

# THE ESSENTIALS TO FAITHFULNESS

THE NECESSARY WATER, WORSHIP AND FOOD TO REMAIN FAITHFUL AND STRONG IN THE LORD



JESUS: "MEET ME AT THE WELL."

## 1) OUR NECESSARY WATER - LIVING WATER

### I. Followers of Jesus drink exclusively from the water he offers, 4:7-15.

A. A woman from Samaria came to draw water from the well outside her town.

- (John 4:7a ESV) A woman from Samaria came to draw water.

B. She arrived and Jesus began a conversation by asking for a drink of water.

- (John 4:7b ESV) Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.”

C. He then directed the conversation to the water she actually needed.

- (John 4:10, 14 ESV) Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and **he would have given you living water.**” ... but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. **The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.**”

D. The woman then asked for this water.

- (John 4:15 ESV) The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water ...”

### II. Rivers of living water flow from the hearts of those who believe in Christ—i.e. those who drink exclusively from the fountain of living waters.

- (John 7:38–39 ESV) **Whoever believes in me**, as the Scripture has said, ‘**Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.**’ ” 39 **Now this he said about the Spirit**, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

A. The text reveals that the rivers of living water refer to the Spirit.

B. So when we believe in Jesus and drink living water (receive eternal life), then the Spirit flows out of our hearts like a river.

#### SO DOES IT? AND HOW WOULD WE KNOW?

C. One way we would know seems to be that the fruit of the Spirit will be abounding in that person’s life.

- (Galatians 5:22–23a ESV) **But the fruit of the Spirit** is **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control.**

D. Scripture also represents drinking living water as drinking from the river of God’s delights.

- (Psalm 36:5–9 ESV) **Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds.** 6 Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; your judgments are like the great deep; man and beast you save, O LORD. 7 **How precious is your steadfast love, O God! The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings.** 8 **They feast on the abundance of your house, and you give them drink from the river of your delights.** 9 **For with you is the fountain of life;** in your light do we see light.
  - i. The opportunity to drink from this river is extended to us because of God’s steadfast, measureless love and faithfulness.
  - ii. Those who drink in God’s steadfast love take refuge in him, feast on his abundance and see life in the light of God.

### III. Those **who do not** drink exclusively from Jesus’ fountain of living waters commit a double evil.

- (Jeremiah 2:12–13 ESV) **Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate,** declares the LORD, 13 **for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.**

A. This evil is so evil that we should be appalled, shocked and utterly desolate.

B. This evil is so evil because it is God’s people doing it.

C. Those who profess to know God have always had the inclination to turn from God to self-made religion.

D. Any person or religion that collects religious truth—even biblical truth—but does not rely completely on the source of living waters is doubly evil.

E. Those who profess to know God have always had the propensity to collect truth from various sources, catalog the truth and then store the truth in their religious cistern for future use at their discretion.

F. This God-forsaking, religious person may even believe himself to be wise in combining the work of Christ and human effort—best of both worlds.

G. These man-made cisterns cannot hold living water—meaning they may hold to some semblance of biblical teaching but the power and reality of the word breaks free from and utterly destroys the human constraints.

H. The inherent human impurities of the cistern pollute everything that it stores.

Cistern ... a natural or artificial place where water is collected and stored for use, esp. water for supplying a community, irrigating land, furnishing power, etc.

## 2) OUR NECESSARY WORSHIP - TRUE WORSHIP

- (John 4:20–26 ESV) Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.” 21 Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. 22 **You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.** 23 **But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.** 24 **God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.**” 25 The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things.” 26 Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am he.”

### I. Christ pointed out very clearly that the Samaritans had worship wrong.

- A. The place of worship was no longer relevant but what was relevant was that the Samaritans had been worshiping in ignorance—meaning they had not been worshiping according to the Scriptures.
- B. As we shall see in the text, true worship is always dictated by the authoritative teaching of the word of God, never by human choice.

### II. The Jews had worship right in regard to possessing the truth but wrong in practice.

- A. The Jews were blessed with the truth—the oracles of God—but drew near to God only in appearance.
- B. Salvation through Jesus Messiah was from the Jews.
- C. Jesus did not oppose Judaism as was demonstrated by the righteous life he lived in fulfillment of the law.

D. What he did oppose was the contamination brought about by the religious leaders in storing the truth of God’s holy word in their man-made religious cistern.

### III. The time is now that true worshipers worship the Father in spirit and truth.

A. True worshipers will worship the Father through the work of the Holy Spirit and truth—meaning our worship must reflect what is true about God and the worshiper as revealed in his holy word.

B. Worshiping the Father in Spirit and truth is what true worshipers must do—it is not an option.

C. The Father is seeking such people to worship him—that is, people who do what he created us to do.

D. We were made to worship.

- (Revelation 4:11 ESV) **Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.**

E. We are to offer our bodies in worship.

- (Romans 12:1 NIV) Therefore, **urge you**, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, **to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.**

F. Everything that has breath is to worship the LORD.

- (Psalm 150:6 ESV) **Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!**

G. We are to worship continually.

- (Hebrews 13:15 ESV) **Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God**, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.

### IV. Some basics of true worship ...

A. True worship is worshipping God as God declares he must be worshiped.

B. God is the main point in our worship because God is the main point in everything.

C. True worship is exclusive to those who know God.

D. Practical relevance: So if a church plans its worship service for the unsaved, then this is not true worship.

E. This practice indeed prevents true worship and dishonors God.

### 3) OUR NECESSARY FOOD - THE WILL OF GOD

- (John 4:27–38 ESV) Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you seek?” or, “Why are you talking with her?” 28 So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, 29 “Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?” 30 They went out of the town and were coming to him. 31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” 32 But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” 33 So the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought him something to eat?” 34 Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.” 35 Do you not say, “There are yet four months, then comes the harvest?” Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. 36 Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. 37 For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ 38 I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

#### I. The disciples returned and were somewhat oblivious to the revival that was taking place.

They were puzzled that Jesus was talking with a woman but were more concerned with urging Jesus to eat something. Jesus used the opportunity to teach a much more important truth regarding the priorities and purpose for our lives on this earth.

#### II. Jesus stated that his food was to do the the will of the one who sent him and to accomplish his work.

- A. This was his primary food source and was more important than his daily physical sustenance.
- B. When Jesus speaks of his food here, he is giving us extremely relevant and important information regarding what is necessary for us to remain faithful and strong in the Lord.

Maybe this would be a good opportunity to ask ourselves if that is **our vision of service in the Church—that the food that keeps us nourished and energized is doing the Father’s will and accomplishing his work.**

Maybe it is time that more of our church leaders realize that **faithfulness to the will of God is what God calls us to.**

And maybe we should realize how damaging it is to view the primary church leadership goals as keeping the church going and growing.

C. Jesus directs them to look up and see the harvest—most likely in respect to the townspeople coming out to see him.

D. Maybe Jesus—in pointing out that God is working in the harvest field now—is telling us that it is time for us to be about the Father’s business.

#### III. This priority structure—that Jesus’ food is doing the will of him who sent him—is seen throughout the Gospel of John.

A. He does not seek his own will.

- (John 5:30 ESV) I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because **I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.**

B. He does not do his own will.

- (John 6:38 ESV) For I have come down from heaven, **not to do my own will** but the will of him who sent me.

C. His teaching is not his teaching.

- (John 7:16 ESV) So Jesus answered them, “**My teaching is not mine**, but his who sent me.”

D. He does not speak on his own authority.

- (John 12:49 ESV) For I have **not spoken on my own authority**, but the Father who sent me has himself **given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak.**

**Question:** What might we learn from Jesus’ relationship with the Father about pushing our agenda, demanding our way and speaking from our own authority?