at the Dead Sea. That great Dead Sea cannot sustain life. Its waters are dead and not living because there is no flow out of the Dead Sea. It keeps its waters to itself. What a parable this is to the individual believer and to the entire church! We die if we don't live for God and for others. The source of Living Water must have an onward course for us to be alive to the Spirit.

I suggest that the most miserable and unnatural life is one that is acquainted with Living Water, yet doesn't flow with life. Some who profess faith in Jesus and yet who are not living for Jesus have just enough religion to make them

miserable. Before you became acquainted with the Source of Living Water, you were happier. You didn't know any better. But then you came to know Jesus, and what life can be in him. You also realized he has a purpose for you and a calling and a claim upon your life. You have resisted that calling to obey and follow Jesus, and now his Spirit in you doesn't give you satisfaction, but is rather grieved.

The life lived in step with the Spirit and in the center of God's will is the most joyful and satisfying life possible. That is not to say it's a trouble-free life. To follow Jesus is to share in his sufferings. Jesus is the Lion, and he will devour everything in us and about us that doesn't honor him, for our good and his glory. In fact, to drink of the Living Water is to become a stream of water in dry and barren places. It means to be available to God for taking his Living Water to the thirsty. Just as missionaries are taking the Living Water to the thirsty of West Africa and Malawi, we are to offer the Water of Life to the thirsty where God sends us. It's a life that allows for no indifference. Yet, it is the most satisfying and fulfilling life because it's the life for which you were created and redeemed.

Conclusion:

Jesus today invites us to come to him as the source of.

Some here today are like the people in the crowd who were part of the religious establishment, and were participating in the celebration. There was a choir then, scholars tell us, and they were singing Scripture verses. Yet, they didn't know Jesus nor did they have the free gift of eternal life through faith in Jesus. There were religious people there who had a real understanding of history. They held as sacred the history of their religion/their people. They knew history but they didn't know *His Story*. They failed to see that right before them was Jesus, the source of Living Water, who would make *history* become *his story* that would include them as part of *the story*.

We affirm today the Apostles' Creed, along with believers for nearly 2,000 years, which says we believe in the Holy Spirit. But have you received Christ as Lord and Savior as the Source of the Spirit? Today you can come to Jesus and receive him as your source for life, and follow him as your Lord of life.

Who among us doesn't need to repent of being oblivious and even grievous to the Holy Spirit within us? Have we been living in the fullness of the Spirit? Have we been living as a blessing to others? Have we been sharing him as he source of Living Water? Have we shown others that his life-giving, Spirit-producing Water is flowing through us? The Christian witness is to be a demonstration of God's supply of joy and strength, enabling and delighting in our weak, dependent and obedient lives. "Rivers" (ESV) of Living Water is the translation to be preferred over the "streams" (NIV). You can have a stream of water from a leaky faucet. But "river" connotes an unending source and flow of power that also can produce energy.

I want you to know today that, whatever your need, Jesus is sufficient. His life-giving Spirit is more than capable of giving you life and joy and the satisfaction of your deepest yearnings. However dry and barren and even hopeless you feel, there is hope for you. Jesus stands before you and invites you to come to him now, the Source of Living Water.

Thoughts and questions for personal reflection and/or group discussion:

1. In John 4:10-14, Jesus offered the woman at the well the Living Water of eternal life. At the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus dramatically proclaimed to the religious celebrants that he is the source of Living Water. Would you agree that the offer of Living Water/eternal life/the Holy Spirit needs to be given to the religious in the church as much as to outcasts such as the woman at the well? Discuss with your group.
2. Do you agree with the quote (page 5, Selwyn Hughes), “We simply can’t go through life thirsty. We have to get our thirst quenched—if not with God, then with something else.” Discuss your answer with your group.
3. Both in John 6, when Jesus said he is the Bread of Life, and in 4:15; 7:37-39, when he says he is the source of Living Water, Jesus offers us a personal relationship with him. The crowds, however, were more interested in what Jesus would do *for* them (the woman at the well wanted a convenient water supply and the crowd wanted Jesus to keep feeding them) than what he could do *in* them. Does it seem that many today are more interested in what God can do for them than they are in having a personal, life-changing relationship with Christ? Discuss your answer.
4. In verse 38 of our Scripture text, Jesus’ promise is in the Greek present tense, and literally says, “Whoever *continues to believe* in me...streams of Living Water will flow from within him.” Jesus is inviting us not to just a one-time experience of faith but rather to an on-going relationship with him. Do you see the connection between Jesus’ invitation to Living Water with Paul’s injunction in Ephesians 5:18, which literally says, “*keep on being filled with the Holy Spirit*”? Explain.
5. How do we as Christians continue to experience the flow of the Living Water and the infilling of the Holy Spirit? Share with your group.
6. In the sermon is the story of the missionary in Niger, West Africa who shares his water supply with his neighbors who have no other source of water. Jesus says he will cause streams of Living Water to flow from us to others. Are you allowing the Spirit to flow from you to others? Please share with your group, and pray that you will lead the thirsty to find Christ as their life and as their source of true and lasting satisfaction.

7. We are as desperately dependent on God as is a dehydrated person upon water. But also God is to be our greatest delight and joy. John Eldredge says that if Christianity doesn't take your breath away, something else will. Pray also that you will find Jesus to be your greatest source of meaning and joy in life.

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