



## What about me? Part 3 RIVERS OF LIVING WATER



→ Review: What was it like living last week with the Dove on your shoulder?

DIFFERENT WATER METAPHORS: RIVERS, STREAMS, WELLS, FOUNTAIN, RAIN, CLOUD, DEW ... drinking, watering, washing, baptising, refreshing (EXAMPLES: John 4:13-14, 7:37-38, Isaiah 44:3-4, Revelation 22:1-2)

→ Familiar with any of those pictures? Any have particular meaning for you?

What does water do? Why so important to life? How long without drinking? Why such powerful metaphor?

Biology 101: Without water, earth utterly barren Like Mars or moon ... no life / vegetation, just ball of matter ... + You die in < week without water

MULTIPLE USES: Drinking, cooking, cleaning, agriculture, manufacturing, hydro-Electricity, Habitat, Leisure + Fitness, Firefighting, Water Mill

Water Footprint (UK) = 1695 m<sup>3</sup> per person per year

### 1. Frequent DRINKING

\* Without water you DIE ... Your Christian life SHRIVELS UP, becomes WEAK, WEARY, LIFELESS.

\* God's plan for us: OVERFLOWING LIFE, ABUNDANCE (John 10:10, Ps 23)

→ What does it mean to be overflowing? What is abundance? Why does scripture use rivers and fountains to depict this?

\* Problem is, we LEAK, EMPTY, GET SQUEEZED DRY.

→ What do dry and thirsty look like? Ever been there? Often? Why is it dangerous? What squeezes you dry?

DANGER = we look to all the wrong places for replenishment, refreshment, sustenance ... e.g. Fun, leisure, love/sex, food/substances, work, adrenaline rush, solitude, none of which are bad in themselves, but John 6:63!

→ Where do you tend to go for replenishment? Does it work? Might physical or emotional replenishment help you spiritually? Is there a danger that physical and emotional replenishment mask spiritual deficiency?

\* Spiritual life comes ONLY from the Spirit of God (John 6:63).

\* So, we need to DRINK, DEEPLY and OFTEN (Rev 22:17)

→ How do we do that? How do we drink or soak? What activities or environments? To which wells do you go often to drink?

### 2. Regular WASHING (Ezekiel 36:25-26, Hebrews 10:21-22, 1 Thess 5:23)

LAST WEEK focussed on holiness, beauty + purity, and noted that much of the Holy Spirit's work is in sanctifying, teaching, maturing, making us holy, refining + renewing our souls, forming Jesus in us.

\* Repeated message: We must allow the powerful combination of WORD and SPIRIT to WASH US CLEAN.

\* To SATURATE us with His love + power and to FLUSH OUT any impurities that sneak in (1 John 1:9, 2 Corinthians 3:17-18).

→ What points can we draw about the Holy Spirit's sanctifying work from Ezek 36:25-26, Heb 10:21-22, 1 Thess 5:23 and 1 John 1:9?

→ How does He wash us clean? How do the Spirit and Word work together?

### 3. Corporate REFRESHING (Isaiah 35, Acts 3:19-20)

\* Repeated biblical illustrations + prophecies of BARREN land made FERTILE and FRUITFUL.

\* Revival = BRINGING LIFE BACK → FULL of life, ABOUNDING in life, NEW life ... and it should show!

→ What is revival? What are its characteristics? Is it God's purpose for us? How do we get there?

→ Our church vision sees us as alive and Spirit-filled. Are we? How might this teaching / topic increase that? Why do we sing 'Let it Rain'?

### 4. Rains for the HARVEST (Zechariah 10:1, Joel 2:23-26)

In ISRAEL = Arid, desert-like ... Summer is very hot, dry, arid ... Rain is seasonal + critical. In Autumn, the former (Oct/Nov) are for SOWING (You can't plant before the rains, when the landscape bursts into life). In Spring (Mar/Apr), the latter

→ Similarly, we need the Holy Spirit to prepare hearts for the seed to be sown + to bring the harvest to ripeness. How is the Holy Spirit involved in that process? What happens if we try to do it without Him? How might we get Him more involved?

\* Where the river flows, there is FERTILITY to reproduce life and HEALTH to sustain life. And life congregates and propagates.

→ Does our church contain the conditions necessary for life? Are we allowing the Holy Spirit to produce fertility and health? How could we release Him to facilitate more of that? What would a church look like that operated as a river of life?

→ "Jesus blesses all who believe in Him with rivers of living water so that we will be satisfied in Him and so that we become a source of blessing to others." Discuss!

→ "Stagnant waters lead to disease and death, but living water is life-giving water." Is it possible for the church to become stagnant water? What might cause that? How do we avoid it?

**ADDITIONAL READING:** Deut 11:14, 1 Kings 8:35-36, Psalm 24:3-4, 36:5-9, 65:9-12, 143:6, Isa 30:23-26, 32:15, 43:18-20, Ezekiel 47:1-5, Hos 6:1-3, 14:1-7, James 5:7-8

→ Look for the double-meanings in these texts: i.e. How do they fit in terms of natural things v spiritual applications?