

“Come to Me and Drink”

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. The text for our meditation this morning is the Gospel reading John 7:37-39; which reads, “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. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” 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.” Amen. So stands God’s Word. Amen.

Have you ever been thirsty? I am talking about really being thirsty, you know, your mouth is dry, your tongue feels swollen and it sticks to the roof of your mouth. Being thirsty, being without water affects us much faster than being without food does. I have seen that you can go without food for as long as two months or more, depending on how healthy you were when you started. Water, now water is something altogether different. An adult human body typically consists of about 60% water, the experts say that a person can, on average, only last for three to four days without water. That is quite a disparity isn’t it? Water is so important, so crucial that many people in the world go for miles each day in their quest for fresh, clean water to drink. It takes a great deal of time out of each day, but, it is something they must do to survive.

Jesus has gone up to Jerusalem for the Feast of Booths. Yahweh commanded that the people of Israel observe this feast the 15th through the 21st days of the seventh month (Tishri our September) of the Hebrew calendar. It was a time of pilgrimage and rejoicing and the people lived in booths as they remembered when Yahweh had them live in booths

after the Exodus from Egypt. On the final day of the feast Jesus stands and promises that believers in Him would receive the Holy Spirit. This promise was fulfilled at Pentecost. This would be after Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension. St. Paul writes in Romans 8:9, "You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him." Paul also writes in 1 Corinthians 12:3, "Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit."

Our Lord has always been satisfying the thirst of and giving wonderful gifts to His people that He created. We know that all that we are and all that we have are gracious gifts from His life giving and preserving hand. The greatest gift He has given us is His very own Son Jesus Christ. This same Jesus who described Himself as the who would supply the living water that would slake their thirst. We were in desperate need of this because we so very thirsty. We were lost and condemned sinners; condemned by the inherited sin from Adam and also by our own sins that we commit every day. In fact it is our very nature to sin because we were crying out for this living water. We had lost the Spirit of God. We had lost that divine image of our Creator and we needed that living water.

Our thirst is satisfied as we hear God's Word of Law and His Word of promise; the Gospel of His Son our Savior Jesus Christ. He sacrificed Himself at the Cross; submitting to the will of the Father so that He would make atonement for us, for our sins; that by His suffering and death for us, in our place, we would receive forgiveness and eternal life for His sake and in His name. We receive and take hold of that gift by faith

and that faith by which we receive that gift is given to us and created within us by the Holy Spirit. This wells us within our hearts, “rivers of living water.” Jesus said to the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well in John 4:9-10, “The Samaritan woman said to him, ‘How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?’” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.”

After more conversation the woman runs back to town to tell the people about Jesus, “Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?” They went out of the town and were coming to him.” Jesus had told this woman, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 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.” The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.” Of course we know that Jesus is talking about the promise of the Holy Spirit, as He is in the text this morning.

The people who had come out to see Jesus as well as those who were listening to Jesus at the Feast of Booths, as well as us today can get caught up in these other things; in feasting, or in the search for something to satisfy our thirst. As Jesus said normal water will only satisfy for a short time, but this living water which Jesus gives will satisfy forever.

There are those who when they hear the message of salvation by grace through faith in Christ reject it they do not allow the Holy Spirit to work within them, they resist

Him and His work and are content to be drink of the water of the spirit of this world. We read in 1 Corinthians 2:11-14; “For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.” Now that is the Spirit that truly satisfies our thirst. The Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit that was poured out upon the people on the Day of Pentecost and is also poured out upon us at our baptisms.

The Holy Spirit brings us to faith in Jesus Christ fully equips us for spreading the Good News of salvation in and through Him. Luther tells us in His explanation of the Third Article of the Apostle’s Creed that, “I believe that I can not by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.” Jesus promised that although He was going to heaven that He would send the helper to us which are the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit’s mission is in fact to lead us to Jesus Christ so that by faith we receive the forgiveness and life that He earned for us on the Cross. This pouring out of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the pouring out of the Spirit upon us as we are brought to faith in Christ is in fulfillment of that promise.

Today the Spirit works through the spoken Word and creates faith in those that hear the message. They are given that living water by the Spirit and born are again and are brought into the Kingdom of God. This is not by our own merits but for the sake of Jesus and His atoning work for us and the world at the Cross.

To have our thirst satisfied in this life is a wonderful thing and a blessing from God but being satisfied with the living water of the Holy Spirit, so that we will never thirst again, is a blessing to us for all eternity as He pours out His gift of Grace and forgiveness through Christ upon us. We come to Jesus, and we drink, and are satisfied. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, forever keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.