

## “Flowing Life”

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A reflection for a worship service celebrating  
the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the United Church of Canada.

John 3.37-39

June 7, 2015

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Before we hear this Scripture, we need to remember.

Remember when God set God’s People free from slavery. God sent us into the desert wilderness. We had to learn to be God’s People. The wilderness is a great place for shaping souls. If you can survive it.

God gave us what we needed to survive! Not always what we wanted—we grumbled, a lot! Everything we needed. Like water, which God flowed from the rocks in the wilderness.<sup>1</sup>

Before we hear this Scripture, we need to remember God’s prophet Ezekiel. God gave Ezekiel visions. You know the wheel a-rollin’, way in the middle of the air. You know the valley of dem dry bones, breathed to life. Do you know about the River?<sup>2</sup>

God brings Ezekiel in a vision to the threshold of the Temple. Flowing from its steps is a trickle. Follow it along, and it’s gets ankle-deep. Follow further, and it’s to your knees. Then, your waist. Then, over your head. The River keeps flowing, until it pours into the Dead Sea. The Sea is “dead,” too salty for life. But God shows Ezekiel trees verdent along its shores, and fish thriving in its waters. This vision is the River of God flowing life wherever there is death.

Now, remembering that God flowed water from the rock in the wilderness bringing life, and remembering that God flowed water from the Temple into the Sea bringing life,

On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” By this he meant the Spirit. . . .

John 7.37-38

New International Version

hear then what Jesus says (from the Good News according to John).

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<sup>1</sup> See Numbers 20. In John 7, Jesus is at the Festival of Sukkot, also known as Booths or Tabernacles. It celebrated how God provided for the people in the Wilderness.

<sup>2</sup> See Ezekiel 47.

This is God's Word, the Good News of Jesus Christ.  
We are a church of the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit-River is flowing from our Saviour Jesus into us. And through us, to others around us.

In the wildernesses, God the Spirit is flowing, into us and out from us. In the dead places, God the Spirit is flowing, into us and out from us. God the Spirit is flowing, with life for all around us.

That is the promise of Jesus. He blesses us now, so we bless others. "*Anyone who is thirsty,*" he says. All one need be is needy.<sup>3</sup>

We are needy. "*Let anyone who is thirsty, come to me.*"

Our communities—our neighbourhood communities, our regional communities, our global community—are needy.. "*Let anyone who is thirsty, come to me.*"

As we celebrate this 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary, is this really all we have: the Saviour who gives life by the Spirit, to the glory of God? Is there anything more we need, than the Saviour who gives life by the Spirit? . . .

Praise be to God! Amen.

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<sup>3</sup> Frederick Dale Bruner, The Gospel of John, A Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 487.