

JESUS, THE STREAMS OF LIVING WATER

John 7:1-52

Key Verse 7:37b.38

"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him."

In chapter 6 we reflected on Jesus who helped a large crowd not to seek the corruptible physical bread, but to accept him as the bread of life. Let us give thanks to Jesus who out of his shepherd heart for the crowd, his disciples and for us, helped us not to follow Jesus with a false motive, false expectation or a divided heart, but to clearly decide to participate in Jesus' suffering. May God bless our common prayer to witness Jesus as the true bread from heaven through 10,000 one-to-one Bible study teams and to prepare the environment for the spiritual revival of this generation.

Ever since Jesus had healed a 38-year sick man on the Sabbath, the Jewish religious leaders sought to eliminate Jesus. This evil effort to speak out against Jesus and eliminate him did not diminish, notwithstanding the feeding of the five thousand. Many even of his disciples turned away from him when Jesus taught them the truth that he was the living bread from heaven. In this hour, let us learn about Jesus' spiritual struggle, who fought to the end in the midst of a hostile environment to please God and fulfill God's purpose by his death on the cross and resurrection. Let us also get to know Jesus' promise that streams of living water will flow from everyone who drinks at the spring of Jesus.

1. The right time for me has not yet come (1-9)

First: The worldly-minded brothers of Jesus (1-5)

Let's look at verse 1: "After this, Jesus went around in Galilee, purposely staying away from Judea because the Jews there were waiting to take his life." Because Jesus had healed a 38-year-old man on the Sabbath, the religious leaders persecuted Jesus and tried to kill him. So Jesus walked in Galilee for a long time. He knew that the religious superiors in Judea envied him because of his popularity and were looking for an opportunity to kill him. But Jesus did not stay in Galilee for fear of death, but because it was not God's time to die. To plant the seed of the Kingdom of God in the hearts of the people, Jesus avoided unnecessary confrontations with the malicious leaders. The religious leaders were to be shepherds for their suffering people and serve them with the Word of God. But they became a political instrument and were only interested in their political authority and power.

Let's look at verse 2: "But when the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was near, " As the Feast of Tabernacles approached, people looked forward to that week of celebration. The Jewish men marched in a caravan to Jerusalem. Jesus' brothers were thrilled by this festive setting and said to Jesus (3.4): "You ought to leave here and go to Judea, so that your disciples may see the miracles you do. No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world." Jesus' brothers urged Jesus to go up to

Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles. They expected that Jesus would finally become popular and be recognized. They imagined that a large crowd would carry him on their shoulders and cheer enthusiastically. Then they would wave back like football stars, sign autographs, give interviews and get countless likes on Instagram and Facebook. Jesus' brothers were thirsty for the praise and recognition of the people. They want to use Jesus for their own glory and popularity. But Jesus didn't seem to have any desire to go to Jerusalem at all, even though people from all villages and cities were enthusiastically moving to Jerusalem.

What does the author testify about Jesus' brothers? Let us look at verse 5: "For even his own brothers did not believe in him." Jesus' brothers did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God. They did not recognize his true greatness, his origin, his sonship with God. Therefore, John testified about them that they were men of unbelief. Unbelievers are people who are not spiritually minded and who do not belong to God but to the world.

Second: Jesus' decision to please God (6-9) What did Jesus tell his brothers who were pressing him? Let's look at verse 6: "Therefore Jesus told them, "The right time for me has not yet come; for you any time is right." "My time" and "my hour" is one of the most important points in John's gospel regarding the climax of the redemption story through Jesus' death on the cross. In verse 6, "my time" refers to the best opportunity in which Jesus would accomplish God's work of redemption. Jesus sought this best opportunity to please God. Jesus did not live according to people's expectations or desires, but he waited for the time that God had planned for him. While people were in a festive mood and seeking to enjoy themselves, Jesus was looking for the opportunity to best please God. When Jesus wanted to please God, he even had to accept misunderstandings by waiting for the time that God had planned for him.

If a person lives with the decision not to please himself or others, but God, he will inevitably experience misunderstandings and persecution. We remember M. Dr. Samuel Lee. When he had decided to please God instead of himself or others, he served the students in Korea and America devotedly with the shepherd heart of God. In return, he willingly accepted that many people misunderstood him and even persecuted and slandered him badly. When a young man decided not to please himself, his wife or his parents-in-law, but to please God by living a God- and mission-centered life and working with the servant of God, he experienced numerous slanderings and persecutions from the humanists. God blesses his determined missionary life based on Deuteronomy 6:5 and uses him as a spiritual leader, especially for the next generation.

We can learn from Jesus and these examples that we can never please God and the world at the same time. Whoever wants to please the world and its expectations will be just a person without backbone and will eventually become the devil's plaything. Therefore: let us make a clear decision to please God and to do his whole will to the death and at all costs! Then we will be a blessing to many people and God will be glorified through our lives.

When Jesus alone wanted to please God and did not seek the recognition of the world, he was misunderstood and hated by the world. Let us look at verse 7: "The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that what it does is evil." To please God, Jesus lived without compromise according to God's timetable and taught people the word of God. When the sinful people of the world saw His holy life according to God's schedule and heard His message, their sins were revealed and their pride was wounded. Therefore, they hated Jesus without reservation. After these words, Jesus sent his brothers ahead to the feast, but he remained alone in Galilee (9).

2. For I am of him, and he has sent me (10-36)

First: The teaching of Jesus came from God (10-16)

Let's look at verse 10: "However, after his brothers had left for the Feast, he went also, not publicly, but in secret." When Jesus went up to Jerusalem in secret, there were various controversial opinions about him. The Jews thought that he should appear at this important feast and make clear whether he was the Christ or not. Some held Jesus in high esteem and others considered him a seducer of the people (12:13). They did not know exactly who Jesus really was and had only superficial knowledge about him. Also, no one wanted to make a clear commitment to Jesus because they were afraid of the religious superiors. Let us look at verse 14. In the middle of the feast, Jesus went up to the temple and taught the people the Word of God. How did the people react to this?

Verse 15 says: "The Jews were amazed and asked, "How did this man get such learning without having studied?" Behind this statement was the anguish of the Jewish leaders. They were amazed that Jesus' words had authority. They were all successful men of learning. They tried to amaze people by their speech. But whenever they made a speech, one by one, people began to open their mouths, yawn, and finally fall asleep. But when Jesus spoke, people were deeply touched by His words (Mark 1:27). When Jesus spoke, people's hearts were filled with joy and heavenly peace. Jesus' spiritual authority came from his faithful obedience to the Word of God, so that the people recognized that Jesus' teaching came from God (16). Let us love the Word of God from all our hearts, explore the Word of God daily through Bible study and factual study, and serve young people in spiritual power with the Word of God.

Second: Jesus chose the will of God (17-20)

Let's look at verse 17: "If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." Many people doubt that Jesus' words are God's words. They do not want to give up their own opinion and imagination. In this verse Jesus teaches us that when a

person decides to do the will of God, he can clearly see that Jesus' word is the truth of God. Jesus also teaches us here that a decision of faith shows the innermost motive and goal of a person's life.

We remember Moses. When he made the decision to give up his own honor and glory as an Egyptian prince and suffer along with his enslaved people, he revealed that he did not want to live for himself but for the glory of God and for his people (Heb 11:24, 25). Mother Sarah Barry decided at the age of 25 to go as a missionary to poor post-war Korea and serve the desperate Korean students with the Gospel. She held fast to her decision in all situations, renounced her marriage dream and selflessly served the world mission. She was able to do so, because she had decided from her heart not to live for herself, but for the glory of God and for the salvation of the young people.

In a similar way, our Lord Jesus chose to renounce all his honor and glory as the heavenly Prince of God and to do the will of God, even if it meant that he had to humble himself endlessly as a servant of man and give his own life for the salvation of rebellious, sin-slaving people. It was a path of thorns and the cross. It was a path of surrender and endless suffering. But Jesus chose the way of God because he loved God. As a result of his decision he had to be crucified. But Jesus was not sad, but rather prayed to God: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." (Lk 23:34a). Let us reflect on whether we have clearly decided to do the will of God in obedience to faith. We live in a society where people constantly seek their own advantage and honour. Let us examine our hearts, our minds, whether we are determined to take upon ourselves all persecutions, all misunderstandings, all sufferings and the pressures of the world to do the will of God in our generation. As long as we live in dependence on the reaction and opinion of the people without a decision of faith, we can neither recognize what the will of God is nor fulfill God's will. Then we are like those who serve their own purpose, filling their own stomachs, perhaps walking

in the work of God for a time, but in the end running away and getting lost.

Let us read verse 17 again: "If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." No one needs to sit in uncertainty, doubt or disbelief. We may choose to obey a word of God and do God's will. When the priest Ezra made a life decision for the will of God to study and do the word of the LORD and teach commandments and rights in Israel (Ezra 7:10), God used him very preciously for spiritual revival in Israel. May God grant us the holy desire to do His will in our generation.

Let's look at verse 18: "He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him." It is a temptation for every servant of God to speak from himself and seek his own glory. The Devil fights very hard to have servants of the Word preach their own word instead of God's word. That is why we must pray constantly for the preachers of the Word and participate in their spiritual struggle so that they may preach God's Word as God's Word - without any compromise. We must also seek God's glory in all things alone, even if it means that people reject us, criticize us or want nothing to do with us. When God gave Ezekiel the commission to preach to his people, the LORD said to him in Ezekiel 3:7-9, "But the house of Israel is not willing to listen to you because they are not willing to listen to me, for the whole house of Israel is hardened and obstinate. But I will make you as unyielding and hardened as they are. I will make your forehead like the hardest stone, harder than flint. Do not be afraid of them or terrified by them, though they are a rebellious house."

From Jesus we learn that he did not speak a beautiful teaching to the ears of the people. Nor did he ever seek the honor or recognition of the people. From the beginning he did everything for the glory of God. That is why his sermon had authority. His spiritual authority came from his decision to devote

himself completely to the will of God and to give himself completely to it. God gives his spiritual authority to those who have chosen him. Spiritual authority cannot be acquired by any human work or merit. Nor by material wealth or worldly success. Jesus obeyed the will of God to the end. His spiritual authority came from his obedience. His authority testifies that He is the Christ, the Son of God, sent from heaven by God.

Third: Jesus was misunderstood and persecuted because of his shepherd heart (21-24)

Let us look at verses 23 and 24: "Now if a child can be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing the whole man on the Sabbath? Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment." In the time of Jesus, the Jews circumcised their sons even on the Sabbath so that their sons would receive God's blessing, and they never thought that they had broken the law of Moses. But in reality they transgressed the law of the Sabbath by their circumcision, because this law of circumcision did not come from Moses but from Abraham, the patriarch of faith (Gen 17:23). Their actions and assertions were contradictory in this sense. It is said that the famous American president Jefferson taught his people to give freedom to slaves. But he himself had 70 slaves in his house for his field work. The Jews who broke the Sabbath Law by circumcising their sons wanted to kill Jesus on the grounds that Jesus had broken the Sabbath Law by healing the man who had been sick for 38 years. But Jesus had not broken the Sabbath Law when he practiced the mercy of God according to the Law of God and healed a hopelessly paralyzed man. Although Jesus knew that it was the Sabbath, he healed the man because he had a burning shepherd's heart for him. Because of the healing of this pitiable man, Jesus was in danger of receiving all sorts of misunderstandings and persecution and even being killed. But that did not matter to Jesus. Jesus' heart burned to heal people spiritually, to deliver them from

their burdens of sin and to give them eternal life.

When God's servant missionary Peter came to Bonn 40 years ago, he served many sin-sick and desperate students who could not find hope in their lives. He helped them with prayer and God's Word and through the community of life until they were restored by the love of God, even completing their studies and beginning a life for the glory of God. But although he gave his life for the salvation of the students, he was slandered and accused like an evildoer. But even today he is determined to dedicate his whole life to the salvation of young people, also for the spiritual growth and education of the next generation, and to give his life for the spiritual renewal and revival in Germany, Europe and even into the Muslim world.

May God give us a personal decision of heart and faith to make the goal of Jesus' life, to please God, also our clear goal in life. If we live with this goal, we must not expect to please people, let alone to receive their glory. We will be misunderstood, criticized, even persecuted by the world. As we read in John 15:18-21, Jesus did not give his disciples any illusions. He said: "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also."

Fourth: Jesus testified that he is the Christ (25-36)

Let's look at verses 25 and 26: "At that point some of the people of Jerusalem began to ask, 'Isn't this the man they are trying to kill? Here he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him. Have the authorities really concluded that he is the Christ?' Some people wondered if the religious leaders had recognized Jesus as the Christ. They were very confused. Out of

confusion, they discussed back and forth whether he could be the Christ and what would be in favor and what would be against. When Jesus heard about their confusion, he testified of himself that he is the Christ. Jesus testified that he came from God and that he is the true Son of God. Let us read verses 28 and 29: „Then Jesus, still teaching in the temple courts, cried out, "Yes, you know me, and you know where I am from. I am not here on my own, but he who sent me is true. You do not know him, but I know him because I am from him and he sent me." Here Jesus testified that he did not come in his own name nor on the basis of his own idea, but obeyed the sovereign will of God.

Let's look at verse 30: "At this they tried to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his time had not yet come." The unbelief and malice of the Jewish leaders was very surprising. Through Jesus' clear testimony they became all the more unbelieving and tried to take Jesus captive. But they could not do so because God did not allow them to do so. This scene gives us the impression that darkness rules the world and that the servants of the devil have the upper hand over the history of mankind. But it is indeed not so. The darkness is not an independent power that could simply destroy God's work and God's people. God is Lord and everything happens only as far as God allows it. Jesus then and also we today are not dependent on fate, but we know ourselves in every situation, also in every storm of life, in God's mighty hand. We live in a dark world. Every day we experience the influence of godless and satanic teachings, such as godless humanism, materialism and genderism. Yet God's work is happening right in our midst. Through the Junior Leadership Camp we saw the work of the Spirit of God in our next generation, that God used them as powerful preachers of the Word of God. Despite the dark world and despite the Corona pandemic, God will also use the coming GLEF 2020 very preciously to establish global spiritual leaders among the next generation who are ready to follow Jesus, obey His Word, preach God's words

of life and be used as main characters in God's history.

Let's look at verse 31: "Still, many in the crowd put their faith in him. They said, "When the Christ comes, will he do more miraculous signs than this man?" In this passage, Jesus clearly testified to the confused crowd that he is the Christ. Why is Jesus the Christ? The Gospels say that He alone opened the eyes of the blind, healed the terminally ill, and preached the joyful, hopeful message of eternal life to those who were wretched under the power of sin. His whole life, his words, his teaching, his work, his miracles, his voluntary atoning death and resurrection, and the fulfillment of the Scriptures through his life reveal that he is the Christ. This passage says that Jesus is the Christ because He was sent by God. The expression "who sent me" is repeated here five times (16, 18, 28, 29, 33). God fulfilled His promises by sending Jesus into the world to complete His plan of salvation for the world. In his great mercy, God sent his only begotten Son into the world to deliver people from the power of sin and death. God sent Jesus into the world as the promised Saviour to open the door to the Kingdom of God and to bring us back to the eternal Kingdom of God (29.33). If we believe that Jesus came from God, we can be changed into spiritual people.

In this passage we have learned that by doing the will of Jesus we can clearly see whether Jesus' teaching is from God and is God's truth. We have also learned from Jesus to live with the purpose of life to please God and to live for God's glory. If we do God's will and live for God's glory, we will experience the mighty work of God through us in this generation, despite misunderstandings and rejections by godless people.

3. Streams of living water will flow from within him (37-52)

Let's look at verses 37 and 38: "On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty,

let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." Now the last and highest day of the feast had come, when two main events took place. The ceremony of the Atonement and the ceremony of the pouring of the water. The priest went out to the spring of Siloah, accompanied by the sound of the trumpet, and filled a golden jar with water. He brought it back to the temple, where the water was poured out in the forecourt at the foot of the altar of burnt offering. The Jews remembered how God had once made the water flow out of the rock in the desert so that the whole people could drink from it (Exodus 17:6).

Jesus' shepherd heart was burning. He saw that now at the end of the Feast of Tabernacles the people had experienced much, celebrated much and drunk much, but that their souls had remained empty and thirsty. Therefore, Jesus stood up and cried out (37b.38): "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." Jesus wanted to give the crowd to drink the living water so that their soul thirst would be completely quenched. Jesus is the true rock of salvation for all men. He is the true fountain of salvation, who gives us the living water for our souls. We experience that in our time many people are thirsty. Thirsty for holidays, amusements, for wine, beer, parties and much more. Only Jesus alone can quench the thirst of the soul. There is no living water in this world except Jesus. Without Jesus the souls of men remain thirsty and empty. Psalm 42:2.3 says: "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? My tears have been my food day and night, while men say to me all day long, "Where is your God?"

When Jesus said, "Whoever believes in me..." He said that we should not believe in Jesus because of any opinion or feeling, but because of the Scripture, because of the Word of God. Through Bible study, Jesus reveals Himself through His Word. Because of the Word of God, we are allowed to believe in Jesus. His death on the cross and his

resurrection change our lives by 180 degrees. The Holy Spirit makes us God's beloved children and God's holy people. The Holy Spirit constantly changes us in Jesus' image and makes streams of living water flow from our bodies.

The disciples of Jesus experienced the mighty life-changing work through the Holy Spirit. After Jesus' ascension to heaven, they were so fearful that they hid in the upper room. But when the Holy Spirit came upon them on the day of Pentecost, they were completely changed. Acts 2:4 says, "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." Peter, James, John, indeed all twelve began to preach in various foreign languages that they had never learned before. Acts 2:9-11: "Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs--we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

George Whitefield (1714 - 1770) came from Gloucester, England. When he was two years old, his father died. He studied in Oxford, attended the Holy Club there, where he met John and Charles Wesley. At the age of 21 he converted and became a deacon and preacher. His changed life testified that streams of living water flowed from Whitefield to countless people. While the Anglican Church with its rituals remained in a state of paralysis, Whitefield preached in the open air to the common people and was able to shake the masses in Britain and America deeply. He preached some 30,000 sermons, led countless sinners to repentance and is considered the greatest evangelist after the apostles of the New Testament.

About 40 years ago, God led Korean nurses to Germany. Many had come to earn money for their poor relatives in Korea. But through

Dr. Lee's prayer and Bible study, they were set up as missionaries who courageously served the able students in Germany with the Word of God. The Holy Spirit worked mightily through them, so that streams of living water flowed to the German young people and many locals were set up as shepherds, Bible teachers and spiritual leaders.

We could also see the work of the Holy Spirit in the teenagers of the next generation this summer during the Junior Leadership Camp in Rehe. As God filled our teenagers Ezra, Andrea, Daniel, Sarah Grace, Peter Joseph and Sarah with the Holy Spirit in their messages, we could see and hear streams of living water flowing from them and God's living Word entering the hearts of all participants.

A young woman once lived to quench her own thirst in the world. But through Bible study and the spiritual servanthship of the servant of God, she met Jesus and experienced the work of the Holy Spirit. Through Galatians 2:20b she received the living water from Jesus and became a new creature. Now streams of living water flow from her to numerous young women whom she faithfully serves through Bible study.

For many years I was thirsty for the transient waters of this world: for human recognition, success, money and career. Through God's initiative love and grace, I was allowed to meet Jesus as my Christ through Bible study and drink his living water. Through the Word of God from Luke 23:34a I personally experienced Jesus' unconditional and forgiving love. Faith in Jesus' death on the cross and his resurrection gave me the glorious certainty of new life. The Holy Spirit now makes me drink the living water of Jesus every day, so that the streams of living water continue to flow even through me to the intellectual students at the BRS College, in DE, EU and even into the Muslim world.

Let's look at verse 39: "By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been

glorified." The work of the Holy Spirit is to bring spiritually dead sinners to life through faith in Jesus' completed work of redemption on the cross and resurrection. A spiritual person who believes in God is like a spring of living water because the Holy Spirit is at work in him and always causes living water to flow to him in his soul, thus using him as a source of blessing for others.

The verses 40 - 52 describe the different reactions of people to Jesus' invitation. Some of the people said, "Surely this man is the Prophet." (40b). Others said, "He is the Christ." (41a). The superiors sent out servants to take Jesus. But when they returned to the chief priests and Pharisees without having achieved anything, the servants said: "No one ever spoke the way this man does." The Pharisees answered: "You mean he has deceived you also? Has any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him? No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law-there is a curse on them." The quarrelsome words of the superiors revealed one thing above all: that they did not know the Bible at all and in their ignorance had even become instruments of the devil.

Today we have learned Jesus' spiritual battle to please God and to fulfill God's counsel to the end. Jesus clearly testified that He is the Christ who came from the Father to do God's will. We were also allowed to hear Jesus' promise: "Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." May the living water of Jesus flow mightily from you: to every faculty of the Bonn University, to the University of Mainz, the University of Koblenz and HS Rhein-Sieg, to all 1700 universities in Europe and as far away as Dubai, Istanbul and Cairo.