

## THE SEVEN BENEFITS TO A SPIRIT EMPOWERED CHURCH

JOHN 7:37-39; EZEKIEL 47

Do you want to have an average church or a normal church? By and large, the average church we find today, the normal church we find in the Word of God. Let me ask you a couple more questions. Do you want to be a container or do you want to be a channel? Do you want your church to be a reservoir or do your church to be a river? How you answer these questions is going to determine your future. At the upcoming Synergize 2016 Pastors & Leaders Conference, we will be focusing more than ever on the spiritual dimensions of ministry than ever before.

One morning Jesus Christ stood in the middle of a religious crowd as a ceremony was coming to a close. The priest had just taken a pitcher filled with water, and he poured it upon the altar symbolizing salvation. The people have danced and they have shouted and now they're making their way home. And Jesus cries aloud and he says, "If any man is thirsty, let him come unto me and drink and he that believes in me as the scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." Jesus knew that on the next day that the people would have a memory but they would not have reality. So Jesus Christ cries aloud to try to get the attention of that religious crowd.

Do you know what Jesus Christ was trying to say then? Do you know what Jesus Christ is trying to say today? **He was simply trying to say stop enduring religion and start enjoying revival.** God is sending revival to this world and God is looking for pastors and leaders who want to be a part of this last-day revival.

### We Need To Realize The Secret To Spirit Empowerment

What is the secret to an outpouring of the Holy Spirit? You know, a lot of people say you've got to have a ten-step plan. It is the church that makes it complicated. Jesus Christ keeps it simple. What is the secret to revival in our heart, home and harvest? The answer is thirst. In fact, He was talking here about the rivers of the Holy Spirit flowing through our lives.

I do not know how much of God we have, but we got just as much of God as we want. We determine our level of victory every day. Jesus is looking for thirsty churches. Did you know a shallow thirst produces a shallow satisfaction? There is a difference between thirstiness and emptiness. My automobile has been

“on empty” many times, but it has never been thirsty one time. I have purchased gas not for a “thirsty tank” but an empty gas tank.

If we going to Spirit-empowered churches, we’ve got to get to the place where we don’t just focus on our emptiness but we begin to focus on our thirstiness. We begin to say, “Lord, we are thirsty and we want to be filled with the power of the Spirit of God.” I do not know how much of God we have, but we are where you want to be.

## **We Need To Recognize The Source Of Spirit Empowerment**

What is the source of the Spirit-empowered church? Some people have the idea we’ve got to a place. Some people have the idea you’ve got to get to a preacher or a particular leader. What is the source of genuine revival? Jesus answered it. He said, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come unto me.” Jesus Christ is the source. Jesus has always been the source. Holiness is not the way to Christ. Christ is the way to holiness. Revival is not the way to Christ. Christ is the way to revival. Jesus Christ is the source. He’s always been the source and He’ll always be the source.

Jesus gave everyone of us an invitation. He said if you’re thirsty, come. That means we’ve got to respond. He didn’t say if you’re thirsty, sit. He said if you’re thirsty, come. Jesus said, if you’re thirsty, come; and drink. How do we drink? We drink by faith. How do we drink by faith? Jesus said, “and he that believes in me.” do you believe? You believe by faith. So you come to the Lord Jesus Christ and you drink by faith.

It is possible for us to become so thirsty that every nerve in our body cries out for something to drink. Physicians tell us that you can get so thirsty that every thought in your mind cries out, screams out for something to drink.

Imagine yourself in the Mojave Desert. Last year, the Mojave Desert set new records temperatures ever recorded in the world. Imagine yourself in the Mojave. You’ve been there for just over two days; and you haven’t had a drop of water; and you are walking along this dirty, dusty path trying to find help. You are desperately thirsty. Every nerve cries out for something to drink. Every thought thinks about a cold glass of ice water. You’re so thirsty, desperately thirsty. You make your way around a curve; and as you do, you see a man standing there along the roadside, and he’s holding in his hand a pitcher filled

with ice water. It's one of those see-through pitchers. You can see the ice cubes floating inside. You know it's cold water because there's water condensation on the outside and it's dripping off the bottom.

The man looks at you and looks at your eyes. He can tell you're desperately thirsty, and he says to you, "You can have every bit of my water." Let me ask you, "Are you going to look at that man and say, "Well, you know I appreciate that offer, but you know I've got so much to do on my to do list I don't have time to stop." Are you going to say, "Well, let's sit down in the dust and have a long theological debate as to whether or not that water is for me." You're not going to do that. You know why? Because you're desperately thirsty. You know you're going to die unless you have that water that is inside that pitcher. And with a gracious heart, you reach out and you take that pitcher and you drink that water knowing that it will satisfy you and will help you to live.

For the last twenty years, tens of thousands of churches have become confused between busyness and business. Jesus Christ stands in a barren wilderness, and He says, "If you're thirsty, come unto me and drink by faith," and He says, "I've got something that will satisfy you and will change your life."

If we are going waiting until you've got enough time to seek God, we are going to wait the rest of our lives. If we are going to wait until all the pressures and stresses and strains are gone before we come to Christ for Spirit-empowerment and revival, then we are going to wait the rest of our lives. We can't wait until society says so. We can't wait till our work says so. You've got to make up your mind that you and your church are coming to Christ because you're thirsty!

## **We To Need To Remember The Supply Of Spirit Empowerment**

Jesus Christ is not offering us a stream, but a miraculous river. Christ is not offering something that is out of touch or outdated. He is offering something that will change our ministries and our churches forever. Jesus said, "If any man is thirsty, let him come unto me and drink and he that believes in me as the scripture has said." What Jesus was saying was based upon the Word of God. He wasn't simply espousing a new truth. The Word of God had already said it, and he was reiterating it to the people. I believe Jesus was talking about a river, a prophetic river, a personal river and a powerful river found in Ezekiel Chapter 47.

At the upcoming Synergize 2016 Pastors & Leaders Conference, **we will bring focus to the seven benefits of the Spirit Empowered Church.** I hope you will make plans to be with us! I want to paint a picture on the canvas of your mind and heart of the kind of Spirit empowered church that wants us to

have every week. Jesus is offering a **Holy Empowerment**. He's offering us a holy river. Why do we need a holy river? To help us live a holy life.

When the river of the Spirit flows through our life, it changes our character, and folks, there's a difference between being a character and having character. He wants the river of the Spirit to flow through our lives. Also the Church needs a holy river at large because so many individuals in the church live like the world and talk like the world and prioritize like the world.

We not only need a holy river, but we need a **Humble Empowerment**. This river flows under the door. You can't get much lower than that. It's a low flowing river. Did you know it's pride that hinders the moving of the Spirit of God? Did you know it's pride that hinders revival? We never become self-sufficient. Every week we need a fresh outpouring of the power of the Holy Spirit.

As the river of God flows, it travels by the altar. We need a **Healthy Empowerment**. If we plan to be a part of this last day revival, we have to understand that the gateway is the altar. The altar is on onramp to the river of revival. We need to invite our congregations once again to return to their first love in Christ. Every aspect of our lives are ministries are to be healthy and reproductive for years to come.

Ever great "move of God" starts small, but it doesn't stay small. Ever mighty river has a source or a beginning. Yet, it goes and grows as it flows. We need a **High-Rising Empowerment**. In Ezekiel 47, the man of God gets off the banks and he comes down to the river and he begins to measure the river. I see the man of God as he gets off the banks and he goes along the shore. The river is first to his knees, then to the ankles, to the waist and the river to swim in.

A lot of people like to have revival on the banks. They like to stay right there on the banks. They like to watch where the river's going and read about it in Church history books. There is a difference between being on the banks and being in the river. There is a difference between being a part of revival and being a part of the supernatural outpouring of the power of the Holy Spirit. We have on the banks too long! I believe it's time for us to get off the bank and get in the river and go where God wants us to go.

As the man of God surveys this powerful, transforming river, there comes a time that gets in over his head and becomes part of the river. Christ is offering us a **Harmonizing Empowerment**. In other words,

it is possible for us to get “in sync” with the Holy Spirit and with the church. We have move from competing with fellow churches to “completing” with fellow churches. I believe harmony is a step above unity. Harmony allows pastors and leaders to allow their divine gifts in a flexible and creative manner that adds value to one other and keeps “end game in mind” at the same time.

We also need a **Healing Empowerment**. Did you know Jesus is offering us a healing river? The Bible says that as this river flows, it began to transform the desert. Spirit-empowerment deals with *dry places in our lives*. The Holy Spirit wants to transform our barrenness into fruitfulness.

The river flows to the desert and it ends up at the Dead Sea. The Lord first of all deals with the dry places and then the dead places. Do you have any dead places in your church? The Bible says that their leaves became like medicine. Our lives are to be like medicine to a hurting world. When people come in contact with us and our churches, they are to sense the healing power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

And, if the above was not grand enough, our Lord is offering us a **Harvest Empowerment**.

When the river of God, gets to the Dead Sea, the Dead Sea is transformed. If we went to the Dead Sea today, there are two things you will not find. You won't find fish and you won't find fishermen. But when the River of Life gets there, there are two things you are going to find. You're going to find fish and you're going to find fishermen. And when God sends Spirit empowerment to the church, there are two things you're going to find. You're going to find fishermen and you're going to find fish. You will find men and women coming to know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

Do you know what revival does? Revival gets fishermen and fish together. Revival causes us to become mighty soul winners for the glory of God. When our churches become Spirit empowered, we will catch fish where we have never caught fish before! You and your church can become a fountain head of supernatural revival in your community, city and country.

Why should we settle for the average church when the Lord wants us to have the normal Church? And why should we settle for a reservoir when the Lord is offering us a river? Why should we desire to be containers when the Lord wants us to be channels? And why should we settle for the breeze of a ceiling fan when the Lord is offering us a mighty rushing wind? We encourage you to make plans now before all the seats are taken at the upcoming Synergize 2016 Pastors & Leaders Conference in gorgeous Orlando, Florida.