

Sermon 01-24-10

The Invitation – John 7:37-39

Background:

Feast of Tabernacles (booths/shelters). On each of the seven days they had an important water ritual. It commemorated God's miraculous provision of water during Israel's wilderness wandering (E. 17:6; Num. 20:8-11; Deut. 8:15; Meh. 9:15; Pss. 105:41; 114:8; Isa. 48:21), and anticipated the blessings of the messianic age (Isa. 30:25; 35:6-7; 43:19-20; 44:3-4; 49:10; Ezek. 47:1-9; Joel 3:18; Zech. 14:8). It was also a symbolic prayer for rain.

The Invitation

Our Lord stood up and in "a loud voice" invited thirsty souls to come to Him for spiritual, eternal, life-giving water, instead of the physical, temporal water of the ceremony. Christ shifted the focus from the need of the parched mouths in the wilderness to the spiritual need of the thirsty soul for the water of life.

Three items necessary to accept the invitation

Thirst – those that recognized their need and their spiritual thirst (Isa. 55:1-3; Mt. 5:6).

Come – come to Jesus, the only source of living water. Example: Rich young ruler.

Drink – appropriate Him by faith. Only those who drink will receive the living water in Christ; all others prove themselves to be false disciples (Jn. 6:53 "...eat the flesh and drink the blood, you have no life in you"), whose repentance is insincere and incomplete.

Streams of living waters flowing from within equal streams of living waters flowing from God through us to others.

Believers are to be channels through which the streams/rivers of living water are sent to others. Believers receive the gift of God, so they can pass it on to others. When a man or woman believes they become a servant of God, and God uses them to be the means of bringing the blessing to others. By evangelizing the lost (which is the primary emphasis here) and edifying the saints (1 Cor. 12:4-11; 1 Pt. 4:10-11), believers allow the spiritual life within them to spill over and impact those around them.