

Series: Communion With The Triune God #1617

Title: 2 Corinthians 13.14; John 7.37-39

The Holy Spirit, The Source of the Living Water

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. Good to have you here and we are coming to the end of our very brief discussion on the communion we can enjoy with God the Holy Spirit who is our comfort. My goal now is to show you just one way in which the Spirit comforts believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. And we find this in the seventh chapter of the Gospel According to John and verses 37-39, most of which we have already looked at. Let me read that for us. **“Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, ‘If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’ ³⁹But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”**

Highlight this in verses 38 and the first part of verse 39, “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’ ³⁹But this He spoke of the Spirit...” We are taking this in two parts. First Jesus quotes the Old Testament and Isaiah, “From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.” We read those passages last time. Second, notice the beginning of John 7, verse 39, “But this [Jesus] spoke of the Spirit...” Emphasize the application. The Spirit is the Source of the rivers of living water that will flow out of the innermost being of those who believe in Jesus. Let me say this again: The Spirit is the Source of the rivers of living water that will flow out of the innermost being of those who believe in Jesus.

I cannot speak for you, obviously. But I can speak for myself and you might be able to relate to me. When I read Jesus inviting the thirsty to come to Him and drink, that is exactly what I did. I have believed in Him for quite a long time now in my life. I was (spiritually) thirsty, very thirsty, so I came to Him and I drank and I am still drinking the waters of His life. Now, according to Jesus, this means from my innermost being will flow rivers of living water, right? That is what we read in the text. And *this*, Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit. So, the Spirit is the source of any rivers of living water that flow from my innermost being. And, if you believe in Jesus, from *your* innermost being. Do you follow? This makes logical sense, right? OK, good.

That is all true, but here is my dilemma: how come in practice there are not always rivers of living water flowing out of me? How is that I am sometimes producing only a trickle of living water or almost no water. How is it that sometimes I am dry? I am still drinking from Jesus, but that’s intake. What happened to the outtake? Here is what happens: I have not been living my life by the Spirit of God. I have depended too much on myself to live the spiritual life God expects of me. I have not depended on the Holy Spirit God has given to live in me. And, friends, when I do not invite the Spirit of the Living God to fill me, when I do not invite Him to empower me, and when I do not pray to Him and ask Him to draw out of me, from my innermost being, these rivers of living water, guess what? I am dry.

This has been my experience. And again, maybe you can relate? In many ways this all comes back to prayer. I admit that I have work to do in my communion with God the Holy Spirit. I am learning how to pray to Him and to receive from Him. And I say “Him,” because the Spirit is a Person (not an ‘it’). The Father and the Son have given me the Holy Spirit, and I am to develop my relationship with Him such that He fills me and uses me, pouring out of me the rivers of living water that Christ has poured into me. In the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 8, **“do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace...”**

When I walk according to the Spirit. When I invite the Spirit, daily, to fill me. When I live under the influence of the Holy Spirit, then I am comforted by Him. I enjoy life and peace. *And* my innermost being is overflowing with *living* water. As this same man Paul said to the Ephesians, **“Be filled with the Spirit.”** (That’s Ephesians 5, verse 18.) Oh how I need the Holy Spirit.. To do this I must seek Him every day, and I find the best time of the day to do this is the morning. What I have done is to use music to accompany my prayers. I love the hymn *Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart*. I have a version played by the organ with no words. And I bow in simple prayer and listen to that organ play those notes and I pray, asking the Spirit to descend upon *my* heart; to fill me for the long day ahead.

And in those moments I always find such comfort. Yes, I have to agree with Jesus. The Holy Spirit is my Comforter. And that's why I agree with the theology of our 17th century theologian friend John Owen. In their book *A Puritan Theology*, authors Joel Beeke and Mark Jones write this as they reflect on Owen. Quote, "What does it mean to have communion with the Spirit? What is the essence of His consolation and comfort? The Spirit comforts believers by bringing them into fellowship with the Father and the Son (113)." They then quote John Owen himself. Listen to what he says, "All the consolations of the Holy Ghost consist in His acquainting us with, and communicating unto us, the love of the Father and the grace of the Son; nor is there anything in the one or the other but He makes it a matter of consolation to us; so that, indeed, we have our communion with the Father in His love, and the Son in His grace, by the operation of the Holy Ghost (*Communion with God*, 2:262)." End quote.

Remember what we have already discovered. God the Father is our love. God the Son is our grace. And God the Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost, is our comfort. And Owen says it is the work of the Spirit in us that ministers Father's love and the Son's grace to us. The Spirit is the Source of the rivers of living water that will flow out of the innermost being of those who believe in Jesus. It is therefore, imperative, that in communion, in fellowship, and in prayer to and with God we forget not God the Holy Spirit.

I hope that this is insightful and an encouragement to you. I hope that you will now take action to pray to the Spirit and ask Him to be the source of your spiritual life. Invite Him to fill you, to help you, and to comfort you. Think of it this way. As Beeke and Jones write, "The Holy Spirit comes to us as the Spirit of God the Father and the Spirit of God the Son (113)." And as Sinclair Ferguson puts it, the Spirit enables prayer to the Father through the Son, so that Christian prayer penetrates, "into the very nature of the Trinity, and the character of the inter-Trinitarian relationship (*John Owen on the Christian Life*, 228)." So very well said.

As we conclude our comments on communing with the Holy Spirit, I want to quote Jesus once more and then hear Owen reflect on what the Lord says. I am reading, still within the Gospel of John, this time chapter 16, verses 13 through 15. This is John 16, verses 13 through 15. Jesus is speaking, "**But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. ¹⁵ All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.**"

Owen addresses this, quote, "Thus, then, [the Holy Spirit] is a comforter. He reveals to the souls of sinners the good things of the covenant of grace, which the Father hath provided, and the Son purchased (*Communion with God*, 2:239)." Unquote.

So we have come full circle. We talked about God our Father who is our love and God the Son, Jesus, who is our grace, and God the Holy Spirit, who is our comfort. There are some concluding remarks I want to make next time and then we are moving on. Let me just say as we close today, that I know there is quite a lot of content here. So if you would like to listen to this again, just visit our website and either listen to the podcasts right there or download them to your mobile device. And, remember to download the manuscript and read along, as well as to capture all the quotations. On the website next to each podcast is a link labelled "read along." Just click the link and get the free manuscript. This will help you dig deeper and apply what we are learning. The website is godisministry.org, that's godisministry.org.

Avail yourself of these resources and then be sure and join us again next time as we continue to discover enjoying communion with the Triune God here, because God Is.

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