

Series: 2 Peter

Title: Cold Water for the Thirsty

Text: 2 Peter 2: 17

Date: July 15, 2012

Place: SGBC, New Jersey

**2 Peter 2: 17: These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.**

The Lord gives us metaphors we can understand. One such metaphor is water. In a dry, hot, desert land a well of water means life for the parched and thirsty man. A cloud of rain holds the same meaning protecting from the scorching heat and providing the needed moisture in the midst of draught.

Throughout the scriptures, “water” is used as a metaphor for spiritual life and grace given to the regenerated child of God by Christ by the Holy Spirit through the gospel. When the LORD God delivered Israel out of Egypt it is written,

Deuteronomy 8: 7: For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills.

Later, when the Lord promised to deliver Israel from the Assyrian he said,

Isaiah 12: 1: And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. 2: Behold, God *is* my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH *is* my strength and *my* song; he also is become my salvation. 3: Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

In our text, the Spirit of God uses Peter to describe false teachers using this metaphor.

**2 Peter 2: 17: These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.**

The picture is of a thirsty sinner coming to a well. You long for a cold drink of water—to be filled with the gospel. But the false teacher turns out to be a well full of sand—a dry well. Or they appear as a cloud of rain which appears on the horizon—you expect the much needed showers of God’s blessing through the gospel. But when the winds of change blow—or persecution arises because of the truth, as a cloud drifts away because of a whirlwind so do they—they are carried away with divers and strange doctrines.

Consider how opposite the believer is to those described in our text. First, false teachers and unbelievers—the unregenerate—are “wells without water”; those born of the Spirit of God are wells filled with water--Proverbs 10: 11: The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life; Proverbs 18: 4: The words of a man’s mouth *are as* deep waters, *and* the wellspring of wisdom *as* a flowing brook. Secondly, those without Christ are described here as “clouds that are carried with a tempest”; but when Christ ascended he gave his true ambassadors “That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;” (Eph 4:14) Thirdly, the false teachers are described as those “to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever”; but the believer has been born of God “To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1Pe 1:4-5)

So instead of focusing our attention on the false teacher, let's focus on how a "wells and clouds" full of water are descriptions of the life and grace of Christ in his true messengers and, particularly, in the believer.

**Proposition:** Every believer is an earthen vessel like a well or a cloud but Christ is our Life, the water within these earthly vessels.

## **I. WE HAVE NO WATER IN US BY NATURE**

A well gets its water from a hidden fountain within it. A man who is showered from above by a cloud receives the rain from above.

### **Dry Wells By Nature**

Every man born into this world is a "well without water." What good is a well without water? The life is in the water.

Many think they will be filled with life—with living water—by seeking it in this world. A person gets their education and lands the big career job. But they find themselves still empty, still thirsty, it has proven a dry well. Folks get married, a house, kids but still just dusty and dry—no moisture no life, still thirsty. Some look to their retirement years—thinking that's when they'll find the water. Then health starts to go, this old body proves to be a dry well—a cloud with no water. A man may accumulate much and by all appearance he may appear as a well full of water. A well can have a nice brick or stone well-house, the best well-pump money can buy, a well-bucket covered over in gold, but drop down in the well—in the heart—in the depths of the soul—no water! What good is it? Without the water of life, of the indwelling Holy Spirit, without Christ formed in you, we are dry wells, dusty, and dead. Such a well is good for nothing but to be capped off so some unsuspecting traveler passing-by is not disappointed by your dryness. Or so no one falls in and is harmed by you. You are a "parched place in the wilderness, a salt land, and not inhabited." Just a well-without water!

**Application:** That's a description of every man born into this world. It's a description of the elect of God until God arrests us by his grace. Even when God sends us the truth, until God works grace in our hearts, we murmur against those who preach the truth just as the children in the wilderness.

Exodus 17:3 And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?

The natural man does so because our thirst by nature is only for natural water.

Jeremiah 2: 13: For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, *and* hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

## **II. CHRIST IS THE FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATERS—HE IS THE SOURCE OF LIVING WATER.**

### **The Smitten Rock**

Christ is that Rock that was smitten by Moses for his people (a picture of the justice of the law smiting Christ our Substitute) from whom the water of life flowed freely.

- Justice satisfied for his people
- Free forgiveness

- Righteousness
- Accepted in the Beloved

Christ Jesus the GodMan is that Living Water given freely to all those for whom Christ died. He is that one who covers us from the scorching heat of wrath and justice and rains down blessings like a cloud full of rain.

Isaiah 32:2: And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

God the Father, the Fountain of life, light, and grace, ordained before the world was made that the Lord Jesus Christ, his own beloved Son, would be the one source from whom all salvation, all righteousness, all sanctity, all grace and truth should flow.

Colossians 1: 19: For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell

Revelation 7:16: They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. 17: For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

And every believer rejoices in Christ our glorious Fountain because:

John 1: 16: And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

**Illustration:** Bob irrigating the fields—plants dry, withering, no water.

The gospel—grace—salvation accomplished according to the eternal purpose of God, by the work of Christ, by the Spirit of God—grace, salvation, apart from our dry, dead, flesh and works—is water. We are dry, we are sand. We need this Water of Life.

### III. HOW DO SINNERS COME TO HAVE THIS WATER?

#### The Gospel Water

As God promised to do, he makes everyone of his elect's path to lead to his gospel—a well of water, a cloud full of rain.

- Like the Samaritan woman who came to Jacob's well and met Christ the Living Water
- Like the Ethiopian met Philip
- Like Lydia met Paul

The Holy Spirit makes us to behold Christ and beholding the true Water and we begin to see our sin and our soul becomes thirsty. God's hand becomes heavy upon us

Psalm 32: 4: For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

We become so thirsty. And we begin to hear Christ say in our hearts:

John 7:37: If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. (without money, without price) 38: He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (Isaiah 55: 1)

John 4: 14: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

The Word begins to become good news to us:

Proverbs 25: 25: *As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.*

The thirsty sinner find himself believing Christ, we find ourselves crying out from the depths of our heart as the Psalmist did:

Psalm 42:2: My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

Psalm 63:1 «A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.» O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;

Psalm 143:6: I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.

### **Water From Above**

God always makes good on his promise. Our Redeemer pours out in abundance when the Spirit brings us to cry for him—Christ enters in and fills us with living waters.

Isaiah 35:7: And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

Isaiah 41:18: I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.

Through his gift of faith...he shows us

Revelation 22: 1:...a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

For the first time, we stop boasting in ourselves and we begin to honor God for his free, unmerited, unsought grace to us—and this just as he said we would:

Isaiah 43:20: The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen.

### **Showers of Blessing**

God plants us in HIS hill—where HE HAS PROVIDED HIS WELL OF WATER—HIS CLOUD THAT CANNOT BE CARRIED AWAY BY A TEMPEST---WHERE THE gospel flows like water in a well and from clouds above. He promises to keep us, saying,

Ezekiel 34: 22 Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. 23 And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, *even* my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. 24 And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken *it*. 25 And I will

make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. 26 And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing. 27 And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them. 28 And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make *them* afraid.

When we become troubled—wondering if the Lord will call out any more of his sheep in this place—he calms our fears...

Isaiah 44: 2: Thus saith the LORD that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, *which* will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen. 3 For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: 4 And they shall spring up *as* among the grass, as willows by the water courses.

He instructs us to simply ask him:

Zechariah 10:1: Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain; so the LORD shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.

He instructs us to patiently wait on him.

James 5: 7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. 8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

#### **IV. THE PURPOSE OF A WELL FULL OF WATER**

##### **A Well Provides Water for Others**

A well is made to provide water to others. This grace is given us to know our Redeemer and his accomplished redemption so that we can give this good news to others.

Believer, it is not only to fill us but to provide for other thirsty pilgrims. The soul born again of the Holy Spirit is a well of water in a dry and thirsty land for others to drink from. Only a believer who is daily taught the dry death our earthen vessels are without Christ is capable of teaching others that the flesh profits nothing.

Only you who see God's holiness and justice and righteousness which demanded he provide his own Son, his own Lamb, to honor his own law and purge the sin of his children are able to dispense this water. Only you who have been made to know the conflicts of the flesh and the spirit, the warfare between this world and the believer--can dispense this water. Only the thirsty sinner who has been given Christ our Water can teach others that "Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Mt 5:6)

A life which adorns our doctrine, a walk consistent with the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, steadfastness in spreading his gospel through this dry desert world, these are ways God uses his wells as he calls out his lost sheep.

## **Well Replenished by its Source**

Remember, the more water a well gives the more water it is given. You can draw water out of a well and the hidden spring of water continually fills it again. Our great Fountain of grace says, "Freely ye have received, freely give." He promises to *replenish* us so that our water is never dried up.

Proverbs 11:24: There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth;

Is it our substance? The cattle on a thousand hills are his. Is it our time? My times are in his hands (Ps 31: 15) Is it our talents? He gave them. He replaces more than we ever dispense—of his fullness have we all received grace for grace. The Lord promises, "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue fails for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." We can truly say, "my cup runneth over."

## **V. HERE IS THE LAST WORD**

### **Dry Sinners**

Let me ask you, poor child of sin and dust and instability, why do you doubt the sincerity of the Lord Jesus Christ? Sinner, why will you go on seeking water where this none? Why will you die the second death?

The mist of darkness—hell that is reserved—will be flamed by passions unsatisfied, desires unanswered, a consciousness of all that could have been yours freely but which you refused for a momentary 70-80 years of dry dust. What you thought an oasis will prove to have been a mirage. You will cry, send someone "that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." (Lu 16:24)

What's the price for this water? Free. What's the catch? None—you can offer God nothing nor add anything to him—but he can give you everything—Life Eternal. What must I possess? Only thirst

Why will you go on in all your dust and parched rebellion and inherit the mist of darkness and separation from Christ forever? If you die, it is not because God withheld anything from you, it will be because you withheld all from yourself.

### **Living Wells**

Brethren, give all glory to God. All God's children, by the grace of God, by perfect redemption accomplished by Christ Jesus, by the full work of salvation wrought on their behalf, through the Living Word, by the Holy Spirit of Life making us eternally new are:

- Wells full of living water
- Showers of blessings are rained down upon us from our Father above
- Be no more children carried about like clouds in a tempest--but rooted and grounded in Christ
- He has promised that to us: "is reserved an inheritance ready to be revealed in the last time."

If you came here thirsty, I hope you have enjoyed a cold drink of good water this morning. Is it raining in your heart? If so, to God be the glory!

Amen!