

The Day of Pentecost

“Life-giving water flowing to and from believers in Jesus!” John 7:37-39

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Rev. Ed Weber

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for this day of Pentecost is from our Gospel reading, John 7:37-38.

“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.”

So far our text:

Last Sunday in John 17 we heard Jesus speak to His apostles that the hour had come for Him to be glorified. He said these words on Holy Thursday, the night He was betrayed. And after His suffering and death Jesus was glorified by His resurrection. By doing the will of His Father, Jesus paid for the sins of all people on the cross, and glorified His Father. Jesus, according to His human nature which was humbled and did not use His Divine power at all times was then glorified. Jesus true God and true Man ascended to heaven and is reigning with all power in all glory!

Our text in John 7 takes place 6 months earlier where Jesus is speaking to the people in the temple during the Feast of Tabernacles. This was a feast that commemorated the Israelites wandering through the desert for 40 years and God provided for them, food and water, but most importantly living water for their souls that God was with them.

Jesus led them as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The people were assured of God dwelling with them. And on this occasion of remembering all the blessings that God bestowed and continues to bestow, Jesus raises His voice twice and cries aloud for the people to believe in Him. In verse 28 we read:

28 Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in the temple, saying, “You both know Me, and you know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me

is true, whom you do not know. 29 But I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me.”

What a stir Jesus caused! Some believed and others wished to kill Him, but Jesus hour had not yet come.

30 Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. 31 And many of the people believed in Him, and said, “When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this Man has done?”

So Jesus loudly again speaks to their souls and says that He is the Living Water and all who thirst are invited to come to Him and He will quench their soul’s thirst. How does Jesus quench the soul’s thirst? He does so like He did for the woman at the well, who believed in Him and all her village. For they believed that He was the Christ, the Messiah.

And how did they believe? Jesus speaks of waters that flow out of a believer’s heart because they first have flowed in by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus told Nicodemus that one must be born again by water and the Spirit.

“5 Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

And we know that Nicodemus did believe as he defended Jesus in verse 50 of this chapter 7 with these words:

“50 Nicodemus (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them, 51 “Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?”

And Nicodemus also helped honor Jesus in His burial by bringing spices. Yes, Nicodemus believed and the living water of the Holy Spirit flowed into his heart, giving him life and flowed out of his heart by showing love to his Savior Jesus.

So, it was with the woman at the well. Convicted of her sin that she was with a man with whom she was not married, Jesus gave her the water of life for her forgiveness that He

was the Messiah. And that water flowed out of her heart as she witnessed her faith to the people of her village.

How does this work? Romans 10 tells us! Through the powerful living Word of God.

“The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.” 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. 13 For “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Whoever believes... you and me will not be put to shame because of our sin, but receive the riches of His forgiveness and shall be saved. God gives to us this day His Word to save us!

So Paul speaks loudly in his epistle! **“17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”**

And Paul also says in 1 Corinthians 12:

“no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.”

So also we read in Psalm 104:

“You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; and You renew the face of the earth.”

God alone creates and saves. Man cannot create this river of life. It flows to him and through him to others.

And the Holy Spirit was promised by Jesus after He was glorified, on this day that we celebrate His coming on Pentecost. For the Holy Spirit revealed all that Jesus had fulfilled for the salvation of the whole world. It was accomplished and this special giving of the Holy Spirit flowed upon those believers waiting in Jerusalem.

The Holy Spirit poured out His gifts upon them to speak of the marvelous work of Jesus in many different languages. For God wants all people to have their thirsty sinful hearts

quenched with His Word of forgiveness and sealed in the water of regeneration of baptism!

This gift is for Jews and Gentiles, starting in Jerusalem until the uttermost parts of the earth! And Jesus makes sure that we hear about His universal love in our text.

“If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.” Jesus puts no limits on the work of the Holy Spirit. For this gift of the river of water flows to all people!

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

And these verses speak to us this morning...you who believe in Jesus. You who have confessed His name in the Nicene Creed. You who by the power of the Holy Spirit are now part of the “one holy Christian and apostolic Church,” who “acknowledge your Baptism for the remission of sins, and who look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.”

The living waters flow from your heart as you confess your faith here in God’s house. And the living waters flow to your heart as you receive Jesus very body and blood for your forgiveness!

And strengthened by this sacrament, you go forth, in your heart saying, send me, send me! Send me to show Christ’s love working in me, flowing in me through what I say and do!

And the Holy Spirit does work mightily in you. For you are part of the Royal Priesthood, the special people of God. And He removes the sin from your heart that has built dams to stop its flow. He inspires you to forgive as you are forgiven, love as you have been loved, serve as you have been served!

Yes, the Holy Spirit has come at Pentecost and continues to come through the living rivers of Word and Sacrament to you and through you to others. All glory be to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit! Amen

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)