

JCI #168 January 2016
Just Checking In
Christ the Satisfier of the Soul

As John Piper so well said, "God is most glorified when we are most satisfied in Him." And Jesus Christ is the sole, soul satisfier! One of His most wonderful invitations is found in John 7:37-38... **On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" (ESV)**

In this wonderful invitation we want to consider five key words... anyone....thirsts...come...drink...flow.

The extent of the invitation "If anyone thirsts..."

This invitation is as wide and extensive as is the thirst of men. The only prerequisite to the satisfying of the need is the experience of the need in the soul. It is only necessary that one thirst to hear the invitation to find satisfaction in the living water of our Lord Jesus. The woman at the well was thirsty, and Jesus welcomed her. The thief on the cross was thirsty, and Jesus welcomed him. The only ones who are deaf to the invitation are those who are dulled by the satisfaction with lesser things. If bread satisfies, then living bread has no draw. If stagnant water satisfies, then living water has no attraction. If the artificial and transitory wealth of this world satisfies, then real and eternal wealth has no appeal. The problem is not that man desires too much, it is that he is satisfied with too little. As A. W. Tozer put it, "Without strong desire, nothing will do you much good!"

The experience of the need "If anyone thirsts..."

Thirst is a universal, God given, continually occurring, ever increasing, demanding and essential desire. It is an evidence of a need. The desire increases with time, and increasing desperation requires wise solutions, less the thirst is quenched with the temporary or the tragically lethal substitutes of sin. Many years ago, shortly after Val and I were married, I was mowing my in-laws lawn on a blisteringly hot day on Long Island. I came into the kitchen overwhelmed by thirst. I opened the refrigerator door and immediately poured out a glass of what I thought was lemonade, only to discover way too that it tasted horrible! I was then to discover that my mother-in-law saved all the water from cooking vegetables to make soup with. I had just swallowed down nearly a quart of potato water! Yuck! While it did me no great harm, it failed miserably to quench my thirst. It actually ruined my appetite for the real thing. So it is with Satan's substitutes... drugs, alcohol, immoral relationships, consumerism, greed, media escapism... the list is endless, as endless as the thirst it fails to satisfy. The ancient Indian religion of Jainism says the goal of life is to escape conflict by elimination of all desire. They would tell us the problem is that we thirst. No it isn't! The problem is that we refuse to come to the living water that alone can satisfy. It's not that we desire too much, it's that we desire the wrong thing in our blind groping after something that will satisfy our souls.

People fear coming to Jesus because they think it will hurt too much... like the child with a splinter in his hand, or a broken arm - don't touch it, as long as it doesn't hurt it will be fine. Just so, many are trying to stop the pain, the thirst, if but for a few hours, only to end up thirstier as days lead to years lead to eternity to thirst forever on and on.

Hell is the all-consuming thirst left eternally unsatisfied. We see this in Luke 16:24, as the rich man calls out to Abraham to send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool his tongue for he was parched and tormented by the flames of Hades. When men are satisfied by lesser things on earth, they are confronted with real and consuming thirst in hell. The question is not "if" we will thirst, it is "when." Will we thirst now, or after it is eternally too late to ever be satisfied.

But if there is a thirst, a yearning, a longing, a desire for the real and satisfying...there is an invitation that shouts loudly still today... ***"If anyone thirsts.... Let him come to Me and drink!"***

The decision born out of desperation "Let Him come to me..."

When the thirst reaches a point of desperation, the soul possesses the motivation necessary to take action. The ruler of the synagogue was desperate. Mark 5:22-23 Even though the other rabbi's, his peers and mentors, were offended by Jesus due to his Sabbath healings and teachings, it didn't keep him from coming to Jesus. Desperation brings decision.

When the need is great enough, the motivation is strong enough to get a man to come. He not only came, he came personally, he came falling down, he came begging. This is what “coming” to Jesus looks like.

The experience of soul satisfaction “let him come to Me and **drink**... Whoever believes in Me...”

Drink! This is the reason for coming to Jesus. We come not just to inspect, discern, consider, and contemplate... no, we come to drink! This “drinking” is one of five common metaphors for saving faith. Let’s consider five common metaphors for saving faith and see what they teach us.

Believe - to **place your trust and confidence in**, to be **fully convinced** and **committed to**, to **stand with & for**

Are you a skeptic or a believer? Do you simply assent to the gospel or do you trust it?

Is your response to Christ an “I guess so” or a resounding “Yes, Lord!” Are you fully convinced that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the only Savior, the Lord of the living and the dead before whom every knee will bow?

John 7:38... Acts 16:31... John 3:16

Eat - to **take for ones-self**, to **personally embrace and receive**

No one can eat for you - no one can feast for you - you must open up and take in for yourself.

This metaphor of faith shows that it is personal and real. This is the truth behind the phrase “I took Christ as my personal Savior.”

John 6:48-51, 53

Drink - to **experience**, to **take in**, to **make your own**

Like eating, it speaks of a real and personal experience of taking Christ into your life, and making Him your own. Taking a drink of water is definite - you either do or you don’t. It’s definite and evident.

John 7:37 John 4:14

Rest - to **rely on fully**, **entrust your soul’s care and keeping to Jesus** - to **give it all** to Him, to **let go & relax in**

Like sitting down on a chair, resting is fully entrusting your well-being to the strength and support of another. It speaks of faith as a full reliance on the finished work, full sufficiency, and unchanging faithfulness of Jesus as your Savior.

Psalm 62:1 Heb 4:3 Rest in the Lord

Follow - to **submit**, to **follow another’s lead**, to **cease to be in charge**, to **yield**, to **obey**

This metaphor of saving faith describes letting another determine your direction and destination.

It is a full yielding of your all to Him. It speaks of a continual yielding and obedience day after day, all your life long. This is the evidence to all that your faith is truly in Jesus Christ. This is the walk that proves the talk!

The overflow of soul satisfaction “out of his heart will **flow** rivers of living water”

This result of coming, drinking/believing in Jesus Christ will be a super-satisfaction of the thirst to the extent that you cannot keep it from spilling out into all your other relationships. The satisfaction is so complete and full that you must share it with others. The Holy Spirit’s fullness in the soul brings an overflow of joy, delight, love, and satisfaction that demands that we invite others to come to Christ just as we have. Hence we see in Revelation 22:17 *The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.(ESV)* The bride is the church, the believers who have found their soul satisfaction full and overflowing in Christ. We make the good news known continually... come to Jesus and drink of the living water. Like the woman at the well in John 4:28-29, she immediately left her water jar at the well (no longer thirsty!) and rushed into the city to tell the good news... Messiah has come!

As we begin a new year, let’s continue to drink to the full the living water of our Savior and let the overflow of His fullness spill out wherever we go.

Self-check

- 1) Am I finding my every thirst satisfied in Jesus or am I restless because I am looking elsewhere?
- 2) Who do I know that is seeking satisfaction in broken cisterns instead of in the fountain? Pray, share!
- 3) Is the overflow of the Spirit real in my life? If not, why not?

For Further Study:

THIRST FOR GOD - His presence - the answer to every thirst

Ps 42:2 *My soul thirsts for God*, for the living God

THIRST FOR FORGIVENESS - Young Ruler Mark 10:17-23 Eph 1:7

THIRST FOR BELONGING - Woman at the well John 4:15-17 John 17:24

THIRST FOR SECURITY - Israel Psalm 121:1 Jeremiah 2:13-18 John 10:27-28

THIRST FOR HOPE - Job 7:6, 13:15 (Col 1:27)

THIRST FOR JOY - David Psalm 51:8 (John 17:13)

THIRST FOR PEACE - Jeremiah 6:13-15 (John 16:33, Eph 2:14)

THIRST FOR PURPOSE - Solomon Ecc 1:1-3 (1 Cor 15:57-58)
1:1-3, 8, 14-15 2:11, 17-18, 3:11

Cross references

John 4:13-15 John 7:37-38 Jere 2:13-14 Isa 12:2-3 Isa 41:17-18 Isa 55:1-2 Isa 58:11 Rev 22:17

“Lord, you alone can satisfy the soul’s thirst. We were made for You. Thank you for doing all that was necessary to seek, save, sanctify and satisfy our souls. From beginning to end, you are the source and end of all desire. May my soul find its fullness in You that others may be drawn to You through the work of your Spirit in me. I pray in the Name of the only Soul Satisfier, Jesus Christ the Son of God, Amen.”

Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you.

Living with leaving in view.... John 9:4

Ron& Val

Seeing The Invisible, embracing The Unapproachable, declaring The Unexplainable,
changed by The Immutable, running after The Irresistible
with inexhaustible joy in our inexpressible sorrows,
spending our time on eternity,
owning nothing yet possessing everything
that matters and lasts.

We are Pilgrims in Paradox.

Welcome to THE JOURNEY