



Silverdale Baptist

THE INVITATION • COME AND DRINK • JOHN 7:37-39, MATTHEW 5:6, JOHN 6:35 •
8/22-23/2020

MAIN POINT

Jesus is our satisfaction. The cry of our hearts is calmed only in Christ.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

When in your life, have you been thirsty? When have you been really, intensely thirsty?

What satisfies your thirst?

Whatever you may turn to when you are thirsty, when you are genuinely desperate, it is water that will satisfy your body's needs. We need water to live. And in this lesson, we will see that we need Jesus to live. He is the living water that satisfies our soul.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

Note: *The author has asked you to read John 7:37-39 three times. This may seem like busywork, but the author has a purpose in mind. Many studies indicate a person needs to hear something at least three times before it begins to resonate with them. As the leader, you are free to use the material as you wish. However, if you have the verses read out loud at least three times, the group may hear it a little better each time.*

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 7:37-44

Jesus was in Jerusalem, in the Temple area, on the last day of the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles. In the heart and minds of the Jewish nation, the feast was linked to God's deliverance of His people from slavery in Egypt. The children of Israel walked out of Egypt and into the desert where they lived in temporary shelters or tabernacles, ate manna from heaven, and depended on God for every drop of water they had to drink. Only God could satisfy their thirst in the desert.

Each day during the Feast of Booths, the High Priest would bring water from the pool of Siloam in a golden pitcher. As he poured the water on the altar, the people remembered God's provision, and they worshiped. On the last great day of the feast, the priest had no water in his pitcher. The mood was somber, and there was no singing. When the priest arrived and turned the pitcher upside down to show it was empty, he was saying God had provided water in the wilderness, but He has not yet provided His Messiah.

At the moment, what did Jesus say in verses 37-38?

How did the people respond to His words?

How does understanding the environment of the feast add to your understanding of Jesus' invitation?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 7:37-39

What is Jesus' invitation to the people?

Why is it significant that the creator of the heavens and earth is inviting us to come and drink?

What is the promise to those who believe in Him?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 5:6.

What does Jesus promise in this passage?

How does this relate to John 7:37?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 6:35.

How does Jesus describe Himself?

What does He promise for those who come to Him?

How does this relate to John 7:37- 39?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER RE-READ JOHN 7:37-39.

What is the water a picture of in this passage?

Jesus promised living water, life-giving, soul-satisfying water will flow our innermost being. Shall we keep the water to ourselves?

What are some of the things you substitute for the living water?

APPLICATION

Unlike today, the people of that day couldn't irrigate their crops or just turn on the faucet. No water meant no life. That's why one of the promises of God in the Old Testament for faithfulness rain. As the people gathered year after year to pray for rain at this festival, they were reminded that they were ultimately dependent on God for their very lives.

But then, as is the case now, people tend to drink from all kinds of things that are unsatisfying, and that brings death instead of life.

Why do you think we tend to look to other sources when the living water of Jesus is available? What does that show us about our hearts?

Think back throughout your life. What are some of the sources other than Jesus from which you've been drinking to sustain you?

Why is it significant that Jesus didn't extend an invitation to come to the synagogue, or come to the temple, but instead to come to Him and drink?

In what ways do you think Jesus wants His living water to flow out from you to others through ministry?

PRAYER

Pray to close your group. Thank God that Jesus can truly satisfy. Repent of seeking satisfaction in any other source than Him.

COMMENTARY

| JOHN 7:1-39

D. Invitation of the Messiah (7:37–44)

SUPPORTING IDEA: Amid discussions of his origin and departure, Jesus drove home the centerpiece of his mission—to provide living bread and living water for hungry and thirsty people.

7:37–38. The invitation of Messiah is received by believing. We have come to the eighth day of the feast, the last and greatest day. Finally, as his brothers had urged more than a week earlier, Jesus “went public” with his message. This great water ceremony reminds us again of the link between water and the Holy Spirit in John 4, and quite possibly also John 3. Any thirsty people out there within the sound of Jesus’ voice? Let them come and drink. And those who drink would have within themselves streams of living water falling from the inside out.

The surrounding context offered a dramatic backdrop for these brief but powerful words. The corporate mind had been focused on water for days. Hughes describes the scene:

On the seventh day, the priest would circle the altar seven times in succession—as the people of Israel had encircled the walls of Jericho. When he came around for the sixth time, he’d be joined by another priest carrying the wine. They would ascend the ramp to the altar of holocaust where they were together to pour out the water and wine on the altar. When they were in place, there would come a pause as the priest raised up his pitcher. Always the crowd shouted for him to hold it higher and he would do so. It was considered to be the height of joy in a person’s life if he could see the water being poured out onto the altar (Hughes, p. 139).

One cannot argue for certain whether Jesus’ words were delivered on the seventh or the eighth day. Either could be called the last and greatest day of the Feast. Nor do we know what Scripture he had in mind in the citation of verse 38. Westcott argues, “The reference is not to any one isolated passage, but to the general tenor of such passages as Isa. 58:11; Zech. 14:8, taken in connexion with the original image (Exod. 17:6; Num. 20:11)” (Westcott, p. 123).

7:39. Thank God for John the interpreter for surely we would have theology of all sorts flowing from the “streams of living water” in this passage. But John left no question about meaning because the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is one of his great themes. We find more detailed teaching on this theme in chapters 14–16, but the glorification of Jesus is another important message in this book. We see it repeated in 8:54; 11:4; 12:28; 13:31–32; and 14:13.

So the Spirit is the living water from within. This interpretation may help us with John 3:5 and 4:13–14. Note John’s careful time delineations as well. The Spirit’s coming at Pentecost was still future at this event, though John was writing decades later. Throughout the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit’s descent upon servants of God was temporary, but soon believers would receive him. All this awaited until after the glorification; John uses the verb form for the first time here. As Tenney points out, “It has varied meanings in this Gospel. It may refer to establishing status or to

enhancing a reputation (8:54; 12:28; 13:32; 14:13; 15:8; 16:14; 17:1, 4, 5, 10; 21:19). In this particular context it refers to Jesus' death, which, despite all appearances, would be the entrance to glory for him (7:39; 11:4; 12:16, 23; 13:31). The death and resurrection of Jesus would demonstrate the perfection of God's love and power through humiliation" (Tenney, EBC, p. 87).[1]

[1] Kenneth O. Gangel, John, vol. 4, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 147–149.