



# RIVERS OF REVIVAL

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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# Rivers of Revival

SERMON REFERENCE: Ezekiel 47:1-12

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2475

John 7:38 says, "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

As we ask God to do something supernatural in our desperate world, we must pray to become like the rivers of revival pictured in Ezekiel 47.

"Then he brought me back to the door of the temple, and there was water, flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the front of the temple faced east; the water was flowing from under the right side of the temple, south of the altar." (v. 1)

## The Mysterious Source of the River

It is a humble source; it flows from under the threshold. Adrian Rogers says, "Revival never begins without God's people humbling themselves." It is a holy source; it flows past the altar, the holiest of holy places. It is a heated source; it flows out towards the east, where the sun rises.

## The Marked Course of the River

It flows into the depressed, deserted, and deadly places. There are people who are fearful and perplexed, unsatisfied, and spiritually dead. They don't know the joy that we know or have the answers to life that we have. They need the rivers of revival to flow out of us.

Ezekiel explains the mighty force of this river, declaring that where the water flows:

- Trees will grow: "When I had returned, there, along the bank of the river, were very many trees on one side and the other" (v. 7).  
Ezekiel is talking about Christians who have strength and life, becoming trees that will not wither. (See *Psalm 1:2-3*.)
- Fish will go: In Matthew 4:19, Jesus said that we're to be fishers of men. Evangelism is a by-product of revival; when the church gets right with God, others will come to Jesus.
- Fruit will show: Galatians 5:22-23 reveals the fruit of the Spirit: "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control."
- Health will glow: When the rivers of revival flow through, the result is spiritual health: for us those around us.

## Life Application

Are you thirsty for revival? Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness; for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). Pray for a river of revival to flow through you today.



# Rivers of Revival

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## 1) INTRODUCTION

- a) There are three categories of people in every church:
  - i) Those who make things happen.
    - (1) These are they who pray for God to send a mighty revival and to send it through them.
  - ii) Those who watch things happen.
    - (1) These are Sunday morning spectators.
    - (2) They think they have done God a favor by getting to the church service.
      - (a) But the real “service” is when you walk out the church doors and begin to serve the Lord.
  - iii) Those who don't even know anything is happening.
    - (1) They go to church for appearances or out of habit or because someone invited them.
    - (2) They don't really understand what is going on.
- b) John 7:37-38
  - i) There was a feast of the Jews called the Feast of Tabernacles.
    - (1) It was the tenth feast in the Jewish year.
  - ii) It was a feast of great joy and exhilaration.
  - iii) On the last day of the feast, the priest would go down to the Pool of Siloam where he would fill a golden flask with water and go back to the temple.
  - iv) He would pour out the water by the altar, and the people would begin to shout and to praise God.
    - (1) The trumpets would sound.
  - v) In the middle of all of this was Jesus Christ.
    - (1) All of the Old Testament ceremonies and feasts were about Jesus.
    - (2) All of the feasts were about Jesus.
    - (3) Jesus Christ, the Water of Life, was standing in their midst, but they didn't recognize Him or know who He was.
  - vi) As they were pouring out sparkling water (symbolizing the Lord Jesus Christ), Jesus invited any who were thirsty to come to Him and to drink.
    - (1) Jesus knew that these people, who were so full of religious fervor, would go back to their same old fears, foibles and failures.
      - (a) After the enthusiasm of the moment had died, they would go back to their old way of life.
    - (2) Jesus knew that what they needed was not to come to a service to get their cup filled but to become a river of living water.
      - (a) We are to be a river of revival.
      - (b) Revival power is to be flowing though us.
- c) Ezekiel 47:1-5
  - i) This Scripture illustrates the passage in John 7.
  - ii) This applies to us personally.
  - iii) The illustration here is the Old Testament temple of God.



- (1) The author is using supernatural symbolism to describe something that is happening from the temple.
- (2) He is not talking about the literal temple here, but there is a greater spiritual lesson.
- iv) As Christians, we are the temple of God.
  - (1) The Old Testament temple was an illustration of the Christian.
  - (2) In the Old Testament, God had a temple for His people.
  - (3) In the New Testament, God has a people for His temple.
    - (a) 1 Corinthians 6:19
- d) There is a river of revival that should be flowing through us.

**2) THE MYSTERIOUS SOURCE OF THIS RIVER (EZEKIEL 47:1)**

- a) This river comes from under the threshold.
  - i) Ezekiel 47:1
  - ii) The idea here is that it's about as low as you can get.
- b) This river has a humble source.
  - i) The river flowed from under the threshold.
  - ii) Revival never begins without God's people humbling themselves, on their faces before Him.
    - (1) Have you really, truly been broken and humbled before God?
    - (2) We often strut into the presence of God; heady, high-minded, unbent and unbroken.
  - iii) James 4:10
- c) It comes from a holy source.
  - i) It flows past the altar.
    - (1) Ezekiel 47:1
  - ii) The altar was the place where the blood was shed.
  - iii) The blood that was shed in the Old Testament speaks of the blood of Jesus Christ.
    - (1) 1 John 1:9
  - iv) If we want to be a river of blessing, then we must be humble and holy.
    - (1) The only way to be holy is to let the water of our lives flow past the altar for cleansing.
- d) The river is a heated flow.
  - i) Ezekiel 47:1
    - (1) The waters flowed toward the East.
      - (a) The sun rises in the East.
    - (2) The waters flowed from the south side of the altar.
      - (a) That is the sunny side of the altar.
  - ii) People should feel the warmth of Jesus in our churches.
  - iii) We should be full of enthusiasm and love for the Lord Jesus.
    - (1) Our hearts should be hot toward the Lord Jesus.

**3) the marked course of the river (ezekiel 47:2-5)**

- a) This humble, holy and heated flow becomes an ever-deepening and ever-enlarging river.
  - i) It is a supernatural river because there are no tributaries.
  - ii) It grows in width and in depth.
- b) Ezekiel 47:3-5
  - i) There's a man with a measuring line, measuring the depth of the river.



- ii) The man wades in the river, which is ankle deep.
  - (1) This speaks of walking in the Spirit.
- iii) The river becomes knee-deep.
  - (1) This speaks of praying in the Spirit.
- iv) The river deepens to waist deep.
  - (1) This signifies strength in the Spirit.
  - (2) The loins are spoken of in the Bible as the center of our strength.
- v) The waters become so deep and forceful that he couldn't pass through.
  - (1) These are waters in which he would be swept up.
  - (2) This is genuine, Holy Spirit control of our lives where the water of revival is flowing out of us and getting wider and deeper.
- c) You cannot stop a river.
  - i) The only place where you could stop a river would be at its source.
    - (1) The only thing that can stop the river of revival in your life is you.
      - (a) John 7:38
- d) Where do the waters flow?
  - i) They flow to the depressed places.
    - (1) Ezekiel 47:8
      - (a) The waters flow down from the mountain into the depressed places.
      - (2) We live in a land of depressed people.
        - (a) They may be sick.
        - (b) They may be out of work.
        - (c) They have wayward children.
        - (d) They are confused, perplexed, unsatisfied and fearful.
          - (i) There needs to be a supernatural river flowing out of us and into these depressed places so that we can be a river of revival to these hurting people.
  - ii) They flow into the desert places.
    - (1) Ezekiel 47:8
      - (a) The desert mentioned here is the Judean desert.
        - (i) Nothing much grows in this desert.
        - (ii) There is no real fruitfulness there.
      - (2) Many people are living desert lives, parched lives.
        - (a) They do not know the joy we as Christians know.
        - (b) They do not know joy unspeakable and full of glory.
        - (c) They do not have the answers to life that we have.
  - iii) They flow down into the deadly places.
    - (1) Ezekiel 47:8
      - (a) The sea spoken of here is the Dead Sea.
        - (i) No organic life can live in this sea.
        - (ii) The Dead Sea is saltier than any ocean.
        - (iii) There is so much salt in the Dead Sea that you can sit in it and not sink.
        - (iv) But the Dead Sea is also a deadly place.
          - 1. It has no fish because it is a deadly place.
      - (2) There are people around us who are dying and going to Hell.
        - (a) There is a place of death, and it can even be next door.



- (b) Romans 6:23
- (c) Ezekiel 18:20
- (d) 1 Timothy 5:6
- (e) We have to show them the way to life in Christ.
- (3) A river of life has to flow out of us.
  - (a) Will you touch their lives?

#### 4) THE MIGHTY FORCE OF THE RIVER (EZEKIEL 47:7)

- a) Where the waters flow, the trees will grow.
  - i) Ezekiel 47:7
    - (1) The Jericho road going down to the Dead Sea is dry and barren, yet these trees on the bank of the river were green and succulent.
    - (2) These trees represented here are not literal trees.
      - (a) Psalm 1:3
      - (b) These are healthy Christians who are finding strength and life.
  - ii) A healthy saint is like a tree.
- b) Where the waters flow, the fish will go.
  - i) Ezekiel 47:8-9
  - ii) This river cascades down into the depressed places, the desert places and the deadly places.
    - (1) The water comes to the Dead Sea, and a transformation takes place.
    - (2) This sea where no fish could live now begins to swarm with fish.
      - (a) We are to be fishers of men.
        - (i) Matthew 4:19
  - iii) We catch so few fish because we fish in a stagnant pond.
    - (1) Revival is not evangelism.
      - (a) Evangelism is the fruit of revival.
  - iv) When we get on fire for the Lord Jesus, it will be noised abroad.
    - (1) Acts 2:6
      - (a) On the Day of Pentecost, there were only about 120 disciples.
      - (b) Historians estimate there were approximately one million people in Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover.
      - (c) How do 120 people impact one million?
        - (i) The unsaved will come when they see the reality of Jesus Christ.
    - (2) The world is not looking for a new definition of the Gospel; they're looking for a new demonstration of the Gospel.
  - v) Souls will come by the multitudes.
    - (1) The sea will swarm with fish, and our nets will be full when we let the Spirit of God flow out through us.
    - (2) Your life will be a testimony.
- c) Where the waters flows, the fruit will show.
  - i) Ezekiel 47:12
  - ii) Psalm 1:3
    - (1) There is fruit.
  - iii) People should see the fruit of the Spirit in us.
  - iv) The test of our ministry is this:
    - (1) Are we helping others become more like Jesus?



- (2) Colossians 1:28
- v) The fruit spoken of here in Ezekiel is the fruit of the Spirit.
  - (1) Galatians 5:22-23
    - (a) This is a description of the character of Christ.
- vi) When a river of revival flows out of our innermost being, then those around us will be disciplined, and they will become fruitful.
- d) Where the waters flow, the health will glow.
  - i) Ezekiel 47:12
  - ii) Many churches today (the body of Christ) are sick, weak and anemic.
    - (1) What would happen if every church member became a river of revival?
    - (2) What would happen if we became real in our service to the Lord?
  - iii) We are to have a healing force on this world and our cities.
  - iv) Everywhere we go, there is to be spiritual health because the river is flowing out of us and touching lives.

## 5) CONCLUSION

- a) Are you thirsty today?
  - i) John 7:37
    - (1) It begins with a thirst.
- b) We have all of God that we want.
  - i) Matthew 5:6
  - ii) A shallow thirst, a shallow satisfaction.
  - iii) A deep thirst, a deep satisfaction.
- c) Do you have a genuine thirst for Jesus?
  - i) It's not a one-time thing; it's a constant thing.
    - (1) You drink and keep on drinking.
- d) Matthew 10:32-33
  - i) The faith that will not lead to confession will not lead to Heaven.
- e) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- f) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31
  - v) John 3:16





# Rivers of Revival

**SERMON REFERENCE:** Ezekiel 47:1-12

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #2475

Would you take God's precious, holy Word and turn to the Old Testament, Ezekiel 47. The title of the message today is, "Rivers of Revival."

Now we're praying for, planning for, hoping for, and looking for revival. We're expecting God to do something supernatural in our midst, not only corporately as a church, but in your life and in your home and with your associates.

Now there are three categories of people in every church; at least three. There are those who make things happen. Then there are those who watch things happen. And then there are those who don't even know anything is happening. Now I'm afraid that we have all three groups here today. There are those here today who'll say, "O God, begin a mighty revival and send it through me." There are others who will come Sunday by Sunday and say, "I wonder how it's going." And you're used to Bellevue programs, and you say, "Well, that one's good," or, "They're doing thus and such," and you become a Sunday morning spectator, thinking that perhaps somewhere you've done God a wild favor by getting here. You call this the service; this is not the service. The service is when you walk out those doors and begin to serve the Lord. This is just getting ready to serve the Lord. And then there'll be some who will not have a clue. They've come here this morning and for whatever reason, but for appearances or because somebody invited them or out of habit, but they really will not understand what is going on. We're talking about rivers of revival, and I want you to be in that first category.

In a moment, we're going to read some Scripture from Ezekiel chapter 47, but I want to set up the Scripture by giving you a passage in the New Testament. Now I'm not going to ask you to turn to that. Of course, you can if you want to in John chapter 7 verse 37 and following. But here's what happened.

There was a feast of the Jews called the Feast of Tabernacles. It was the tenth feast in the Jewish year. And it was a feast of great joy, great exhilaration. And the climax of that feast, the last day of that feast, the priest would go down to a pool called the Pool of Siloam. He would take a golden flask, fill it with water and then go back to the temple. There by the altar he would pour out the water by the altar, and the people would begin to shout and to praise God. The trumpets would sound. The Talmud said, "He who has not seen the rejoicing at the pouring out of the water, or the drawing of the water, has never seen rejoicing." They were exhilarated. Now right in the middle of all of this was Jesus Christ. Now all of the Old Testament symbols were about Christ. Now learn that. All of these Old Testament symbols. These feasts, all of it, it's about Jesus. And there He was, the water of life, standing in their midst. They didn't recognize Him. They didn't know who He was. And so the Bible says in John chapter 7 verses 37 and following, "In the midst of the feast," listen, "Jesus stood and cried." Now He had to speak with a voice loud enough that all the multitudes could hear Him. Jesus stood and shouted. That's what it means. And here's what He said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." As they were pouring out that sparkling water, it all symbolized the Lord Jesus Christ. But Jesus knew that these people, who were full of exhilaration, these people who were full of religious fervor, these people who were full of excitement, would go back to their same old fears, their same old foibles, their same old failures, and after the enthusiasm of the moment had died, they would go back to their old way of life. Now Jesus understood that what they need is not to come to a service and get their cup filled, but to become a river of living water.

You know, people go from Bible conference to Bible conference to get their cup filled. Well, you don't have to keep going to get your cup filled if you've got a river inside of you. Jesus said in the Gospel of John chapter 7



verse 38, “Out of His innermost being shall flow a river of living water.” And then He makes it clear. He’s speaking of the Holy Spirit. Now you, friend, are to be a river of revival, a one-man, a one-woman, a one-boy, a one-girl, a river of revival. Revival power is to be flowing through you.

Now, Jesus said, “As the Scripture hath said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.” We don’t find that exact text in the Old Testament, but we find the illustration in the Old Testament, and it is in Ezekiel chapter 47. And so I want you to begin reading with me from the Word of God, and we’re going to read the first five verses. “Afterward, he brought me again unto the door of the house,” now the house he’s speaking of is the temple, “and, behold, the waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward; for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of, of the house, at the south side of the altar. Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the outer gate by the way that looketh eastward, and behold, there ran out waters on the right side. And the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he bought, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; and the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters; and the waters were to the loins. Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over; for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.”

Now that may sound very convoluted and difficult, but we’re going to break it down a little bit, and you’re going to find out that it applies to you personally today; not just to Bellevue, but to you personally; because Jesus said if you thirst and come to Him, out of you will flow a river of living water.

Now the illustration here in Ezekiel is the temple of God, the Old Testament temple. Now he’s using supernatural symbolism here about something that is happening from the temple. He’s not talking about the literal temple here. There is a greater spiritual lesson. Now what you need to understand is, friend, you are a temple of God. The Old Testament temple was only an illustration of the Christian. You see, listen. In the Old Testament, God had a temple for His people; in the New Testament, He has a people for His temple. You are the temple of God. That’s what Paul had to say in First Corinthians chapter 6, verse 19, “What? Don’t you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost who dwells in you?” That’s what Jesus was talking about. Out of his innermost being, out of the temple, will flow rivers of living water. There is a river of revival that should be flowing through me. As I studied this and prayed over it, I thought, “Dear God, make my life a river of revival. Lord, I want to be a river of refreshment to those who are around me. I don’t want anybody to come in contact with me but what somehow they are touched with me.”

Now I want us to notice three major thoughts this morning. And, first of all, I want us to notice what I’m going to call the mysterious source of this river, **the mysterious source of the river**. This river comes, first of all, from under the threshold. Look, if you will, in verse 1, Ezekiel 47 verse 1 and you’ll find out that this river comes from under the threshold. Now how high is the threshold? Well, about that high. And the water flows out from under the threshold. Now what’s the idea? It’s about as low as you can get; under the threshold. Now you are the temple and this water is to be flowing out of you from under the threshold. **This river has a humble source**. Listen to me, church, revival never begins without God’s people humbling themselves, God’s people on their face before God.

May I ask you a question? Have you really, honestly, truly been broken and humbled before God? Are you right now? We strut into the presence of God. We sit heady, high-minded and unbent and unbroken. Sometimes we pray, “O Lord, humble me.” I wouldn’t pray that for myself. I want to humble myself before God. That’s what the Bible says in James 4:10, “Humble yourselves before God, and He will lift you up.” This river comes from a humble source.



And **it comes from a holy source**. It flows past the altar. You see it there in the Word of God? It flows right past the altar. Now what is the altar? The altar was the place where the blood was shed. What does that blood shed in the Old Testament speak of? The blood of Jesus Christ. First John 1 verse 9, "For the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin." You see, if you want to be a river of blessing, you've got to be humble and you've got to be holy.

Again, I want to ask you this question. Not only are you humble this morning, but are you holy? That seems to be a word that we don't like anymore; holy, holier-than-thou, holy Joe. I mean, it's sort of a pajorita. But it's not taken out of the Word of God. We are to be holy. And the only way to be holy is to let your water flow past the altar for cleansing, and let it be a holy flow.

And then it's a, **it's a heated flow**. If you'll look there in the Bible again, you'll find out that the waters flowed out towards the east. The east is where the sun would come up and heat the morning chill. And it flowed from the south side of the altar. That's the sunny side of the altar. Again, if we do business with God, we're going to have to say, "O God, give me a hot heart. Give me a concern. Lord, may this river that flows out of me, may it come from a sunny side of my disposition." I want that for our church.

You know, I want people to come in here and feel the warmth of Jesus, don't you? Now we talk about a family of friends. It can't be a family of friends unless you're friendly. We talk about the warmth of this church. How warm are you? How will you greet our guests this morning? How much of the enthusiasm and the love of Jesus Christ is in you today? And don't you look down your long nose at those who are drinking whiskey or going to the casinos. If your heart is not hot for the Lord Jesus Christ, you're probably doing more to hold back revival than they are.

You know, people come to a church like this and they want to know do we really love Jesus. Can they see it? Can they sense it? I'm not talking about superficial enthusiasm. I'm talking about a holy glow. I'm talking a warm-hearted flow that comes out of us.

Bobby Burns was a noted Scot poet. He got depressed one day, and he felt, "I need to go to church. I need to get my spirits lifted." And he found a little church and walked in, and it was deader than last Tuesday. There was no joy, no victory, no shouts, no warmth, no welcome. He just felt further depressed. He opened the hymnbook and scribbled these words on the inside cover;

"As cold a wind as ever blew,  
as cold a church, and in it bit, but few;  
As cold a minister as ever spack,  
Ye'll all be hot e're I come back."

Wouldn't you like for people to say, "I want to go back to Bellevue," or, "I want to be around that individual. Their life warms me up and makes me want the things of God." Now this is the mysterious source of the river. It comes from under the threshold. It goes past the altar. It comes from the sunny side. And the river is this wonderful river. It's mysterious.

Here's the second thing I want you to notice. It's what I'm going to call **the marked course of the river**. Let's see where the river flows in Ezekiel 47 verses 2 through 5, "And he brought me out by the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the outer gate by the way that looketh eastward, and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side. And when the man had measured the line in his hand the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, and he, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the wa-



ters; the waters were to the loins.” that is, the waist. “And afterward he measured a thousand; and there was a river that I could not pass over; for the waters were ris, were risen, waters to swim in that could not be passed over.”

Now what is happening? This humble flow, this holy flow, this heated flow that comes out. It becomes an ever-deepening, ever-enlarging river. It’s a supernatural river because there are no tributaries. The Mississippi River is a mighty river because, though it starts with a trickle, there are many tributaries that come into the Mississippi. But this river has no tributaries, and yet, it is supernatural. It begins to grow in width and it grows in depth. And there’s a man with a measuring line, and he begins to measure the river and sound it for depth, and he’s doing it in about five hundred yard increments. And he measures five hundred yards and the water now is cascading and enough that a man could wade in it and get up ankle deep. That’s speaks to me of walking in the Spirit. And then the water gets deeper. It gets to the knees. That speaks to me of praying in the Spirit. Then another five hundred yards the water begins to deepen, and the water is waist deep. That speaks of strength in the Spirit. The loins are spoken of in the Bible as the center of your strength. And it is today for a wrestler. And the water is up here to the, to the thighs and the loins. And then, finally, five hundred more yards and the river is so deep, the waters are so forceful, you couldn’t pass through it; just waters that you’re swept up in, waters that you’re carried along by. I’m not talking about a false enthusiasm. The spirit of the prophet is subject unto the prophet. Some people say, “Well, I was just swept away.” I’m not talking about that kind of being swept away. I’m talking about a genuine, Holy Spirit control of your life where you step into the water of revival, or the water of revival is flowing out of you. It is getting ever wider, ever deeper. What a mighty force this river is.

You know, you can’t stop a river. If you dam it up, what will happen? Well, it’ll just rise up and overflow the dam and the countryside. You throw rocks into the river, what does it care? You cannot stop a river. The only place that you can stop a river is at its source. And, ladies and gentlemen, listen, the only thing that can stop the river of revival in your life, listen now, is you. Did you hear that? The only thing that can stop the river of revival in your life is you. Nobody can stop a river unless they stop it at the source. This is a supernatural river. In John 7 verse 38 Jesus said, “Out of His innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.”

And where do the waters flow? First of all, **they flow to the depressed places.** Now the water starts up here at the temple, and verse 8 tells us that, “These waters go down into the desert and into the sea.” They go down, down, down. One day, when we go back to Israel, we’ll go to the Mount of Olives, 2,700 feet above sea level, or the temple mount, 2,700 feet above sea level. But as you turn eastward, the topography changes and you go down and down and down. And about that time the guide will say, “We’ve just gotten below sea level. Everybody close the windows of the bus.” And you go down and down and down and down. And finally you come to the lowest place on the face of the earth right there at the Dead Sea, 1,300 feet below sea level. And these waters go from the mountain place down into depressed places.

Now listen, we live in a land of depressed people. There are people today who are up against it. They don’t know what to do. They’re people who have loved ones who are sick. They’re people who are out of work. There are people who are having domestic scraps. They’re people who are having wayward children. There are people who are confused and perplexed and unsatisfied and fearful. They are depressed. And it’s not going to do you any good just to say, “Buck up, do better.” There needs to be such a supernatural river flowing out of you into those depressed places that you will be a river of revival to these people.

But not only does the river flow into the depressed places; **it flows into the desert places.** Now the Bible says there in verse 8 these waters go down to the desert. That’s the Judean desert, the Arabah, and nothing much grows there. A few little scrubby things, but there’s no real fruit, there’s no real flower, there’s no real succulents, there’s no real fruitfulness there. And there’s so many who are not depressed, but they’re living desert lives, parched lives. They don’t know the joy that you know. They don’t know joy unspeakable and full of glory. They don’t have the answers to life that you have.



You know, it dawned on me the other day, “Adrian, you are always looking at life through the lens of the Bible and through Jesus Christ.” And then I had to stop and I said, “What would it be like if you did not have the ability to see life through those lenses?” Friend, I’m not saying that you ought to get drunk. But what I’m saying is this; what hope is there, what future is there? How are you going to put all of this puzzle together? All you have hope in is getting sicker and sicker and sicker and then going into the ground, dying, and rotting. Desert, dryness, fruitlessness.

And not only do the waters go down to the depressed places and desert places and the dry places; **these waters go down to the deadly places.** Verse 8 says, “They flow into the sea.” Now that sea is the sea I told you about a little while ago. It’s the Dead Sea. You know why they call it the Dead Sea? Because organic life can’t live in it. The Dead Sea receives water from the Jordan River, but it doesn’t give off any because it’s so low. It’s 1,300 feet below sea level, and the depth of the Dead Sea itself is 1,300 feet. And so the waters flow into it. And the water that flows into it is mostly fresh with just a minute part of saltiness. But there’s constant evaporation in that hot climate and therefore, the salt does not evaporate, and it gets more and more concentrated. The salt in the Dead Sea is twenty-five percent saltier than the salt in the ocean. There’s so much salt there that if you get in it, as I’ve done, you can’t sink. You could sit in there and read a newspaper and just bobble along like a cork. Because the water is so thick, it has a viscosity to it. But it is a deadly place. No fish in there because it is a deadly place.

Now, friend, not only are there people around us who are depressed, and not only are there people around us who are dry, but there are people around us who are dying and going to hell. There is a place of death. I’m not talking about overseas. I’m talking about next door. I’m talking about the people that you work with. They are living a life of death. Romans 6:23, “The wages of sin is death,” Ezekiel 18:4, “The soul that sinneth, it shall surely die,” First Timothy 5:6, “She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she lives.” How are these people going to have life?

A river of life has to flow out of you. Do you care? Does it make any difference to you that souls are dying, people are slipping out through the jaws of death into a Christ-less eternity, and many of them are dead while they live? Do you care? Is there something about your life that will help to change their life? Will you touch their life? This is the force of the river. It flows into the deadly places.

Now here’s the third thing I want you to see. I want you to see with me what I’m going to call **the mighty force of the river**, the mighty force of the river. We’ve seen the source and the course. Let’s think about the force of the river. Where does this river flow? Well, first of all, look, if you will in verse 7 and put this down. Where the waters flow, the trees will grow. Look in verse 7, “And now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other.” I can just imagine that. I’ve been down that Jericho road going down there to the Dead Sea. How dry and barren it is. And Ezekiel says, “Look, look at the trees; green, succulent, all of them growing by the river that is flowing from the temple.” Well, does that represent, literal trees? Of course not! What that represents is this; the Bible says in Psalm 1 verse 3 that, “A righteous man should be like a tree,” what? “planted by the river of water.” Like a tree planted by the river of water, that’s Psalm 1. He’s talking about Christians, healthy Christians, Christians now who are finding strength and life, becoming a tree that will not wither. Where the waters flow, the trees will grow. A healthy saint is like a tree.

And then, watch this; **where the waters flow, the fish will go.** Look at it now, verses 8 and 9, “And he saith unto me, ‘These waters go, issue toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and into the sea, which being brought forth unto the sea, the waters shall be healed,’” that is, these deadly waters of the Dead Sea are going to be healed, “and it shall come to pass that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live; and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither; and they shall be healed; and every thing shall live wither the river comes.”

Now here’s this river cascading down, down, down, down, down, down into depressed places and desert places and deadly places. And the water comes to the Dead Sea and a transformation takes place. That Dead



Sea where no fish could live begins to swarm with fish. May I tell you what that speaks to me of? Jesus said to me, to you, that we're to be fishers of men.

Why is it that we catch so few fish? Because we're fishing in a stagnant pond. Friend, when the church gets right, when we have genuine revival; and revival is not evangelism. Evangelism is the fruit of revival. Revival is the river flowing; but when the river begins to flow, where the river flows, the fish will go. You know, if we get on fire for the Lord Jesus Christ, or filled with the Spirit, however you want to call it, it will be noised abroad. The Bible says in Acts 2 verse 6, when Jesus was doing His ministry, "It was noised abroad that Jesus was in the house, and the place was filled."

Have you ever thought about the Day of Pentecost? On the Day of Pentecost, there was a little handful of disciples, 120. But they began to pray and praise and give glory to God and there was a mighty, mighty demonstration of the Holy Spirit. And the Bible says, "And the multitude came together." Now historians tell us there were probably about a million people in Jerusalem at that time for the Feast of the Passover. A hundred and twenty people. How are they going to impact a million people? Well, friend, the unsaved will come when they see the reality of Jesus Christ. The world is not looking for a new definition of the Gospel; the world is looking for a new demonstration of the Gospel.

It's almost like it's the Olympics. And we're down on the field, and up there in the stands are the multitudes. And they say, "Could this really be true what these Christians are saying?" And they're watching. And they want to know whether or not we have reality. Friend, I tell you that souls will come by the multitudes the sea will swarm with fish, and our nets will be full when we let the Spirit of God flow out through us. I believe that with all of my heart. I believe that if you get right with God, you'll have to backslide to keep from winning souls. Your life itself will be a testimony.

Have you ever thought of a person coming to a cold, dead, dry, unrevived church what it must be like? Here's a man whose wife has begged him to come to church, and he finally comes. But he says, "This once I'll come." And he sits there and the choir sings something in Latin, something he can't understand. Then the congregation stands to sing and there's no enthusiasm. They sound like a couple of calves dying in a hailstorm. And then the preacher gets up. He's not anointed of God. He may not even use the Bible. He'll give some soliloquy or some Reader's Digest this or that, or some commentary on the news. And everybody is cold and clammy. I'll tell you one thing. That man will leave and, most likely, won't come back.

But you let this man come into a service where the Spirit of God is there and the river is flowing, and the people are praising God, and revival is on the face of the choir, it's in the handshake of the usher, it's in the way the congregation sings, it's in the friendliness, it is in the warmth, and you know what's going to happen to that man? He's going to stop ticking things off the program with his pen, waiting for it to get over. He's going to lift up his head and look around, and he's going to say, "You know, these folks believe that stuff." And before long he'll be believing it also. You see, look, where the waters flow, the fish will go.

Now here's another thing; **where the river flows, friend, the fruit will show**. Look, if you will, in verse 12 of our chapter, the Bible says, "And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and that side, shall grow all trees for meat," that means for food, "whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed." Now that's the same thing as Psalm 1 verse 3, which says, "A man planted by the rivers of water will bring forth fruit, and his leaf shall not wither." You see, there's fruit.

Do you know what I want my life to be? I want my life to be an encouragement to you and to me, that people will see the fruit of the Spirit in you. You know what the test of my life is, test of my ministry? It's not how many buildings we have. It's not the size of our Bible study. It's not how much money we receive. It's not how well we're organized. It's not even how wonderful the services are. The test of my ministry is this; are you





becoming more like Jesus? “That we might present every man perfect in Christ,” that’s what the Apostle Paul says to the Colossians in chapter 1 verse 28. And he’s talking about the fruit. What is the fruit? It is the fruit of the Spirit. Read in Galatians chapter 5 verses 22 and 23, “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, gentleness, mercy, long-suffering, and temperance.” All that is is a description of the character of Jesus Christ. And when a river is flowing out of you, out of your innermost being, those who are around you are going to be discipled and they’re going to become fruitful.

Last of all, **where the waters flow the health will glow**. Look in verse 12, “And by the river and upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaves shall not fade; neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed. It shall bring forth new fruit according to his months; because they are waters, they issued out of the sanctuary, and the fruit thereof shall be for food, and the leaf thereof for medicine.”

The church, the body of Christ, is sick, weak, and anemic. We might sing, “Like a Mighty Army Moves the Church of God,” but, really, do you think of most churches as a mighty army? I mean, Bellevue’s certainly above average as a church. I believe that. Not boastfully; it’s just, it’s a fact, but I wonder are we a mighty army? My chest almost leaps out of my throat as I look at the congregation here and the earlier congregation this morning, what a mighty multitude. What would happen if every man, woman, boy, girl in this building became a river of revival? What would happen if we become real in our service to the Lord?

Again, I want to tell you that coming to church is good, but don’t think you’ve done God a wild favor because you’ve come. This is only to get you ready to do what you need to do. And you’re to have a healing force on this world, in this city. Everywhere you go there is to be spiritual health because the river is flowing out of you and touching lives. Now the question is this, very simply and very plainly; are you thirsty?

Remember how Jesus began this thing? Jesus said in John 3 verse 37, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. Come to me and drink.” Remember it begins with a thirst. How thirsty are you? Listen to me this morning. I don’t know how much of God you have, now listen, but you have all you want. You say, ‘No, I want more.’ No, you have all you want. If you wanted more, you’d have it. In Matthew 5 verse 6, Jesus said, “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.” A shallow thirst; a shallow satisfaction. A deep thirst; a deep satisfaction.

A little girl in the middle of the night said, “Mommy, can I have a glass of water?” The mother got up and gave it. Fifteen minutes later, “Mommy, I, I want some more water.” She breathed a sigh and got up and gave another glass of water. Third time, “Mommy, would you bring me some water?” She went in there with water the third time and said, “If you ask for water again, I’m going to spank you.” A little while later the little girl said, “Mommy, when you get up to spank me, would you bring me some water?” It’s a thirst.

How many of you can say, “I have a genuine thirst for God?” “O God, my heart cries out for You. Dear Lord, I want You to come into me and then flow out of me toward others.” It’s all predicated with an “if.” “If any man thirst.”

Now I repeat what I said earlier. There will be those who make things happen. There will be those who watch things happen. And there’ll be those who don’t even know anything is happening.

Bow your heads in prayer. I want you to ask yourself this question earnestly; which of those categories are you in? I want to ask you a question. Do you have a genuine thirst for Jesus? It’s not a one-time thing; it is a constant thing. You drink and keep on drinking. I’ll ask another question; do you know people where you live and work who need to be touched by a river of life? Has it ever dawned upon you that you could be that river? Would you pray, “O God, make me a river of revival. Let Your supernatural life flow out of me. O God, make me a blessing.” Father God, I pray that You would seal this message to our hearts, and, Lord, that we would not just be impressed or entertained or informed, but, Lord, transformed and changed. Lord, what I pray for others, I pray for myself. My God, make me a river of blessing. In the holy name of Jesus, Amen.



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