

COME UNTO ME

by

Hyman J. Appelman

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CHAPTER ONE

THE FOUNTAIN OF LIFE

In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink (John 7:37).

We are told in our American histories that De Soto, the Spanish explorer, in the early days of the discovery and colonization of our glorious land, landed on the shores of Florida with the idea of finding the legendary Fountain of Youth. Of course, he never found it. He is buried somewhere beneath the waters of the Mississippi. Others have followed in the searchings of De Soto. Beauty culture, medical science, gland transplantation—those of monkeys into human beings, as though the poor apes were not already suffering enough from the base accusation that they are responsible by evolutionary descent or ascent (depending on whether you are looking up from man, or down from the anthropoids) for men's vagaries—and many other things have been tried to insure the longevity, the vitality, the youth of the human family.

All have successfully and successively failed.

Here, however, there is proposed by God, there is proffered by the Lord Jesus Christ, there is presented by the Holy Spirit a real fountain, not only of the passing youth, but of life, of eternal life, of eternal youth, vigor and joy.

The setting of the story is simple. The feast to which reference is made herein is the Feast of the Tabernacles. This feast continued for eight days, and the first and last days were of primary importance, particularly the latter. On that day, the priests were wont to bring water from the pool of Siloam, to offer it to the Lord, while they sang—“**With joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation.**”

Our Lord improved the occasion by inviting the people of His day and time, and of all the succeeding ages and generations, to partake of the water of life. “**If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.**”

This is a thirsty world.

- There is physical thirst, mental thirst, moral thirst, spiritual thirst.
- There is the thirst of the artist for beauty.

- There is the thirst of the scientist for knowledge.
- There is the thirst of the toiler for ease.
- There is the thirst for wealth.
- There is the thirst for peace.
- There is the thirst for pleasure.
- There is the burning, blighting, destroying thirst of gambling.
- There is the thirst for freedom.
- There is the thirst for financial assurance.
- There is the thirst for safety here and hereafter.

This entire world is just one vast, dry desert, with the generations of men, lost travelers, following some will-o'-the-wisp or other—philosophical, psychological, philanthropic, political, educational, reformatory, even religious suggestion—only to find them to be deluding mirages that rob them of what little hope self, sin and Satan may have left them. The rise of all sorts of cults, of off brand religions, of palm readers, of spiritualists, or clairvoyants, are but some of the signs of this thirst assailing mankind. No one has ever been able to find entire satisfaction for that burning longing save in the Lord Jesus Christ.

May we then analyze His glorious invitation in this way. First, to what are we invited? Second, who is invited? Third, why should we accept the invitation?

Firstly, Jesus Cries, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink”

This is, of course, figurative, metaphorical. Jesus also speaks of Himself as the bread of life, “**the meat which endureth to everlasting life.**” Our coming to Christ to drink means that we are to receive from Him all those spiritual blessings, all those eternal mercies that He has to bestow upon us. But, to be more specific, let us consider the benefits to which Christ invites us, of which we may freely and abundantly drink and partake at this fountain of life:

There is the *receiving of pardon from all of our sins.*

You will never, never, never have quietness of mind, peace of heart, soul satisfaction, until you know your sins are forgiven. The haunting remorse, the biting days, the sleepless nights, will be your constant heritage until you come under the blood. You may lose yourself for a time in the whirl of some pleasure, in the stupefaction of some sin, but you will come to yourself again and again to find that you have been grasping the wind, with the taste of gall and bitter wormwood on your tongue. The forgiveness of sins is your primal need. It is only through Christ that you can obtain the blessing. He obtained it for you by His death. Only the water and the blood which flowed from Immanuel’s side can cleanse you from all sin.

Then there is *the knowledge of the truth.*

Without Christ we wander in doubts and uncertainties and are subject to innumerable mistakes. If we would walk surely, we must follow Jesus. He Himself said, “**I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.**”

He says again, “**Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.**”

Also, there is *spiritual consolation*.

In Him we have the grace and the power for complete sanctification, to walk unspotted in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation. He gives rest to the weary soul bowed down by the vicissitudes of life. One of His very mightiest invitations is couched in the familiar words, “**Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.**” He keeps constantly before our minds the promises of His Holy Word, the presence of His blessed Spirit, the certain prospects of future glory.

Last of all, we are invited to *eternal happiness*.

Nowhere on earth can we find this save in the Lord. No one in all creation can bestow it save the Christ of God. He has it in His power and at His bestowal. It is all the fruit of his sufferings and death. He, and He alone, can give us the sight and enjoyment of God. He, and He alone, can lead us to Living Fountains. Of what use is all the world if we miss eternal bliss?

Secondly, let us consider to whom this urgent invitation is presented

The text specifically tells us that it is given to every man who thirsts. This invitation is not limited. Formerly the Jews claimed the exclusive privilege of being God’s people; but now both Jews and Gentiles are invited to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Not only is this invitation given to all nations, but to every kind of sinner; however great, numerous, or longstanding your sins may be. While Jesus was here upon the earth, He healed bodily diseases that had continued many years. The same Physician can cure spiritual diseases of the longest standing. His blood cleanses from all sin.

- He came to save the chief of sinners.
- He saved a persecuting Saul.
- He saved the thief on the cross.
- He prayed for His murderers, and God forgave three thousand of them on the day of Pentecost—perhaps many others later.
- He made the first offers of mercy to those who despised and crucified Him.

He will cast none out. “**All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out**” (John 6:37).

But what is this thirsting after Christ? Surely it means the thirst of the soul.

There must be a sense of *the want of Christ*.

Oh, brother! Oh, sister!

- You want Him for justification.
- You want Him for comfort.
- You want Him for peace.
- You want Him for power.
- You want Him in sorrow.
- You want Him in the hour of death.
- You want Him to represent you at the judgment.
- You want Him to keep you out of hell.
- You want Him to take you into heaven.
- You want Him.
- You need Him.
- You will perish without Him.

Then there must be a sense of *the worth of Christ*.

He is most excellent in every one of His mighty attributes. He is our only Saviour. He is our sole physician. He is able to supply every want. He is able to heal every disease. He is able to save to the uttermost depths of depravity, to the uttermost degree of temptation, to the uttermost duration of time. There is no soul too steeped in iniquity for His mighty power to release. There is no sin too deeply ingrained for His matchless merits to remit. There is no sinner so far in the wilderness of transgression that Christ cannot bring Him back, safe-cradled in His bosom.

Finally, there must be *an ardent, passionate desire after Him*

Thirst is the word. You must thirst after Him, thirst for Him. You must long, and tell me, do you not long to taste the sweetness of His pardon, the warmth of His grace, the depths of His love, the breadth of His comfort, the length of His eternal salvation? Tell me, if you think I am too vehement, too insistent. What have you without Jesus? Tell me, what will you take in exchange for your soul's salvation and satisfaction in Christ? Tell me, what is the devil giving you that will pay you for unhappiness here and torture hereafter?

The last question is: why should we accept this invitation?

There are numberless reasons. I have time for just a very few of them, a limited few.

First, there is *the consideration of the Person who invites us*.

It is not some prophet, some preacher, some priest, not even some church, or churches. It is Jesus, the beloved Son of God, the King of kings, the Lord of lords.

- How would you treat an invitation from the President of the United States?
- How would you treat an invitation from the King of England?
- How would you treat an invitation from the governor of this state?
- How would you treat an invitation from one whom you held in high esteem?
- How will you treat this invitation from the Sovereign of the Universe?

There is *the consideration of our wants*.

How desperately bad is our state out of Christ. We are in bondage to sin. We are liable to all sorts of afflictions, to pain, to death. There is the uneasiness and horror of the soul in view of the inevitable wrath of God that is sure to be visited upon our sins. We cannot help ourselves. I cannot say that often enough. We are without strength, without hope, without God. But let us come to Christ and all will be well here and hereafter.

Then, there is the welcome that others have found in the Lord Jesus Christ. He has made them the sons of God. He has showered them with the abundance, aye, the superabundance of His mercies.

I have met too many people, both young and old, men and women, in the upper classes and in the lowest strata of society, who were desperately sorry for every minute they had spent in the service of Satan. I have yet to meet a single Christian, and I have met millions of them under all sorts of circumstances and conditions, who was sorry for having accepted Jesus Christ as his or her personal Saviour. The unanimous testimony of the satisfied generations of Christians is another great proof that your own life would be best in the hands of the Redeemer.

There is, also, the mighty plea that these benefits to which we are invited, these benefits that I have attempted to portray before you, can be obtained nowhere else in all this vast, wide world. Christ is the only fountain which sends forth these streams of salvation to lost mankind.

- There is no other mediator between God and man but Christ.
- There is no other sacrifice for sin.
- There is no other High Priest to intercede for us.

Life, light, love, “**and the peace of God which passeth all understanding**” are to be found only in Him.

Oh, may the Holy Spirit of God press these wondrous truths upon your thirsty souls. Let us together admire, thank God for, and rejoice in the matchless kindness, the munificent grace of the Redeemer in surrounding us with tokens of His favor and goodness, in ever inviting us to this providential fountain of life and bliss, in seeking us instead of waiting until we sought Him.

Oh, my friends, if you thirst, if these words have stirred up that dormant longing, that yearning of soul which you have been striving to cover by indifference, or even by sinful pursuits, come to Christ and drink. Drink your fill! Keep on drinking !

Oh, I beseech you, do not stay away and perish in the desert of your transgressions. Obey the call, heed the invitation. Go to Christ. Apply to Him by faith. Cast yourselves upon His great mercies. Know that He would never invite you if He were unwilling to receive you. Go now! Drink now! Why should you go on until the very marrow of your bones is dried out? Why should you be content with the rotgut drinks of the world when the wine of God, the milk of Heaven, the water of life is pressed to your lips?

Stoop down, brother! Stoop down, sister! Stoop down and drink!

Right now, right where you are, see the hand of Jesus pierced for your sins, holding the cup of salvation out to you!

- By faith take it from His hand.
- By faith press it to your lips.
- By faith drink, and drink, and drink.

You will know such joy that your heart will overflow with it. You will know such thanksgiving that your soul will be flooded with it. You will know such praise that you will want to shout it from the housetops.

~ end of chapter 1 ~

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