

Streams of Living Water 1

Preaching/Teaching

Requirements: THIRST & BELIEVE ... Actions: COME & DRINK ... Outcome: RIVERS OF LIVING WATER (John 7:37-39).

THE PICTURE: From the MINISTRY of the Barn should FLOW 'RIVERS OF LIVING WATER.'

- * Whatever we do should be an OVERFLOWING & OUTPOURING.
 - * Preaching / teaching (JC), financial stewardship (RK), communications (PJ), prayer (ALT), worship (JC), pastoral care (BG), discipleship (SM), evangelism (DH)
- "How STRONG would we be as a church, if we were STRONG in all those areas, if they were to be POURING OUT of all we do like STREAMS OF LIVING WATER?" Discuss!
- "We're not just after well-run programs, with good intentions and professional organisation; We want Holy Spirit rivers of living water. Whatever we do should be an overflowing and outpouring." Discuss!

WHAT ABOUT YOU, PERSONALLY?

1. If you want Holy Spirit grace & power to FLOW FROM YOUR LIFE, a significant key is to cultivate a rich, fertile PRAYER life.
 2. If you want a cascade of Holy Spirit WISDOM & INSIGHT, you need to become a person of the WORD.
 3. If you want Holy Spirit HARMONY in your relationships, your COMMUNICATION must be wholesome & God-honouring.
 4. If you want Holy Spirit ABUNDANCE in your FINANCES, you must be generous and faithful in way you STEWARD money.
 5. If you want Holy Spirit FRUIT in your character, you need to go on maturing, DISCIPLESHIP journey.
 6. If you want Holy Spirit BREAKTHROUGH, like Paul & Silas in prison or Joshua marching around Jericho, press into PRAISE & WORSHIP.
 7. If you want Holy Spirit to use you in EVANGELISM, fill yourself up to OVERFLOWING with God's power / presence and let Him POUR OUT.
 8. PASTORAL CARE is an outpouring of Holy Spirit fuelled LOVE to your friends, neighbours and anyone He brings across your sphere of influence.
- How are you personally doing in each of these areas? Are they 'rivers of living water,' or are you experiencing some blockage? Are they fleshly struggles or spiritual outpourings? What could you do to 'open up the flow?'

A. WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

- * Your relationship with the LORD will only be as STRONG as your relationship with His WORD.
 - * If you want to grow spiritually strong, you must feed on spiritual FOOD and fill yourself with spiritual FUEL, which is the WORD OF GOD.
 - * The Shepherd's most important job is to FEED his SHEEP.
- "God's Word must be the ROCK upon which you stand ... The DAILY BREAD on which you feed ... The TRUTH that dominates your thought-life ... The PROMISES that prophesy your future ... The WISDOM that lights your path ... The FILTER that guards your heart ... The INSPIRATION that forms your character ... The RIVER OF LIVING

WATER that cascades out of your mouth." Is it? Which of those do you need right now? Ask your group how they think you might best get there!

→ Who have been the most inspiring preachers you've come across on your spiritual journey to date and why?

B. OUR JOURNEY SO FAR

THE TEMPLATE

1. Answer QUESTIONS people are ACTUALLY ASKING.
 2. Unleash the POWER of 'WORD SEED' (Heb 4:12, John 6:63, Jer 1:12, Isa 55:10-11)
 3. JESUS must be the HERO → So every message should be
 - i) GOOD NEWS, ii) GRACE, iii) Calling out WORLDLINESS & advocating GODLINESS, iv) Ending up with Jesus on the THRONE.
 4. Dig it DEEP enough to be RELEVANT & APPLICABLE.
 - * Not OUGHT TO but HOW TO.
 5. Open the door to the MINISTRY of the HOLY SPIRIT
 - * The message is a MEANS; the ENDS is our RESPONSE.
- What do you personally feel you need from a Sunday message? What qualifies as a nutritious meal for you?
- "As listeners, we need to be spoken to on three levels: head, heart and hands." What does that mean?
- Andy Stanley wrote, "Preaching for life changes requires far less information and more application; less explanation and more inspiration." What did he mean?
- What does it mean to make Jesus the 'hero?' What does it mean to say that every message should end with Jesus on the throne?
- What does it mean to say that a sermon is 'deep?' [Clue: It's not about how much Greek or Hebrew, complex doctrine or long theological words!]
- 'Ought to' preaching leaves you frustrated and condemned; 'How to' preaching leaves you empowered and encouraged. Do you agree?
- How quick and/or willing are you to respond at the end of Sunday morning messages? How do you usually respond? What inspires you to respond and what might stop you from doing so?

C. WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- * Developing a TEAM of preachers & teachers makes us much STRONGER, more SECURE and better PREPARED.

D. WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

1. Keep preaching / teaching a PRIORITY throughout church life.
2. Continue MODELLING & DEVELOPING the template.
3. Look to IDENTIFY, TRAIN & MENTOR those with a preaching / teaching gift.

RESPONSE QUESTIONS

1. What is your current relationship with God's Word? With what mindset do you come to church on Sunday, Bible reading on Monday, Connect Group on Wednesday? Would you say that your heart was open and ready for God to pour in? If not, what might change that?
2. Do you sense a call to preach/teach? If so, what are your next steps? You could try writing some messages: Few people actually get to preach their first few prepared messages!