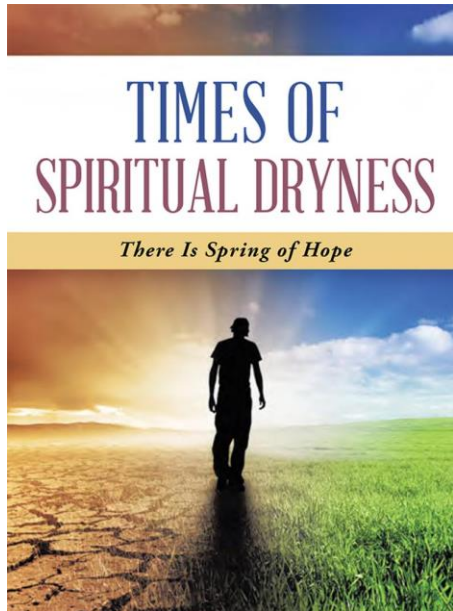


## Spiritual Refreshment

By Pastor Kelly Sensenig



What do you find most refreshing? A cold drink on a hot day? An afternoon nap? Listening to calming music? There are other things in life that are refreshing.

Laughter is refreshing. Have you laughed out loud today? Try it. You might like it! Singing can refresh you. Fishing – now there is a way to get refreshed. Jesus did it, so it must be pretty important, right? Well, of all the refreshing experiences we can find, nothing can compare to the renewal of the mind and spirit that is found in the presence of God. The Bible teaches that we do need to experience spiritual

refreshment in our personal and daily lives. If we are not careful, we can become spiritually dry in our lives and miss out on the refreshing, peaceful, and satisfying walk we can have with God.

Spiritual refreshment is when we are refreshed or revived in our inner spirit through our relationship with God and our hearts are filled with peace, joy, inner strength and renewal, as we experience God's life and God's Word in our daily living. Spiritual refreshment happens when we draw near to God and our hearts are quieted in a devotional time of prayer and when we daily meditate upon God, worship Him, and experience His refreshing presence.

One of the online dictionaries defined refreshment as "restoration of strength, spirit, vigor, or liveliness; relief after suffering; new life or animation after depression. God wants us to experience spiritual refreshment in our lives. This means that we find satisfaction in the Lord's presence by experiencing His peace, rest, contentment, and joy in our lives. It means that we practice the presence of God and are being strengthened, renewed in our inner spirit, consoled, and experiencing God's life in ours on a moment by moment basis.

As we will see in this study, spiritual refreshment comes when our hearts are free from sin, when we are listening to God minister to our hearts through His Word, and when we are experiencing close and intimate fellowship with God.

I'm excited to study about the theme of spiritual refreshment. I have been really trying to experience this type of refreshment in my own life and I want to share with you how we can really find spiritual enrichment and refreshment in our Christian life.

Maybe you have been passing through a dry season in your Christian life. You are busy with your jobs and schedules. You are going 100 hundred miles an hour. But in the midst of our rapid pace, you have lost the spiritual refreshment that you can have and experience in your Christian life. Our souls need refreshing and revival. If they do not experience this type of inner refreshment, we will pass through a dry season. We will experience a type of spiritual dryness in relation to our walk with God and missing out on the gratifying and satisfying life that we can have as a Christian.

Jesus taught in John 10:10:

“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.”

A thief will break into your house in order to destroy and kill you. That's why we have the Second Amendment. A thief comes for selfish motives. In order to gain his own desires, he would even kill. But the Lord Jesus does not come to the human heart for any selfish reason. Jesus came to give, not to get. And Jesus came to give us a new way of life.

Someone paraphrased the words of Jesus in this way:

“I came to bring them life, and far more life than they had before.”

The abundant life is the satisfying life. Yes, God wants to provide us with a better way of life, a life filled with the abundant blessings of His spiritual resources, which bring purpose, meaning, and satisfaction to our life.

Jesus has a totally different mission. He has come to give us spiritual life and a new way of life which is termed as a life of abundance. Jesus was talking about a satisfying life! It's a life that has real peace, joy, inner contentment, and inner fellowship with God.

We receive life the moment we accept Christ as our Savior. After we are saved, however, we find that there are various degrees of enjoyment of this life. The more we turn ourselves over to God's plan to experience this abundant life, the more we enjoy the life which has been given to us.

If you are going through a dry season, you have not been experiencing this abundant life (a life of refreshment). It is time to be refreshed once again in your inner spirit and reclaim times of refreshing for your life. There are only two ways to live your life: You can pursue the world for satisfaction, or you can seek after God to satisfy your heart. By application, the world, under the dominion of Satan, will rob, kill, and destroy your soul. Jesus offers life, and a life that is more abundantly.

The Eskimos have an interesting way of killing wolves. They take a sharp knife, dip in in seal fat, and plant it blade up in the snow. A hungry wolf will smell the seal fat, which he loves, find the knife, and begin to lick it. As soon as he licks it, he tastes blood—his own blood. But he loves the taste of blood, so he licks more and more, until he finally kills himself. What he thought at first was really living was actually killing him.

Gorging yourself on the world and its sinful pleasures is like this. At first it tastes good, but it's really destroying you from a spiritual perspective. Only Jesus ultimately satisfies the soul and gives us the kind of refreshing life that He has promised.

Matthew Henry, the well-known pastor and Bible commentator, was on his deathbed in 1714, at age 52. He had suffered the loss of his first wife and of three children. He was relatively young. He could have complained about his early death. But he said to a friend, "You have been used to take notice of the sayings of dying men. This is mine—that a life spent in the service of God, and communion with Him, is the most comfortable and pleasant life that one can live in the present world."

Have you hit a dry season in your Christian life? If so, this is an important sermon series for you. All of us need to be reminded of this again. We need to experience God's inner refreshment in our souls.

## **God wants us to experience spiritual refreshment on a daily basis.**

There are ten places where we can find spiritual refreshment.



Acts 3:19

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.”

### a. The prerequisite to refreshment

Repentance precedes refreshment. It's a prerequisite to experiencing the refreshment spoken of in this verse. Conversion also precedes refreshment. This too is prerequisite to finding lasting spiritual refreshment in life. The Bible says that unless we repent we cannot experience true spiritual refreshment that comes from the Lord. Unless we are saved we cannot experience the abundant life that Jesus promises we could have.

We learn two important principles from this verse for our Christian life. First, we are *saved to be satisfied*. If we are missing out on the refreshment that God wants to give to us, then we are missing out on one of the reasons for our conversion or salvation. Second, *repentance results in refreshment*. We need to repent of our sins, even in our Christian life (1 John 1:9), if we are going to experience true spiritual refreshment in our personal lives. This means we must change our thinking about our sin, our wrong direction in life, abandon that sin, and turn back to God's way and will for our lives.

We cannot experience times of refreshment in our Christian life when sin is controlling our heart and running our life. Sin keeps us from the abundant life

– the refreshing life, the best life, the real life, the fulfilling life. We need to repent of our wrong way, start going the right way, if we are going to find this true spiritual enrichment and refreshment in life that Jesus promised. If you sense there is spiritual dryness in your Christian life, then you need to look deep within your heart and life and make sure that there are no sins in your life and that your sins are forgiven. Cleanliness always precedes spiritual refreshment.

Isaiah 55:7 reminds us:

“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”

If we want new meaning and true meaning in life once again, then we must repent of our sins, turn away from them, and move in a new direction. Don't candy-coat your sin. Don't cover your sin.

Proverbs 28:13 warns us:

“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh *them* shall have mercy.”

Don't give excuses for your sin. Don't look the other way. Repent of it. Until we do this, we cannot and will not experience these times of refreshment that we can have in our Christian walk and life. Repentance is much more than “feeling sorry for your sins.” As the little Sunday School girl said, “It means feeling sorry enough to quit!” False sorrow for sin could be mere regret (“I'm sorry I got caught!”) or remorse (“I feel terrible!”); and such feelings have a tendency to pass away. Repentance is not the same as “doing penance,” as though we have to make a special sacrifice to God to prove that we are sincere. True repentance is admitting that what God says is true, and because it is true, we change our mind about our sins, and turn away from them.

My wife and I were exercising at the track and several ladies were monitoring a small class of children. I noticed that one lady had to call out a specific girl's name eight times before she would listen to her. Maybe there is something that God has told you to do through His word and inner conviction, but like

children sometimes do, you haven't listened very well. Yes, you heard Him, but because it is something that makes you uncomfortable, or requires you to trust God instead of yourself, you have not obeyed God. You keep saying that you will do what He says, but you keep letting yourself off the hook.

Listen, this is not the way we should respond to our loving Father. Maybe we forget too quickly that He is Lord of the universe and wants to be Lord of our lives! Let's repent of our disobedience and be quick to say, "Yes, Lord, I will do whatever You ask me to do."

One little girl saved up her money for weeks and weeks. She wanted to buy a pretty little plastic pearl necklace she had seen down at the store. At last, she had enough money to buy the necklace. She was so excited! Her Daddy took her down to the store so she could purchase the necklace of her dreams. She brought it home and paraded around in it proudly. That night, when her Daddy came in to kiss her goodnight, he asked her, "Selena, can I have your necklace?" Little Selena looked at her Daddy with a frown and said, "No, Daddy. It's my necklace." Her Daddy just smiled and kissed her and said, "I love you, Sweetie. Good night."

The next night the same thing happened. Her Daddy asked her if he could have her necklace, and her response was the same: "No, Daddy. I saved and saved and bought this with my own money." Daddy just kissed her and said, "I love you, Selena. Good night." On the third night, when her Daddy came in, Selena was sobbing, with big alligator tears streaming down her face. She handed her necklace to him and said, "Daddy, you can have it. I don't need it anymore."

Her Daddy smiled and knelt down beside her and pulled her close for a great big Daddy hug. Then, he took her necklace and slipped it into his pocket. As he did, his hand came out with a thin black box with a velvety cover. He opened it and held it out to her. Her eyes got as big as saucers as she saw a string of real pearls shining back at her. "Oh Daddy," she said. "Thank you, thank you! If I had known, I would have given you my necklace the first time you asked."

Sometimes we are like this. If we would just repent of our sins and be obedient to God, we would experience His blessing and times of refreshment in our life.

b. The explanation of refreshment

It's explained in this way: "when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." The word "refreshment" literally speaks of "a recovery of breath" and indicates cooling off, relief, refreshment or recovery. This is the kind of life that God wants us to experience. We need to stop and catch our breath once again. We need to experience times of spiritual recovery, relief, and refreshment in our daily lives or else we will dry up spiritually.

Wherever the Lord is there can be refreshment. Experiencing God's presence ("the presence of the Lord") will result in experiencing true revival and refreshment in life. We are called upon to live and walk in the presence of God. We are called upon to practice the presence of God and discover the spiritual refreshment that only He can bring into our lives. We must constantly seek to live in His presence, depending on Him, worshipping Him, communing with Him, walking with Him, experiencing His care and spiritual provision over our lives.

In the context Peter is addressing a Jewish audience (Acts 3:12 – "Ye men of Israel") and is actually offering them the earthly theocracy (the promised Kingdom – the Millennium of 1,000-year reign). When talking to the Jews, Peter was not bypassing Pentecost and the Church Age but was reminding the Jews that unless they repent and receive Jesus as their Messiah, they would not enter the FUTURE times of refreshing, the time when they would live with Messiah in the Millennium. I'm convinced that the "times of refreshing that shall come from the presence of the Lord" refer to the blessings of Christ's future kingdom on earth, as mentioned in the next verses.

Acts 3:20

"And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you."

Following Israel's repentance, God promised that He would send the Messiah, Jesus. This refers to the Second Advent of Christ to set up His thousand-year reign on the earth. Jesus spoke of this return in Acts 1:10-11.

Acts 3:21 confirms the Second Coming and Millennium are in view:

“Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution (restoration) of all things (the Millennium – when the earthly will be restored spiritually, politically, and ecologically to the way God intended it to be), which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.”

The phrase “times of refreshing” (v. 19) seems to refer to the blessings connected with the Millennium in view of how Peter described them in verses 20–21. It is clear from verse 21 that God foresaw that the nation of Israel would reject Christ and that the present age of grace would intervene before His Second Coming. Heaven must receive Christ until the times of restoration of all things (the Millennium). The times of restoration of all things point forward to the Millennium.

Zechariah predicted that the Jews would one day accept Messiah whom they had formerly rejected (Zech. 12:10–14; cf. Jer. 15:19; 16:15; 24:6; 50:19; Ezek. 16:55; Hos. 11:11). Peter urged them to do that right now in his sermon so they would one day enter these times of refreshment on earth in the Millennium.

Dwight Pentecost said:

“Peter was not offering the kingdom to Israel, nor was he stating that the kingdom had already been instituted; instead he was stating the conditions by which the nation will eventually enter into their covenanted blessings.”

The apostle Peter is describing here a time of spiritual refreshment that would take place in the future. He exhorted his Jewish listeners to repent and respond to the gospel “that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19). The apostle's statement was especially meaningful to the Jewish audience with its reference to the millennium when Messiah would rule. Although they would have to wait a long time to enter the Kingdom and experience these refreshing times, they could not experience them unless they are saved.



Now what is the spiritual application of all this to our lives today? Just as the saved Jews would one day experience times of refreshment with Jesus Christ in the Millennium, so we today (as God's children) can experience refreshment with the Lord's presence as He manifests Himself to us today. Wherever the Lord is – there can be refreshment! Since Christ lives within us today (Col. 1:27), we can experience His inner life and the spiritual refreshment that comes from Him – peace, joy, satisfaction, contentment, rest, stillness.

Today we can also experience a time of refreshing by quieting our hearts in a devotional time of prayer and Bible reading which takes us into the presence of the Lord. When we spend time alone with the Lord, we can experience His peace and joy which renews us in our inner man or spirit.

- Do you need these times of refreshment today in your life?
- Do you need to be revived again?
- Is it well with your soul?
- Are you in tune with the Lord and are you being daily refreshed by His presence?
- Have you been missing the true meaning of life?

Leonard Ravenhill once said:

“You can have all of your doctrines right – yet still not have the presence of God.”

We should be thankful for the daily refreshment that comes from the Lord.

This was someone's prayer:

“Lord, I need my spirit refreshed and renewed today.  
Speak to me through Your Word  
That I might hear Your heart,  
And help me to share my heart  
with You in prayer. Amen.”

## Psalm 23:5

“Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.”

Now this is refreshment! It is talking about spiritual blessings and the refreshment God brings into our daily lives. This part of the shepherd and sheep analogy speaks of the tremendous blessings that God’s children (sheep) receive from the Good Shepherd. After completing the evening task of caring for the wounds of the sheep and anointing them with the healing oil, the shepherd would then take a large two-handled cup, dip it into a larger container of water, and allow the sheep to drink from the cup.

David, as a young shepherd boy, can remember many times, when the sheep would stick their nose into the cup of overflowing and dripping water, which was just drawn from the water container. This cup reminded David of the overflowing blessings, fulfillment, and satisfaction which God bestows upon his own life on a daily basis. God has a cup that never will run dry. His blessings, fulfillment, and satisfaction in life are limitless. His love, grace, and mercy have no measure. We actually have more than we need!

In contrast, the unsaved drink from “the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath” (Rev. 16:19), while God’s sheep, or children, drink from the cup of His multitudes of blessings. God’s cup of blessing is overflowing with His pardon, peace, mercy, joy, and satisfaction. We are never in want when it comes to God’s spiritual blessings. There is no end to what the Lord provides for His sheep. God does not fill my cup to the top and then stop. He keeps it running over the top. This speaks of abundance and refreshment.

“Fill my cup, Lord;  
I lift it up Lord;  
Come and quench this thirsting of my soul.  
Bread of Heaven, feed me till I want no more.  
Fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole.”

Yes, God wants to provide us with a better way of life, a life filled with the abundant blessings of His spiritual resources, which bring purpose, meaning, and satisfaction to our life.

God has a cup that is running over. If we will take time to drink from His cup, we will experience the abundant and never-ending supply of God's spiritual blessings and experience a life of inner satisfaction that can only come from the Lord. The old children's song fits well at this point:

"Running over,  
Running over,  
My cup is filled and running over;  
Since the Lord saved me,  
I'm as happy as can be,  
My cup is filled and running over."

There is so much living to be experienced in the Christian life. Much more!  
Don't miss the real thing!

Isaiah 57:15

"For thus saith the high and lofty One (a transcendent God who in one sense lives far above His creation) that inhabiteth eternity (God's eternal existence), whose name *is* Holy (God's purity); I dwell in the high and holy *place* (God's throne in Heaven), with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

What an amazing wonder! God not only dwells physically on the throne of Heaven (far above us as the transcendent God), yet, God is still immanent, for He also dwells in a spiritual sense with those who are His humble children, who are broken and crushed over their sins, repentant, and who are in need of reviving. The word "revive" means to refresh and once again speaks of times of refreshing. It points to repair, recovery, restoration, and refreshment.

Revival really speaks of times of refreshment. It reminds us how all of us need to have revival (times of refreshment) in our personal lives. We can become awfully dry if we do not humble ourselves under the eternal and holy God, and let Him repair us, refresh us, and revive us again. Do you need His inner refreshment today? Do you need revival? We don't need newer

programs. We need revival. We don't need a new way – we need the old fashioned way of revival.

We need God to refresh and revive our souls again. In order to have revival, we must experience times of refreshing from God! We need to rediscover God's satisfaction and refreshment, through repentance of sin, through fellowship with God and worshipping God, through prayer, or else our lives will not have true meaning and purpose. We will be missing out on the abundant life, a meaningful life, a life of purpose and satisfaction.

Psalm 138:7

“Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.”

Psalm 85:6

“Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?”

Revival produces rejoicing! When our heart is refreshed in the Lord, then we will sing praises to the Lord!

“Hallelujah! Thine the glory.  
Hallelujah! Amen.  
Hallelujah! Thine the glory.  
Revive us again!”

As we spend time worshipping the Lord, reflecting upon Him, and depending upon Him, we find spiritual refreshment and nourishment in life. Revival is experiencing daily refreshment from God. It is experiencing joy, peace, contentment, and a satisfying life that is filled with purpose and meaning.

Psalm 90:14

“O satisfy us early (in the morning) with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.”

Please note that satisfaction is linked to rejoicing!

1 Peter 1:8

“Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

This is talking about the joy of satisfaction! If we are not rejoicing, it’s probably because we are not refreshed in the Lord’s presence. This is talking about living in the presence of God. It’s practicing the presence of God! We can experience God’s satisfaction or refreshment in the morning, as we reflect upon God and worship Him.

Someone wrote this in their worship of the Lord:

“Morning has broken like the first morning  
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird  
Praise for the singing  
Praise for the morning  
Praise for them springing fresh from the world  
Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from heaven  
Like the first dewfall on the first grass  
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden  
Sprung in completeness where his feet pass.”

Psalm 91:16

“With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.”

We can experience rejoicing and be satisfied with the Lord’s presence all the days of life on earth (“all of our days” and “with long life”). God is in the business of sending refreshment upon our lives as we give our hearts and devotion to Him. God wants us to live an abundant and overflowing life. What kind of life have you been living? A dry or satisfying life? A barren or refreshing life? Have you really been living in the presence of God – meditating upon Him and His character, praying to Him, opening your heart to Him, seeing His handiwork in creation, and allowing Him to minister to your heart.

Philippians 4:4

“Rejoice in the Lord always: *and* again I say, Rejoice.”

This verse is also talking about spiritual refreshment. When we have our mind and heart fixed upon the Lord, our relationship with Him, we will find ourselves rejoicing and experiencing inner refreshment, even when things are not necessarily going as we planned, or when we are experiencing trials and tribulations (hard times).

We learn two things from this verse.

a. The place of this refreshment

We find joy (refreshment in life) in the Lord. It comes from the presence of the Lord! This means that as we experience God’s life in ours, we can experience this inner joy and refreshment in life. Remember once again that revival (refreshment) results in rejoicing. When we are living a satisfied life, when we are refreshed in the Lord’s presence, then we will find ourselves rejoicing (experiencing joy, delight, and singing praises to God).

No matter what trials and changes we might be passing through in life, we can experience spiritual refreshment in the Lord – in His person, our relationship with Him, as we live out a trusting, joyful, peaceful, and satisfying relationship with the Lord. Our refreshment is not based on our circumstances but on our relationship with the Lord. No matter how dark the circumstances of life may be, it is always possible for the Christian to rejoice in the Lord and experience His refreshment.

Jowett shares his experience regarding Christian joy:

“Christian joy is a mood independent of our immediate circumstances. If it were dependent on our surroundings, then, indeed, it would be as uncertain as an unprotected candle burning on a gusty night. One moment the candle burns clear and steady, the next moment the blaze leaps to the very edge of the wick, and affords little or no light.

“But Christian joy has no relationship to the transient setting of the life, and therefore it is not the victim of the passing day. At one time my conditions

arrange themselves like a sunny day in June; a little later they rearrange themselves like a gloomy day in November. One day I am at the wedding; the next day I stand by an open grave. One day, in my ministry, I win ten converts for the Lord; and then, for a long stretch of days, I never win one. Yes, the days are as changeable as the weather, and yet the Christian joy can be persistent. Where lies the secret of its glorious persistency?

“Here is the secret. ‘Lo! I am with you all the days.’ In all the changing days, “He changeth not, neither is weary.” He is no fairweather Companion, leaving me when the year grows dark and cold. He does not choose my days of prosperous festival, though not to be found in my days of impoverishment and defeat. He does not show Himself only when I wear a garland, and hide Himself when I wear a crown of thorns. He is with me “all the days”—the prosperous days and the days of adversity; days when the funeral bell is tolling, and days when the wedding bell is ringing. “All the days.” The day of life—the day of death—the day of judgment.”

b. The constancy of refreshment:

Your refreshment can be continuous (“alway”) as you keep a close walk and relationship with God. Stay in tune with the Lord and you will keep a tune in your heart and experience the inner refreshment that only He can give.

My Choralaires singing group, a 32 voice group, sang these words many times when on tour.

“Always there is music  
Always there is singing  
Always there is gladness,  
In my heart, since Christ has saved me!

I know that He loves me  
Suffered to redeem me  
I know He is coming and:  
His face I’ll see!”

If you have lost your song, it's because you are no longer allowing yourself to be refreshed from the Lord. He wants to bring unending joy, peace, contentment, fulfillment and rest back into your life. As Acts 3:19 declares that the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. This is where true revival and refreshment can be found. We need times of refreshing and rejuvenation again in our lives. We need them every day. We need to live in a constant state of revival and refreshment that can only come from the presence of the Lord.

I was driving the car along the highway. Pastor William and myself were taking the donated items out to Ohio. I noticed while driving a sign which read: "Refreshments." That caught my attention in light of our present study on Sunday nights. The word refreshment in the English language usually denotes food and beverage. However, the New Testament Greek word has a much greater meaning. It means to restore the strength of the soul.

The word "refreshment" literally speaks of "a recovery of breath" and indicates cooling off, relief, refreshment or recovery. This is the kind of life that God wants us to experience. We need to stop and catch our breath once again! We need to experience times of spiritual recovery, relief, and refreshment in our daily lives or else we will dry up spiritually.

One of the online dictionaries defined refreshment as "restoration of strength, spirit, vigor, or liveliness; relief after suffering; new life or animation after depression. God wants us to experience spiritual refreshment in our lives. This means that we find satisfaction in the Lord's presence by experiencing His peace, rest, contentment, and joy in our lives. It means that we practice the presence of God and are being strengthened, renewed in our inner spirit, consoled, and experiencing God's life in ours on a moment by moment basis.

We need to live with a little of Heaven on earth! But we can only do this when we experience refreshment that comes from the Lord. Deuteronomy 11:21 says "That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth." We can only experience "heaven on earth" when we are experiencing refreshment in our daily lives. In other words, we need to



be daily renewed and refreshed in our lives if we are going to experience the kind of life that we are one day going to experience in Heaven.

Why not experience some “Heaven on earth” before you get there! Let God refresh your soul and revitalize your life once again. Let His present become real to your heart and life once again. Some of us are very dry today. Our lips are parched and we need revival and refreshment. Time and trying circumstances may have dried up your spiritual life and you need God’s refreshment once again so that you might experience heaven on earth.

Spiritual refreshment is when we are refreshed or revived in our inner spirit through our relationship with God and our hearts are filled with peace, joy, inner strength and renewal, as we experience God’s life and God’s Word in our daily living. Spiritual refreshment happens when we draw near to God and our hearts are quieted in a devotional time of prayer and when we daily meditate upon God, worship Him, and experience His refreshing presence.

Once again, Acts 3:19 speaks about the time “when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” Wherever the Lord is there can be refreshment. Experiencing God’s presence (“the presence of the Lord”) will result in experiencing true revival and refreshment in life. We are called upon to live and walk in the presence of God. We are called upon to practice the presence of God and discover the spiritual refreshment that only He can bring into our lives. We must constantly seek to live in His presence, depending on Him, worshipping Him, communing with Him, walking with Him, experiencing His care and spiritual provision over our lives.

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My son-in-law and myself were discussing one time about the meaning of all the empty bench pictures that you can find on the internet and on plaques. Many times the benches are placed in a beautiful place of scenery. But why empty benches in beautiful places? For the Christian, these

scenes of empty benches in beautiful places is an indication that God wants you to sit down and slowdown in life and begin to enjoy His presence once again. The empty bench is an open invitation to fellowship with God and be refreshed by His presence.

We must learn to sit down on God's bench and pray, meditate upon Him, and enjoy His beautiful presence once again. We need to sit down in pleasant places and enjoy the God of creation and let Him fill our lives and satisfy us fully and completely.

Jesus gives this invitation in Revelation 3:20:

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

God wants to sup with us, feed us, and fellowship with us, so that we might find our all in all in Him.

Psalm 16:5-6

"The LORD *is* the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant *places*; yea, I have a goodly heritage."

David compared the LORD to a portion (Ps. 73:26; 119:57; 142:5) that was allotted to him by inheritance. He also compared God to a "cup" of refreshment as he did in Psalm 23 ("my cup runneth over"). David was teaching that the LORD was all he needed to satisfy his heart in life. God was being compared to a cup of refreshment and also a beautiful piece of land that was allotted to him. God's satisfying life is compared to a place of

beautiful scenery and calmness. This is brought out in the words “pleasant places” or sweet, delightful, lovely, and beautiful places.



Pleasant places speak of portions of land measured by line and which is distributed by lot. In this case, David compared God’s blessings and life to the best inheritance a person could ever receive. David was saying that the Lord had given him a wonderfully fulfilling and satisfying life and this was compared to a lovely inheritance

which is best described as “pleasant places” (lovely or beautiful places).

God’s life and spiritual blessings are being compared to a pleasant estate in a magnificent setting of beauty. David was comparing God to a piece of real estate such as the ones given to the Israelite tribes when they entered the Promised Land, David had received a pleasant lot and so have we when we are experiencing God’s satisfaction and blessings in our daily lives. God’s presence and satisfying blessings are viewed as an inherited beautiful piece of property. Like David, we are to be pleasantly content and satisfied with God and find great delight in Him.

“In pleasant places Jesus leads me,  
Like a shepherd so gentle and kind;  
In pleasant places by still waters,  
O what pleasure and blessing I find.”

No matter what our place or circumstance when we are in His presence all places are pleasant places (not necessarily pleasant circumstances) where we can enjoy God’s sustaining, maintaining, and refreshing presence.

Psalm 135:3

“Praise the LORD; for the LORD *is* good: sing praises unto his name; for *it is* pleasant” (lovely, beautiful, and sweet, delightful).

When we worship God, and by doing so, experience His presence in our lives, we pass through a “pleasant” experience. Praise and worshipping God is a pleasant or beautiful and satisfying experience that fills our life and satisfies our soul.

This means that God’s presence and life, which is experienced in worship, is something that is sweet, delightful, lovely, and beautiful. As we worship God, we experience inner refreshment and delight which comes from His presence. Worshipping God is something that is delightful, lovely, and fulfilling. So, we need a new sign at our door which reads: “Worship – Don’t leave home without it!”

Psalm 147:1

“Praise ye the LORD: for *it is* good to sing praises unto our God; for *it is* pleasant; *and* praise is comely” (beautiful).

Many Christians today want to talk about “worship and praise” as though it is something newly discovered through contemporary rock music. Friend, praise and worship has been going on since the days of the Psalmist and long before this. All true worship and praise takes place anywhere as we experience God’s presence, times of refreshing, when we open our heart to the Lord and extol Him, when we sense His greatness, wonder, and give our hearts to Him in praise and thanksgiving.

I don’t need contemporary music to worship God. What I need is the daily manifestation of God’s presence in my life. I need the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord! I must open my heart to God once again and experience His life in mine.

Solomon recorded the words of the relationship between a shepherd husband and his wife. The words are typical of the believer’s relationship and walk with God. The word “pleasant” suggests that our walk, relationship, and spiritual intimacy with God is something that is lovely, delightful, beautiful, and satisfying. Hidden in these marital descriptions is a beautiful picture of the believer’s life with his Shepherd.

Song of Songs 1:16

“Behold, thou *art* fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed *is* green.”

Song of Songs 4:16

“Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, *that* the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.”

Song of Songs 7:6

“How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!”

The marital relationship is to be one of physical satisfaction among partners. However, the Christian life is to be one of spiritual satisfaction and intimacy with God. Our life as a Christian should be a love life experienced with God which produces satisfaction, spiritual enrichment and contentment.

Song of Songs 5:16 records these lovely words:

“His mouth *is* most sweet: yea, he *is* altogether lovely. This *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.”

When it comes to the believer’s relationship with God, he finds that God is “altogether lovely” which means that God in every way, in His whole being and presence is “sweet” and lovely. He is completely sweet and when we experience His sweetness or loveliness in our daily lives, we will be refreshed and revived. Wendell P. Loveless wrote a little chorus that reminds us of this verse.

“Altogether lovely,  
He is altogether lovely,  
And the fairest of ten thousand,  
This wonderful Friend divine;  
He gave Himself to save me,  
Now He lives in heav'n to keep me,  
He is altogether lovely,  
Is this wonderful Savior of mine.”

Song of Songs 1:2

“Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love *is* better than wine.”

- Have you been experiencing times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord?
- Do you have a worshipful heart?
- Have you been allowing God to fill your life with satisfaction?
- Have you been practicing the presence of God in your life?

The Bible reminds us that we should “Delight thyself also in the LORD” (Ps. 37:4). Delighting ourselves in God means to enjoy His presence with the result of finding satisfaction and in life. The word “delight” means to “make merry” and speaks of a life of joy and satisfaction that comes from experiencing God’s presence.

The opening lines of the Westminster Shorter Catechism are in the language of the 17th century. It asks, “What is the chief end of man?” The catechist is then to respond, “Man’s chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.” I agree with this! The question is this: Have we been enjoying God? Have we been experiencing God’s presence in our daily lives? Our we worshipping God, being refreshed by His life, depending upon Him, enjoying His life in ours, experiencing the wonder of His person, peace, and presence?

Psalm 16:11

“Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore.”

This is a prophecy of Messiah’s future experience of His resurrection and ascension at the Father’s right hand. However, in writing this, David was also in some sense portraying His own experience as he walked through life with God. He experienced the presence of God in a wonderful way. As he walked with God on the pathway of life, it brought him great joy. David experienced what he called “pleasures for evermore” in walking with God and being at the “right hand” of God’s presence, which portrays his close intimacy and relationship with God.

The word “pleasures” speaks again of something that is pleasant, sweet, and lovely. This was David’s experience when he fellowshiped with God, worshipped Him, and lived in the light of His presence. When we are in God’s presence, fellowshiping with Him, being refreshed by His sustaining and

fulfilling life, we will pass through a lovely, pleasant, and sweet life with the Lord. We will be able to sing “Sweeter as the years go by.”

Do you want to experience God’s pleasures in your life? Is this your prayer? Is this your desire? How close are you to God? The closer we are to God, the more refreshed, revived, and satisfied we will be. The more we will enjoy life.

“Thou my everlasting portion,  
More than friend or life to me,  
All along my pilgrim journey,  
Savior, let me walk with Thee.

Close to Thee, close to Thee,  
Close to Thee, close to Thee;  
All along my pilgrim journey,  
Savior, let me walk with Thee.”

Psalm 42:1-2

As the hart (deer) panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

Hunger and thirst are familiar images of the quest for fellowship with God and the satisfaction it brings into one’s life (Ps. 36:8–9; 63:1; Matt. 5:6; John 4:10–14; 7:37–39; Rev. 21:6; 22:17).



The imagery of a deer drinking beside the water brooks represents how God’s people can find total refreshment and spiritual satisfaction when remaining close to God and deepening their walk and relationship with Him. As water from a brook sustains a deer physically, so God Himself sustains people spiritually and refreshes us in life.

A passion or thirst for God is the flame that keeps our heart burning and on fire for Him. Our thirst is to be for God alone. Why? It’s because only He can

satisfy our soul! We are to thirst for a deepening relationship with the living God and not for a dead idol which can do nothing for us. If we try and find satisfaction in anyone else, or in anything else, we will come up dry!

David's appearance before God may be the time when he worships God in his present life (perhaps an allusion to the temple worship) but it will also be in the future when he is in the very presence of God within Heaven. One thing is certain; David thirsted for God and had his thirst quenched when worshipping God and experiencing His refreshing presence.

In 1984, Martin Nystrom wrote a song based on Psalm 42 entitled "As the Deer." The message of this song is one we can pray and sing to the Lord in order to help us stay thirsty for Him.

"As the deer pants for the water  
So my soul longs after Thee  
You alone are my hearts desire  
And I long to worship Thee

You alone are my strength, my shield  
To You alone may my spirit yield  
You alone are my hearts desire  
And I long to worship Thee."

How do I get this attitude reflected in this song? How do I get a craving thirst for God? What does the Lord use to get a person to this point in his life? Well, we need to spend time with God devotionally in prayer and discover the true spiritual refreshment that only He can give in life. We need to take time to be holy and refreshed in God's presence. When we do, we will want no other substitutes. We will only thirst for more of His presence and worship Him in spirit and truth (John 4:24).

- Do you have a longing for God?
- Do you thirst for His refreshing presence?
- Do you long for spiritual fulfillment?
- Do you want to experience God's satisfaction in a greater way?



David was saying that without worship and experiencing God's life, his human life would be meaningless.

Jesus gave this promise in John 4:13-14:

“Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: 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 (bubbling up) into everlasting life.”

Never thirst! Yes, we will be satisfied when we experience His life in ours. God will quench our thirst by providing us with spiritual refreshment in life. Jesus taught that eternal life, the implantation of God's life within our human spirit, will result in spiritual satisfaction. His life in ours would be like a bubbling fountain of water, constantly overflowing, not only in this life but in eternity as well. This means that God brings inner satisfaction to our soul. He meets our deepest longings and provides us with inner fullness, enrichment, and completeness.



I was watching some children drink from a water fountain. They were having a blast. They kept the handle open and they were putting their mouths down to that fountain and having a grand old time. Their shirts were getting wet. Their faces were dripping with water.

This is the way God wants us to enjoy His presence and life! He wants us to drink from the fountain that will never run dry and let His spiritual refreshment completely satisfy our lives. Don't miss out on life. Life is too short to miss the real thing. Enjoy God and His refreshing presence once again in your life. Let Him fill you, enrich you, and satisfy



you completely. If you have hit a dry spell in your Christian life, guess whose fault it is? It's not the fault of Jesus. He promised a life of overflowing spiritual abundance satisfaction. He promised an unending supply of spiritual refreshment.

The pleasures of this world are for a few short years, but the pleasures which Christ provides go on forever. Do you need to get a life again? Then experience His fellowship, His communion, His worship, and His never-ending refreshing presence.

Revelation 22:17 says, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." We will talk about this verse later in our study. For now, we must realize that when we drink from the well that will never run dry, we will not suffer depression, discouragement, and disappointment. This is because the life of God is like a refreshing drink of water that comes from a well that will never run dry.

"There's within my heart a melody  
Jesus whispers sweet and low,  
Fear not, I am with thee, peace, be still,  
In all of life's ebb and flow.

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus,  
Sweetest Name I know,  
Fills my every longing,  
Keeps me singing as I go."

Now that is refreshment!

I have a small blower that I use to blow my grass off the driveway and sidewalks. After I am finished mowing, I take the blowers and can quickly clean up the unwanted grass. There is a rechargeable battery that comes with the blower. After I am finished using it, I always put the batter on the charger and let is charge until its full. This way I know that it's ready to use the next time. Men, have you ever gone for that second rechargeable battery for your drill and discover that you forgot to recharge it? I've don't this on

several occasions. It always pays to take the time and put your batter on the charger and let the charger do its thing. We daily need to recharge our batteries. We need to be recharged from a spiritual perspective and allow God to refresh and revitalize our life on a daily basis.

It's hard to talk about spiritual refreshment without talking about peace. When I drink deeply from God's life and trust Him to work and act in my life, there is peace in my preaching, pastoral work, and personal living. Our satisfaction in Christ and God spills over into everything we do. God wants us to be satisfied, at peace, refreshed, and revitalized to go on living and serving Him.

Jeremiah 31:25

“For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul.”

The word “satiated” speaks of being soaked or saturated with water and discovering the refreshment that it brings. God is said to refresh the souls of His saints who are wear and worn. Thank God for this! The word “replenished” also speaks of the refreshing touch of God which calms our soul when we are filled with sorrow and sadness. God is the One who ultimately refreshes our lives with His presence. As I fellowship and walk with Him, I experience His loving touch upon my life. What we need today is the touch of God upon our lives. We don't need psychology – we need the touch of God. We need His spiritual refreshment and rejuvenation.

Someone said:

“We need to take an hour, sit in a comfortable place in silence, and do nothing but rest. If you go to sleep, that's okay. We have to stop trying too hard. We need to do this for our own peace, and as an example to those to whom we speak. There is a place for effort, but it must never take God's place with us. We need to make room for him in our lives.”

When God feels absent in my life, it usually means I am out of rhythm and I need to take time to be holy and refresh myself in the Lord's presence. The Bible brings out the importance of being refreshed on a daily basis.

2 Corinthians 4:16 also speaks of God's inner refreshment:

"For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day."

The word "renewed" means something that is fresh and recent. I cannot live on Yesterday's renewal and revitalization. I need daily renewal. This word speaks of God's refreshing, revitalizing, and renewing life that He reveals to us within the realm of our spirit. Our daily spiritual strength, renewal, and refreshment comes from God so we are not overcome with debilitation and life-changing despair. The word "faint" speaks of utter weariness or despair. It connotes someone whose heart is totally overcome with grief and utter hopelessness. Have you been having a fainting spell? Are you wearied beyond measure and in need of inner, spiritual refreshment?

How do we keep from fainting (experiencing overcoming grief and weariness) when we pass through suffering? The answer is that we must experience the transforming power of God's grace in our lives. The "abundant grace" that is mentioned in verse 15. Through experiencing God's life and presence within our human spirit, we can find the inner refreshment that we need to go on in life.

Paul says that our "outward man" (reference to our body) is slowly being consumed by everyday life. The trials, afflictions, disappointments, defeats, setbacks, pressure, persecution, and old age take their toll on us physically. They are like sandpaper that wear us down. This is called the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Everything eventually breaks down.

Time and age slow us down. The events of our lives cause our outward bodies to "perish." This word is from the Greek word *diaphtheiro* {dee-af-thi'-ro} which means "to change for the worse, to ruin, to destroy, to consume bodily strength." It was the same Greek word that was used to describe a moth that consumes clothing. Here is the point. Although physically we may be wearing down, inwardly, within the realm of our human spirit, we should be experience renewal day by day through the person of the Holy Spirit who reveals God's life to us.

Our inward man (the human spirit), as the text says, is that which cannot be felt or seen by others, is renewed, refreshed, revived by the Lord, so that we can experience joy, peace, happiness, and be more like Christ every day of our lives, even as we pass through hard times, difficulties, and suffering.

Our inward man or human spirit and soul is renewed day by day. Wonder of wonders, we can experience this inner refreshment on a daily basis!



We are to live our lives day by day and moment by moment, experiencing God's inner refreshment of our soul and spirit.

“Day by day and with each passing moment,  
Strength I find to meet my trials here;  
Trusting in my Father's wise bestowment,  
I've no cause for worry or for fear.  
He whose heart is kind beyond all measure  
Gives unto each day what He deems best--  
Lovingly, its part of pain and pleasure,  
Mingling toil with peace and rest.

Ev'ry day the Lord Himself is near me  
With a special mercy for each hour;  
All my cares He fain would bear, and cheer me,  
He whose name is Counselor and Pow'r.  
The protection of His child and treasure  
Is a charge that on Himself He laid;

"As thy days, thy strength shall be in measure,"  
This the pledge to me He made.

Help me then in eve'ry tribulation  
So to trust Thy promises, O Lord,  
That I lose not faith's sweet consolation  
Offered me within Thy holy Word.  
Help me, Lord, when toil and trouble meeting,  
E'er to take, as from a father's hand,  
One by one, the days, the moments fleeting,  
Till I reach the promised land."

Lamentations 3:22-23 also speaks of daily refreshment from the presence of the Lord: "*It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*" God's mercies and compassions (His expressions of pity, sympathy, care, and loving kindness) are new every morning. This means that I can make a fresh, new start every single day. This means that every day I can seek Him, wait for Him quietly, find hope in Him and be refreshed by His presence as He showers His mercies, pity, and sympathy, and loving kindness upon my soul. God faithfully provides for His children in order to enrich their life and satisfy them.

The word translated "compassions" speaks of God's emotional response to the needs of His people. God's caring and sharing with me on a daily basis refreshes my soul. I find in God the tender mercies, pity, care, sympathy, and provision that I need for the day. God reveals Himself when expressing His loving compassions toward me, I sense His shepherding presence over my life, and as a result God soothes my soul, gives me peace, reassures me of His presence and help, enriching and satisfying my life.

We must understand that it's because of God's loving mercies and compassions that "we are not consumed." This means that when I experience the expressions of God's loving compassion upon my life, I will not come to my end, be fully spent, wasted, and possess no hope to go on. Instead of being overtaken with life, I can go on in life, since I find refreshment when experiencing God's expressions of love and kindness toward me.

“Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,  
sun, moon and stars in their courses above  
join with all nature in manifold witness  
to thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
all I have needed thy hand hath provided;  
great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!”

A woman, after suffering many losses, went to a great doctor for sympathy. After being in his study for some time, she suddenly exclaimed, "I've got it! I've got it!" The surprised doctor immediately asked what she had got. Instead of answering directly she pointed to a text over the mantelpiece, on which were the words "THOU REMAINEST," and said, "I see now that no matter how much I lose, God remains, and He is all I need."

It is true, God's loving compassion and mercy is we need to go on in life and get us through life, right up to the end of your days on earth.

Psalm 23:6

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.”

Psalm 103:5 also addresses the refreshment that God gives to His saints:

“Who satisfieth thy mouth with good *things*; so *that* thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.”

The Bible says here that God satisfies us with good things as long as we live. The good things are certainly spiritual blessings and refer to such things as His peace, joy, love, mercies, and inner contentment.

Charles Spurgeon comments on this verse in this way:

“Our good Lord bestows really good things, not vain toys and idle pleasures; and these he is always giving, so that from moment to moment he is satisfying our soul with good: shall we not be still praising him?”

The word “satisfies” means to have enough, have plenty, be full. This is how God works in our hearts. He enriches our life and fills our hearts to overflowing. The New Testament counterpart is that He fills His church “Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:23). Yes, He fills and satisfies us. He gives us more than enough, plenty, and fills up our cup with His peace, joy, and enriches our life with His own life.

“Fill my cup, Lord, I lift it up, Lord  
Come and quench this thirsting in my soul  
Bread from Heaven, feed me 'til I want no more  
Fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole.”

There is the threefold reminder given here:

1. A singular condition -- satisfaction.
2. A singular provision -- good things.
3. A singular result -- youth renewed.

There are literally billions of dollars spent each year in this country on cosmetic surgery alone and many others cosmetics to try and keep people in their fountain of youth. The problem with this is that people desire to escape from reality. The identity and self-worth of many people are attached to their outward appearance and perceived ability to turn back the hands of time. Actually, the money that is spent on that which is but a substitute for the real thing. I am here to tell you that the REAL FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH EXISTS. It's found in the satisfying life of God.

Our satisfying and fulfilling life in God results in our spiritual fountain of youth! The result of God's satisfaction in our life is simply stated: “*so that* thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.” Many identify this as a promise to those who are older in age. Yes, even when we are older, we can still possess the fountain of youth in regards to a spiritual and fulfilling life. How wonderful to be one of God's happy old people. You know, the devil has no happy old people. He does not have what it takes to make people happy and fulfilled in life, especially old people, and he would not make people happy even if he could.



Howard Hughes was probably the wealthiest man in the world in his day. He died at the age of seventy with fame and fortune, with all the world has to offer. His estate was probated at approximately two and a half billion dollars. He was rarely seen in public for the last twenty years of his life. He spent his final years mostly in pajamas, living on fudge and cake. He weighed only ninety pounds at death and was suffering from malnutrition! Does this sound like a happy and fulfilled old man?



No matter how old we become, God can satisfy our lives and the spiritual desires of our hearts. Regardless of our age, we find joy and spiritual enrichment or fulfillment in God's presence, promises, and personal blessings, so that the strength of our youth is renewed like the eagle's. David is not talking about physical youth but our spiritual youth and vitality. Under normal circumstances, eagles remain strong to the end of their lives. They manifest superior strength and soar the heights of the heaven manifesting great power. In a similar way, God enables His people to be satisfied with His presence and blessings and remain spiritually vigorous until death.

God's saint who dwells in God's presence enjoy continuous revival, renewal, and refreshment, which results in spiritual strength, can go on in life in spite of hard times, even as an eagle soars from one height to the next manifesting great power. In other words, we have the strength to soar over the problems that face us daily because we have a heart satisfied with God's presence.

On earth there is no fountain of eternal youth as far as the body is concerned, but our human spirit, when it is satisfied with God, can experience one degree of strength to another, so we can soar above our problems and difficulties in life.

Isaiah 40:31

But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint.

We finish our first point with the beloved Psalm 23:1:  
“The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.”

Why shouldn't we want or need anything else when God is our Shepherd? It's because He fulfills us and satisfies our heart and life with His own presence and loving care or shepherding ministry. The statement “I shall not want” means that I don't need anything else.

“The King of Love my Shepherd is,  
Whose goodness faileth never;  
I nothing lack if I am His,  
And He is mine forever.”

How wonderful! “I shall not want,” which means, we won't have any spiritual needs that God cannot meet. God's well never runs dry. We will never lack the spiritual provisions of God for daily living. God meets all of our deep-seated spiritual needs, by providing us with His care, contentment, and comfort, so we can truly say, “I'm satisfied.”

The entire Shepherd Psalm speaks of God's refreshment that He brings upon our life.

Psalm 23:2-3

“He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth (relieves) my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.”

“Savior like a Shepherd lead us,  
Much we need Thy tender care.  
To Thy pleasant pastures feed us.  
For our use, Thy folds prepare.”



The serene scene of green pastures, still waters, and restoration all point to God's satisfying touch and provision upon our hearts and lives. The sheep are satisfied when the shepherd leads them into the green pastures and by the still waters (Ps. 23:2). The picture is one of calm and tranquility because the basic needs of the sheep are met.

This analogy is similar to God's shepherding ministry over our lives. He leads us to the place of spiritual rest and peace and this satisfies our souls. In other words, the wonderful spiritual resources that God provides for His sheep bring spiritual satisfaction into their lives.

As sheep that are fed, watered, and well-satisfied by the provision of their shepherd, so we (God's sheep) find our complete provision and satisfaction from His personal shepherding ministry over our lives. As a result, we can conclude that we have need of nothing, since God meets all of our inner needs for refreshment and restoration of soul.

Why don't we find ourselves in want or in need? The rest of the Psalm gives us the answer. God is our Provider, Preserver, Director, and indeed, He is everything we will ever need in life. Since God is my shepherd, I will have all my spiritual needs met, and find satisfaction through God's provision and person - "I shall not want."

"In God's green pastures feeding,  
By His cool waters lie—  
Soft in the evening walk my Lord and I  
All the sheep of His pastures fare so wondrously fine  
His sheep am I.

Waters cool, pastures green,  
In the evening walk my Lord and I;  
Dark the night, rough the way—  
Step by step, my Lord and I.”



A second place where we find spiritual refreshment for life is in God's Word. I want us to think of a tea bag soaking in hot water. In this analogy your mind is the cup of hot water and the tea bag represents your intake of Scripture. Hearing God's Word is like one dip of the tea bag into the cup. Some of the tea's flavor is absorbed by the water, but not as much as would occur with a more thorough soaking of the bag.

Reading, studying, and memorizing God's Word are like additional plunges of the tea bag into the cup. The more frequently the tea enters the water, the more permeating its effect. Meditation, however, is like immersing the bag completely and letting it soak until all the rich tea flavor has been extracted and the hot water has been colored with a reddish brown. Meditation on Scripture is letting the Bible brew in the brain. We might say that as the tea colors the water, meditation likewise "colors" our way of thinking and living. When we meditate on Scripture it colors our thinking about God, about God's ways and his Word, and about ourselves.

Here is a lovely prayer I found: "Lord, I need my spirit refreshed and renewed today. Speak to me through Your Word that I might hear Your heart, and help me to share my heart with You in prayer. Amen."

Spiritual refreshment also comes into our lives when our hearts are listening to God minister to our hearts through His Word.

Here is another prayer that is very true and meaningful: "Lord, thank you so much for how amazing it is to be refreshed emotionally and spiritually by

reading your words, meditating on them and absorbing them in my mind, my heart and my soul.”

Jeremiah 15:16

“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart (this is spiritual refreshment): for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.”

After speaking in a church, a man came up to me and said, “I eat this book. I eat this book.” What he was saying to me was that he meditated on God’s Word daily, applied it to his life, allowing its principles, precepts, and promises to be real in his daily life. God’s Word refreshes us. It brings joy and rejoicing into our hearts as we claim its promises, fill our hearts with it, and allow it to do its sanctifying work in our lives. I need the daily refreshment that comes from God’s Word. God’s Word refreshes and revitalizes my life. If you want to stay fresh in your Christian walk and experience, then stay in the Word of God. It’s here that God speaks to us, provides for us, and satisfies our soul. We find refreshment in reading and applying God’s truth and promises to our daily living.

Another Psalm reminds us of the importance of meditation and the refreshing results it can have in our daily lives.

Psalm 1:2-3 gives the same promise of refreshment that comes from spending time in God’s Word: “But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD (enjoying God’s Word!); and in his law doth he meditate day and night (spending time in God’s Word). And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper” (prospering through God’s Word).

Jeremiah 17:8 records something similar:

“For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.”



This beautiful scene speaks of refreshment, spiritual growth, and stability that comes through meditating on God's truth and Word. Meditation in God's truth results in refreshment. When we are meditating upon the truth of Scripture and applying it to our lives, we become like a well-watered tree that is standing by

a river. It's getting plenty of water, growing, and is prospering.

The Christian who spends time in God's Word become like a tree that is refreshed by the river, growing in his Christian life, someone who is prospering spiritually.

“I long again to be refreshed  
With your life-giving waters, Lord  
Flow down on me, refreshing streams  
So I may be restored.”

The key is to take time to meditate on God's Word. It's here were we can find God's inner refreshment and experience sanctification and growth in our lives, as we apply God's truth to our daily lives. We need to remember the importance of daily devotion or else we might start experiencing daily erosion. We are going to become barren and unfruitful when we don't spend time in God's Word.

My grandfather was a cow jockey. I remember growing up as a little boy and looking at those cows in the meadow. They just stood there chewing their cud and looked at me. They could always win a stare down contest! The word “meditate” portrays an animal chewing it cud. It means that when we approach the Bible, we are to possess a sense of wonder and ponder what is says. We are not to do a jet tour of God's Word but let it sink deep into our soul and satisfy or fulfill our life.

- Have you been chewing the cud?
- How often do you spend time in meditation?
- Can you honestly say that you are daily refreshed by God's Word?

One man wrote this:

"I'm an introvert, so I have to discipline myself to withdraw and take time to be on my own. Many of these alone times I spend in Bible reading. That refreshes me. I can sit and spend a long time reading, and I have colored pencils I use as I read to mark passages and engage with the text. Bible reading is probably one of the most refreshing things I do."

"If in your life, the voice of God,  
 Is sometimes hard to hear.  
 With all the other voices calling,  
 His doesn't touch your ear.  
 Then set aside your laptop and modem,  
 And all your fancy gear.  
 And open your Bible, open your heart,  
 And let your Father draw near."

Another place we find spiritual refreshment and revitalization of our soul is in God's House. We should not attend church simply because it is something to do or because we want to please the preacher. We should want to attend church to hear from Heaven, be refreshed in our inner soul, and leave being recharged, rejuvenated, and revived to go on in life.



Psalm 65:4 speaks of finding refreshment in God's House:

"Blessed *is the man whom* thou choosest, and causest to approach *unto thee, that* he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, *even* of thy holy temple."

William MacDonald gives this helpful note:

“This reference to the temple causes some to question the Davidic authorship of the Psalm since the temple was not built until after David’s death. However the difficulty vanishes when we realize that the word *temple* was sometimes used to describe the tabernacle before Solomon’s temple was erected (1 Sam. 1:9; 3:3; 2 Sam. 22:7).”

The Hebrew word temple (*hekal*) is apparently a synonym for tabernacle. It means a magnificent house. Of course, this reference was to the temple and David speaks of it as a place where he experienced God’s satisfaction (“we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house”). We can fast forward this to today and also conclude that when we meet together in God’s House (local church) that we also can find great satisfaction and refreshment.

The Bible promises that “we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house.” When we attend church we should experience satisfaction and spiritual refreshment as we experience the “good things” which would include such things as the preaching of the Word, the fellowship of the saints, worshipping God, finding guidance for our lives, and applying God’s spiritual blessings and benefits to our lives.

Church is not to be a Sunday drudgery but a Sunday revival! The attitude that you bring to church will probably be the attitude that you leave church. When we come with expectancy, to hear from Heaven, we can find ourselves being refreshed and revived in the good things!

Psalm 36:8

“They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.”

This is a beautiful way to describe God’s House where the people meet with God in a special way. It’s here that we find abundant satisfaction and a river of pleasure. If this does not speak of refreshment, then I don’t know what does. The expression to “be abundantly satisfied” means to drink to the full; to be satisfied or filled with water, as the earth or fields after an abundant rain.



Albert Barnes describes “abundantly satisfied” in this way:

“There is no lack, and he partakes of it in as large measure as he chooses. So the weary and thirsty traveller, when he finds in the desert a “new and untasted spring,” finds that which he needs, and drinks freely.”

In God’s House, we find security in the Lord, abundant spiritual blessings and provisions, understanding, worship with God, sensing His love, and finding His guidance. All of these blessings and many more are compared to being “abundantly satisfied” and “the river of pleasures.”

A river refers to a large, full, overflowing, and inexhaustible source. When God wants to refresh and revive us, He knows how to do it!

F. B. Meyer pointed out:

“God gives sorrows by cupfuls but pleasure by riverfuls!”

This should be motivation to attend church faithfully and not stay away from the rivers of refreshment and blessing that come from the Lord.

Many expositors suggest that this whole scene is reflecting back on the Garden of Eden and the delightful blessings experienced by Adam and Eve. In God’s House, we can experience a virtual paradise on earth as Adam and Eve did in Eden before the Fall.



I don’t think many people compare attending church to the Garden of Eden! But David does and we need to have a much higher appreciation for God’s House and an earnest desire to be in God’s Eden for us today. There is a spiritual paradise that we can enter

when God’s Word is faithfully preached, when God’s saints fellowship with one another, and when we meet to hear from Heaven and worship God as our Creator and lover of our soul.

Church should be a satisfying and enriching experience in our lives. It should not be a pain in the neck but a paradise from God that we can enter, a place where we can find sustenance and satisfaction for our soul.

A Church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday. The letter reads as follows: "I've gone to church for 30 years now. In that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons. But for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time, and the pastors are wasting their time."

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column – much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote the following clincher: "I've been married for 30 years now. In that time, my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this: They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"

- How often do you attend church?
- What is your true attitude toward church?
- Do you come with great expectancy?
- Are you experiencing Eden's paradise when coming to church?



Another source of spiritual refreshment comes from God's people. The Bible suggests this in several places. God's saints can be of great spiritual refreshment to one another. We can have an encouraging and refreshing impact in the lives of other saints.

2 Timothy 1:16 declares: "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain."

We are not told exactly how Onesiphorus refreshed Paul. Perhaps he brought food and clothing to the damp, dark Roman dungeon. We do know that this man was not ashamed to go to Paul in prison. No considerations of personal safety could prevent his helping a friend in time of need.

Jowett expressed it like this:

“It is a beautiful lineament in the character of Onesiphorus which is given in the Apostle’s phrase, ‘He was not ashamed of my chain.’ ... A man’s chain often lessens the circle of his friends. The chain of poverty keeps many people away, and so does the chain of unpopularity. When a man is in high repute he has many friends. When he begins to wear a chain, the friends are apt to fall away. But the ministers of the morning breeze love to come in the shades of night. They delight to minister in the region of despondency, and where the bonds lie heaviest upon the soul.”

- Have we encouraged someone lately who was chained to a very difficult trial?
- Have we tried to help somebody who has felt trapped?
- What kind of encouragement can we give this week to someone who is in need?

Philemon 1:20

“Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord.”

In this case, Paul is pleading that Philemon would refresh Paul’s innermost being, his soul and spirit, by forgiving and receiving Onesimus, the runaway slave. Philemon’s correct Biblical response to this man would be refreshing to Paul. In a similar way, when we correctly respond to truth, allow it to change us, and become obedient to God, this brings spiritual refreshment into the lives of others.

Our change of attitude, when we think right and respond right, and our spiritual growth and obedience can be a tremendous source of blessing and encouragement to others. How we live and act can have a refreshing impact on the lives of others. When we do what is right and respond to God’s truth correctly, we become like a refreshing breeze that moves upon the lives of

God's people. Our obedience matters to others. Our desire to do what is right is a great encouragement to other saints who are praying for you, seeking to guide you, and who are interested in your spiritual welfare.

Acts 27:3

"And the next *day* we touched at Sidon. And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave *him* liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself."

You know, just hanging out with good Christian friends, laughing together, spending time together, can certainly be a refreshing experience. True friends know how to refresh one another. Their kind words, their comfort, the truth they share with us, the guidance they seek to give to their friends, and the forgiveness, acceptance, and restoration they bring with them brings spiritual refreshment to the hearts of others.

A man tells the story of his descent into impoverishment and how he came to be incarcerated in prison. He lost his freedom, his sanity, his dignity, his confidence, and eventually even his wife. This man had hit rock bottom. At his very lowest point, a prison official came to him and said, "An evangelist came here to see you!" He thought to himself, "An evangelist has come here ... to this place ... to see me." When the evangelist walked into the room, the man in prison recognized him. The evangelist turned towards the man and opened his arms wide.

He said at that moment he felt total acceptance and love. The inmate wrote: "I will never forget this evangelist who ministered to so many people and the day that he took time out of his busy schedule to come minister to one prisoner." The inmate went on to describe how in the midst of his depression, flu, filth and hopelessness, the evangelists visit *refreshed his heart* and boosted his spirit. He was quotes as saying, "I felt as though Jesus Himself had come to visit me."

- How often do we reach out to refresh others?
- When was the last time we met with someone in a low time and brought refreshment to their soul?
- When was the last time we opened our arms to someone who was down and out?

Proverbs 25:13

“As the cold of snow (ice water) in the time of harvest, so *is* a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters.”

Someone prayed, “Lord, thank you so much for the church and the love of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Thank you for how they refresh our hearts and souls.”

Proverbs 25:13 is actually a proverb on Biblical refreshment. We should think of refreshment here from the standpoint of the one who shares the Word of God with someone else (“a faithful messenger”) which results in the message of the Word providing encouragement and refreshment to its hearers.

In his proverb Solomon was likening a faithful messenger to ice-cold drinks brought to perspiring laborers in a harvest field! This verse is a short 3-line poem and in this 3-line parable we find the importance of refreshing others. The first line is the illustration of the next two lines. The first line gives us the illustration: "As the cold of snow in the time of harvest."

The time of harvest is a time when the farm workers get very hot and it is a warm autumn day and they are very uncomfortable. So they often had water boys sent to some near place where there was snow. They would bring this snow down to the workers, but by the time they got it down the hillside it was cold water. The snow referred to in this verse is melted snow that is still cold and refreshing. The water boys would bring it down in containers and the farm workers would all stop and take a drink of this very, very refreshing water. The snowy summit of mount Hermon was not that inaccessible and so this scene is being unfolded to us of water boys bringing down snow from the mountain.

This becomes the illustration for the next two lines: “*so is* a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters.” In the analogy, the communicator of God’s Word, like a Pastor-teacher, or someone simply sharing a Bible truth with another saints, is like a "water boy." In this illustration, he refreshes the souls of his masters or his congregation that hears and applies the Bible doctrines in his messages.

You see, the water boy works for everyone else. The refreshment to the Christian comes through the one who is faithful and loyal in communicating Bible truth to them. And the spiritual refreshment that they bring through their message is like cold water that is refreshing. A mature believer is always going to be a source of refreshment to those in his life. This is a part of the blessing by association which we should provide to other believers.

- Have I been a water boy to others?
- How often do we seek to encourage others by our message?
- What words of encouragement can you share with someone this week?
- Do we really look to be a blessing to others?

“I don’t remember writing the lyrics to that song.” Those were the startling words of Ira B. Wilson to his friends. He held that position until his death, yet his song, “Make Me a Blessing,” lives on in the hearts of millions of Christians in many lands. In 1924 George Shuler and Ira Wilson were roommates at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, Illinois. They combined their efforts in giving to the world the wonderful Christian song, “Make Me a Blessing.” Wilson wrote the lyrics and Shuler the musical setting.

At first, the song was rejected by musical publishers. Not to be stopped, Shuler had 1,000 copies printed to distribute on his own. One copy fell into the hands of George Dibble, an outstanding singer who was the music director for the International Sunday School Convention in Cleveland, Ohio. Dibble asked permission to use the song, and it was granted. Soon people everywhere were singing it and publishers were wanting to distribute copies. The popularity of the song has grown to the extent that Christians in many locations can sing it even by memory.

“Out in the highways and byways of life,  
many are weary and sad;  
are weary and sad  
Carry the sunshine where darkness is rife  
making the sorrowing glad.

Make me a blessing,  
Make me a blessing,  
Out of my life  
out of my life  
May Jesus shine;  
Make me a blessing, O savior, I pray,  
I pray Thee, my Savior,  
Make me a blessing to someone today.”



Dr. Paul Brand was speaking to a medical college in India on Matthew 5:16: “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” In front of the lectern was an oil lamp, with its cotton wick burning from the shallow dish of oil. As he preached, the lamp ran out of oil, the wick burned dry, and the smoke made him cough. He immediately used the opportunity.

“Some of us here are like this wick,” he said. “We’re trying to shine for the glory of God, but we stink. That’s what happens when we use ourselves as the fuel of our witness rather than the Holy Spirit. Wicks can last indefinitely, burning brightly and without irritating smoke, if the fuel, the Holy Spirit, is in constant supply.”

Our study now turns to the Holy Spirit and how the Spirit’s life and presence provides us with inner refreshment and revival. If you are passing through a spiritually dry season in your life, then we are going to be reminded of the important of experiencing the inner refreshing life of the Spirit’s work in our hearts and lives.

The Bible also reveals that we receive inner refreshment and rejuvenation through the Holy Spirit’s presence within our lives. The hallmark of the New Testament revelation is that God’s New Testament saints have the abiding and abundant ministry of the Holy Spirit to help us live a victorious and completely satisfying life.

John 7:37-39

“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. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

It's here at the ending of the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles that Jesus spoke of the refreshment or satisfaction that people can experience through the coming presence of the Holy Spirit. The translators give us some commentary on this when they add in parenthesis that Jesus was referencing the Holy Spirit. I think they are spot on in their understanding of what Jesus was talking about. The Spirit within a believer satisfies his need by providing each believer with regeneration, guidance, empowerment, and a refreshing new way of life, as He reveals the life of Jesus Christ to each one of us. Jesus is promising that the Holy Spirit would reveal Himself to the people and bring inner refreshment into their souls.

The background of this feast tradition is interesting. Early each of the seven mornings of the feast the high priest would lead a procession from the Pool of Siloam to the temple. Another priest would first fill a golden ewer with water from the pool. He would then carry it through the Water Gate on the south side of the temple and into the temple courtyard.

Once there he would ceremoniously pour the water into a silver basin on the west side of the brazen altar from which it would flow through a tube to the base of the altar. Many Jews would accompany these priests. Some of them would drink from the pool while others would chant Isaiah 55:1 and 12:3: “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” This was such a happy occasion that the Mishnah stated, “He that never has seen the joy of the Water-drawing has never in his life seen joy.”

The priest would then pour water into the basin at the time of the morning sacrifice. Another priest would also pour the daily drink offering of wine into



another basin at the same time. Then they would pour the water and the wine out before the Lord. The pouring out of water represented God's provision of water in the wilderness in the past and His future provision of refreshment and cleansing in the future messianic age with God's bestowal of His Spirit in the last days for Israel.

Jesus is now applying what is going to happen for Israel in the future to something they could experience right now in their personal lives, which was salvation and the coming gift of the permanent residency and presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives. The Holy Spirit would one day arrive to permanently indwell His people and this would result in Christ's very own life being manifested in their lives, which would result in spiritual satisfaction and refreshment.

First, Jesus gave an invitation for spiritual satisfaction. The waters certainly speak of the satisfaction which regeneration and new life would bring into their own personal lives. Second, He gave a universal invitation ("If any man"). This was not restricted to some kind of elect group that God wanted to be saved over other people. It was extended to everyone (John 3:16). He also gave a personal invitation. The expression of "thirst" speaks of an individual person who senses their spiritual need. Unless a person knows he is a sinner, he will never want to be saved. Unless he realizes he is lost, he will never desire to be found. Unless one is conscious of a great spiritual lack in his life, he will never want to go to the Lord to have that need supplied. When a person is thirsty, they will drink the water!

Notice also that the Savior invited the thirsting soul to come to Him. He did not say come to the church, the preacher, the waters of baptism, or the Lord's Table. Jesus said, "Let him come unto Me." No one or nothing else will take the place of Jesus Christ alone for our salvation and satisfaction (John 14:6). The only place to discover spiritual satisfaction is through Jesus Christ and the new life that He promises to give us.

The personal invitation is extended to those who actually come and drink ("let him come unto me and drink"). To "drink" means to appropriate Christ for oneself. It means to trust Him as our Savior. It means to take Him into our lives as we would take a glass of water into our bodies. The result is that we

would experience inner refreshment for our souls. Drinking is the same as believing. It's actually a synonymy for what it means to believe on Jesus Christ. This is why Jesus follows up with the words, "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." When we drink or believe on Christ alone to be our Savior (appropriating Christ to our life), it's then that we will experience these living waters.

Just one drink, just one expression of belief in Jesus Christ to be your Savior, and you will experience what Jesus said were "living waters" (picturing a satisfying life) which will flow forth from your "belly" or your innermost being (the realm of your inner spirit where God's life resides). The belly that Jesus was referencing was not our literal belly but the place where this new life and satisfaction would reside, which is a reference to our human spirit and the heart of one's constitutional being. It is here that we would experience the refreshing life of His presence through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

It's clear that the Feast of Tabernacles anticipated the coming work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the Jewish people (John 7:38-39). With the flowing forth of the refreshing waters from the inner beings of believers, Jesus was anticipating this work of the Spirit in their lives at the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2), when the Holy Spirit would come to replace the *physical presence* of Jesus Christ on earth and reveal His *spiritual presence* to every believer in a new, living, dynamic, and refreshing way.

Jesus is essentially saying that for seven days in this Feast of Tabernacle you have seen a ceremony that looks back to the time when God, through Moses, gave you water from a rock in the wilderness. Well, I am the Rock! Today I announce that if you are thirsty, if you are in the dry wilderness, come to me and will give living water to drink that will never dry up. Jesus was introducing to them how with the coming of the Holy Spirit to indwell them, His life would be displayed to them as a continual spring of water bubbling up inside them. What a picture of satisfaction!

Jesus taught in John 14:16-17:

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever (post-Pentecost); *Even* the Spirit of truth; whom

the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you (pre-Pentecost), and shall be in you” (post-Pentecost – the permanent residency of the Holy Spirit).

We see the change from one dispensation to the next. In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit temporarily came upon people for service but in the New Testament Dispensation (the age of the Spirit) the Holy Spirit would live permanently inside of us forever.

Jesus also promises this change in John 14:16:

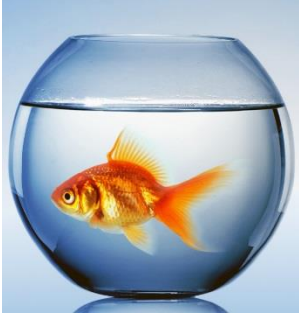
“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever” (post-Pentecost).

There would no longer be any temporary ministry of the Holy Spirit taking place in the lives of God’s saints but a permanent and abiding residency and ministry of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. This means that there would be the continuous rushing of water inside of us (rivers of water), which is illustrative of the Spirit’s life-giving, life-sustaining, and life-fulfilling, and life-enriching ministry.

John 14:20

“At that day (Pentecost) ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.”

This speaks of our spiritual union with Christ or sharing His life with us. Jesus was referring to the Day of Pentecost (the advent of the Holy Spirit) when the Holy Spirit would come to permanently indwell the believers and manifest Christ’s presence to them even after His physical departure. The expression “Ye in me, and I in you” means that the Holy Spirit would bring us into a saving and satisfying union with Jesus Christ, by manifesting and revealing His life to us on a daily basis. Even though Jesus would leave this earth physically, His spiritual presence would be experienced in the lives of His followers.



This expression of Christ in us and we are in Christ might be compared to a goldfish in a bowl. The fish is permeated with water inside the fishbowl. In a similar way, when we are in Christ we share His life. His life permeates ours on every level. We are saved by His life and should now live in union with Him experiencing His power and personal fellowship. “Ye in me, and I in you.” The Holy Spirit’s ministry is to help us to see Christ, experience Christ’s power and sufficiency, and relate to Him in personal fellowship. However, this does not lessen the Spirit’s impact and ministry in our hearts and lives.

We are commanded to “be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18) “walk in the Spirit” (Gal. 5:18). There is a direct connection and ministry that the Holy Spirit has with our lives. The Holy Spirit’s ministry is to have an important role in our personal life. Our personal relationship is to be DIRECTED toward Christ (“that I may know him” - Phil. 3:10) but our RELIANCE for power should first be realized as coming from the Holy Spirit which is a reflection of Christ’s life within us.

Someone has called our Christian living as “the Spirit-empowered life of Christ.” I think this is a good way to remember this. The Spirit’s work and Christ’s work are inseparably bound together within us so that we can live dynamically different and totally transformed. “Ye in me, and I in you.” This is called elsewhere the baptism of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:13 says: “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body (joined to the living Christ to form the Church), whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the ministry of the Holy Spirit that joins or unites us to Christ (the body of Christ) which brings us into a saving and satisfying relationship which meets all of our spiritual needs forever.

The expression “drink” in 1 Corinthians 12:13 picks up on the refreshing work of the Holy Spirit in our lives who saves us, sanctifies, us, and satisfies us in life. It speaks of the refreshing spiritual blessings that the Holy Spirit brings into our lives which once again is a reflection of the living waters that Jesus promised would flow forth from our inner being.

Jesus said in John 7:38:

“He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”



So, we have seen that the ministry of the Spirit is to reveal Christ to us and promote what Jesus said would be “rivers of living water” (John 7:37) flowing forth from our innermost being (our human spirit). These streams of water are not jugs of water but are compared to bubbling up springs of water which provide a continual source of abundant provision and satisfaction

In this statement, the Holy Spirit is seen to satisfy our lives as He introduces the life of Jesus Christ to us, pairing us up with Christ, so much so, that we can say along with Paul the apostle: “For to me to live is Christ” (Phil. 1:21). Our spiritual union with Jesus Christ, sharing His life, is uniquely introduced to us by the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Here is the point that Jesus was making in John chapter 7. Just as water satisfies thirst and produces fruitfulness, so the Holy Spirit of God satisfies the inner person and enables us to bear fruit. At the feast, the Jews were reenacting a tradition of physical water that could never satisfy the heart. But Jesus offered them living and spiritual water which gave to them the promise of eternal life and satisfaction!

He was looking ahead to the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit coming upon His people which would reveal Christ to their lives and bring constant satisfaction and source of spiritual strength to them. The Holy Spirit brings satisfaction into our lives by introducing the life of Christ to us. This is compared to rivers of living water flowing forth from within us.



One pastor shared this story. “Over thirty years ago, when I was a very young pastor still adjusting to all the demands that fall upon one in pastoral ministry, I found myself neglecting my study in order to meet other needs. One Sunday evening following the worship service a dear lady — a person who loved and cared for her pastor—said to me, ‘Pastor, I can hear the dipper banging against the bottom of the bucket.’

I have never in all these years gotten over that remark. It was her way of admonishing me to not neglect my time in the Word and with the Lord. My pitcher was empty...and she knew it.

Is your pitcher empty? Has it gone dry? If so, you need to once again experience this constant inner flow of refreshment that comes from the working of the Holy Spirit in your heart and life. We need the refreshing movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives again! We need to experience these living waters of refreshment and revitalization in our hearts. How wonderful it is to let the Holy Spirit do His work in our hearts by revealing the life of Jesus to us.

Jesus taught the same truth in 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 (gushing spring) of water springing up into everlasting life.”

Jesus was referencing the expression of His life in their own life, which was not only the QUANTITY of eternal life (John 6:47) but also the QAULITY of a new satisfying life (John 10:10). The Holy Spirit would implant and share

Christ's life to those who believe on Him and they would experience a wonderful, satisfying, and enriching life with Jesus Christ.

Jesus taught something wonderful in John 6:35:

“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”

The truth that we shall never hunger and thirst from a spiritual perspective is a wonderful promise of satisfaction and refreshment that Christ promises to grant to us in life. We don't have to live being hungry and thirsty. We can be satisfied with the life of Jesus Christ being lived out in us (Phil. 1:21). When we are hungry and thirsty for worldly or carnal things, we won't be satisfied. Only as we experience our refreshing life in Christ can we find true satisfaction.

So, we have seen how the Holy Spirit brings satisfaction into our lives by introducing and the life of Christ to us. This life of satisfaction is compared to drinking a glass of refreshing water which results in a continuous flow of inner satisfaction occurring in our hearts and lives (John 7:37). I need these flowing streams of blessing in my life today. I need this river of flowing water that Jesus promised with the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. I need the Spirit's work in my heart and life. I need to experience what the Holy Spirit wants to reveal to me – inner refreshment and a satisfying life that comes through His presence, power, and personal fruit that He produces within us.

The Holy Spirit produces in the believer's life an abundant harvest of spiritual fruit: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (Gal. 5:22–23) which in return produces a most satisfying life. When I experience the rivers of water that Jesus talked about, I don't need psychology, psychotherapy, the mind sciences, Freudianism, New Age techniques, or other quack remedies for living. What I need are the constant flowing of these rivers of water! I need the movement of the Spirit of God in my heart and life to produce the life of Jesus, and it's this that satisfies and sustains me in life!

“Spirit of the living God,  
Fall afresh on me.  
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.  
Spirit of the living God,  
Fall afresh on me.”

This is one of the most long-lasting and widely used choruses in Christian worship. Every aspect of the song embodies a simple sincerity. We need the movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives! Without the rivers of water moving inside of us, we will dry up!

The late hymnologist William J. Reynolds provided background on the song’s creation: “During January and February of 1926, the George T. Stephans Evangelistic Party conducted a citywide revival in the tabernacle in Orlando, Florida. Daniel Iverson, a Presbyterian minister from Lumberton, N.C., spent several days in Orlando visiting with the Stephans team. The day he arrived, he was greatly impressed by a message on the Holy Spirit given by Dr. Barron, a physician from Columbia, S.C.

Later that day Iverson went to the First Presbyterian Church in Orlando, sat down at the piano, and wrote this song. Miss Birdie Loes, the pianist for the Stephans team, wrote it out on manuscript paper. E. Powell Lee, the team song leader, was immediately impressed and taught it to the people that evening in the tabernacle, and used it throughout the campaign.

This chorus is what Jesus was talking about John chapter 7. He was reminding us of the importance of the Holy Spirit’s work in our hearts and lives, producing Christlikeness, satisfaction, new life, and dynamic power for living.

Zechariah 4:6 gives this well-known promise:

“This *is* the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.”

I might add, not by Christian Psychology, not by Christian Rock Music, not by Christian - but by the Spirit of God. This is how we live the Christian life!



We need the rivers running inside of us to satisfy us and make our lives victorious and complete.

Jesus may have been looking back to some of these verses when He spoke about the living waters produced by the Holy Spirit. He was making application of them to what was happened today.

Isaiah 44:3

“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.”

This is one of my favorite Old Testament verses. This is a prophetic portion of God’s Word that takes us into the future when Israel will be saved and restored to their Messiah and God. The first half of the verse gives us a picture of dry ground receiving refreshing water and the second half of the verse explains what this means – “I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.”

The refreshing ministry of the Holy Spirit of God upon their lives is mentioned in this verse. The concept of pouring water upon them that are thirsty is reminiscent what Jesus spoke about in John 7. Like a patch of thirsty ground receiving rainwater, so the Jewish remnant in the coming day will receive the refreshing water of the Holy Spirit’s regenerating, reviving, and refreshing ministry upon their hearts and lives.

The same imagery of water on dry ground is repeated in another verse in Isaiah that deals with the Holy Spirit’s ministry in the hearts of His people.

Isaiah 32:15

“Until the spirit (the Holy Spirit) be poured upon us from on high (spiritual regeneration of people’s lives), and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest” (physical regeneration of planet earth).

This is once again looking ahead to what God is going to do for His ancient people someday. There will be a regeneration and revival of Israel that comes from the moving of the Holy Spirit of God upon their hearts and lives.

The concept of the Holy Spirit being “poured upon us from on high” is once again speaking of running water that is replenishing and refreshing.

What we need today is the running water or work of the Spirit of God upon our own lives. If you are passing through a dry season in your life, then you must allow the rivers of water of the Spirit’s life and refreshing ministry to once again be poured out in your heart and life.

If you want to change, you need to once again drink of the refreshing waters of the Spirit’s reviving work. The Holy Spirit is compared to water (John 7:37-39; Isa. 32:15; 44:3), wind (Acts 2) and fire (1 Thess. 5:19). He is the life-changer. He is a game changer. He is the person of the Godhead that is given to us today in the age of the Holy Spirit to promote sanctification and growth in our lives and bring spiritual revival and refreshment into our hearts once again.

E.M. Bounds said:

“What the Church needs today is not more machinery or better, not new organizations or more novel methods, but men whom the Holy Ghost can use—men of prayer, men mighty in prayer.”

We don’t need more programs. We need the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and lives. We don’t need another technique - we need the revival and refreshing work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. We need the Holy Spirit’s work and ministry to pour upon our lives once again so that we might experience the revival and refreshing way of life that God has for each one of us.

Charles Spurgeon said:

“Without the Spirit of God, we can do nothing. We are as ships without the wind, branches without sap, and like coals without fire, we are useless.”

John W. Peterson wrote:

“The Holy Spirit came at Pentecost  
He came in mighty fullness then  
His witness thru believers won the lost

And multitudes were born again.  
The early Christians scattered o'er the world  
They preached the gospel fearlessly,  
Tho' some were martyred and to lions hurled  
They marched along in victory.

Then in an age when darkness gripped the earth  
The just shall live by faith was learned.  
The Holy Spirit gave the church new birth.  
As reformation fires burned.  
In later years the great revivals came  
When saints would seek the Lord and pray.  
O once again we need that holy flame  
To meet the challenge of today.

Come Holy Spirit dark is the hour.  
We need Your filling.  
Your love and Your mighty power.  
Move now among us stir us we pray  
Come Holy Spirit revive the church today.

No person can leave a Bible preaching church and be the same when they are experiencing the rivers of water and allowing them to flow in their heart and life. We cannot be the same when the streams of water are gushing forth inside of us or when we are experiencing the Holy Spirit's refreshing presence and power and revival in our lives.

1 Thessalonians 5:19 reminds us and commands us to "Quench not the Spirit." Ephesians 4:30 adds these words: "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." When we quench the Spirit and grieve Him, we no longer are experiencing the life-giving, life-sustaining, and life-transforming, and life-rejuvenating work of the Spirit in our lives.

R. A Torrey relates the following incident:

"During our Dublin campaign, a young man came to me in great distress. He had been paying attention to a young lady, who was very worldly. He had

been brought up under Christian influences, his mother being an earnest Christian woman.

“He told me that the preceding Sunday evening he had called upon the young lady in whom he was interested. Though it was Sunday evening, the girl’s mother proposed that they play cards. The young lady’s mother urged him to join in the game, but he refused. He said to me, “When I was invited to play cards on a Sunday evening, the thought came to me, ‘What if I should and my mother should hear of it. It would break her heart.’”

How many a man is kept back from doing things he would otherwise do by the thought of how it would grieve his mother if she should hear of it. But there is One who is more keenly sensitive than the purest mother, who is grieved at the slightest departure from the path of right as no mother even is grieved, that One is the Holy Spirit. He goes with us wherever we go. He sees all that we do. He hears all that we say. Yes, He sees the most secret fancy of the heart, and if there is an act or word or thought that has a taint of impurity or selfishness or sin, He is deeply grieved. To me this is one of the mightiest incentives to a careful walk.

Oftentimes when some evil thought is suggested to me by the enemy, the thought comes, “I cannot entertain that thought for a moment. If I do, the Holy Spirit, who sees it, will be deeply grieved, and I cannot bear to grieve this ever-present, faithful Friend.”



Folks, when we grieve the Holy Spirit, we dam up the refreshing internal waters of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We need to take a look at inside of us and make sure we have not erected some sin in our hearts which stops the water from flowing. Keep the water flowing in your life. Keep in step with the Spirit.



One man shared this story about his fear. A few summers ago, we took a family vacation to Toronto. We'd never been there, and we didn't know what to see, but all the guidebooks said, "You have to go up the CN Tower, the world's tallest building and free-standing structure."

I didn't think that was a good idea, because I have a great fear of heights. Just the thought of being 1,815 feet above the ground made me queasy. But the kids said, "Aww, Dad, we gotta go. C'mon, Dad," so against my better judgment, we went.

I was the last one into the elevator, and I turned around, as some unwritten "Law of Elevators" says you're supposed to do. Then we started up. It was only then that I realized that the door of this elevator was actually made of glass, and that this elevator was affixed to the outside of the tower. So as we rushed up the side of the CN Tower, I could see the city of Toronto falling away at my feet. I was only inches from the door—and from the air outside and a freefall.

My palms started sweating, my throat got tight, and I started breathing really fast. I told myself, Just hang on. Soon you'll be on the observation floor. I stumbled out of the elevator onto the observation floor, where I thought it would be safe. But I found that some sadistic person had installed a glass floor there, so that people could walk on it, and look straight down to the ground. The kids were laughing as they walked onto the glass floor, jumped up and down, and even laid down. "C'mon, Dad!" they yelled. I didn't care how thick those blocks of glass were; they were installed by the contractor with the lowest bid, so I wasn't going to chance it.

That same year, we went to the Grand Canyon, where you can stand at the South Rim and peer 6,000 feet straight down. At the Grand Canyon, you are NOT separated from your doom by blocks of glass 2½ inches thick. So every year, an average of four or five people die while visiting. Some deaths happen because of (in one website's words) "overly zealous photographic endeavors."

Still, the Grand Canyon is so beautiful that I was drawn to it. I had to get near it, to see it. I knew I couldn't do anything too foolish near the edge, but the same awesome beauty that caused me fear drew me toward it. Below is a picture of the Glass Skywalk of the Grand Canyon. Would you be scared out of your wits to walk on this?



When the Bible talks about "fearing God," what is it talking about? Is it talking about the kind of fear I felt at the CN Tower? Or is it more like the fear of the Grand Canyon? The Bible teaches that we are to be drawn to the fear of God as a way to regulate our Christian living and at the same time bring refreshment into our lives as God's saints.

When considering the subject of fear, we must remember that not all fear is unhealthy. Some fear is good and some is bad. However, the fear of God is very healthy and is an important part of living the Christian life. Good fear serves a spiritually healthy purpose. It's like a protective mechanism around our lives, which keeps us safe and in tune with God.

The Bible teaches that the fear of God results in a life of satisfaction and enjoyment – not one of misery and disappointment. Fearing God is the pathway to spiritual refreshment and satisfaction in life.

The fear of God is a reverential awe and respect for God and His ways, which results in a wholesome dread of not pleasing Him with our lives. The fear of God is to RECOGNIZE God's character and RESPOND to it by reverencing, worshipping, obeying, and serving Him.

Proverbs 19:23

“The fear of the LORD *tendeth* to life: and *he that hath it* shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.”

There are three results to fearing God. We will not take them in sequence for the sake of our study.

1. Life - “the fear of the LORD *tendeth* to life”

This literally reads “the fear of the LORD (is) life” and suggests that fearing God is the only true and spiritual pathway for living. Any other path is false, useless, and will not result in God’s blessing upon your life. You can go down many different paths but they are not the true path to enrichment and fulfillment. Fearing God is the only true way to live and it results in a wonderful life that you can experience which filled with fruitful living and fulfillment.

Proverbs 14:27 presents a similar truth:

“The fear of the LORD *is* a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.”

The key to a happy and fulfilling life is to practice the fear of God.

“It’s a wonderful, wonderful life,  
When you know the Lord above.  
It’s a wonderful, wonderful life  
When He saved you by His love  
There’s a joy that you never once knew  
and a peace in a darkest night.  
As you travel along in your heart there’s a song,  
it’s a wonderful, wonderful life.”

2. Protection – (“he shall not be visited with evil”)

This means that one who fears God will not be overtaken with calamity or snares in life (Prov. 14:27) from allowing sin to dominate and control your life. The way of the transgressor is hard (Prov. 13:15) but when you fear the LORD, you can be spared from a lot of hardness and difficulty that you create

for yourself because of the sins of our life, the wrong decisions, and wrong paths we choose to go. When you really respect (fear) God and want to please Him, you will stop running away from Him and start living for Him. The result is we will not be overcome with evil and mess up our lives repeatedly. Instead, we will experience satisfaction.

### 3. Satisfaction – (“he that hath it shall abide satisfied”)

It's here that we see a direct correlation between a healthy fear of God and experiencing this inner satisfaction and refreshment in life. When we reverently fear God and His holiness, and respond to His character in submission, wanting to please Him only and not offend Him, it's then that we “shall abide satisfied.”

The word (sabea) speaks of being full, abounding, and finding satisfaction in life. One of the lexicons (Theological Workbook of the Old Testament) gives this information: The usual sense of the verb is "to be satisfied by nourishment." Thus in the episode with the manna the Israelites had food in the morning to the full (Ex 16:8). The word speaks of fullness and sufficiency which brings about refreshment and satisfaction in life. Only as we fear God, reverently respect Him, and want to please Him by following His holy pathway for our life, can we find true fulfillment and satisfaction.

One commenter comments on this verse like this:

“The undisciplined fool enjoys a few moments of joy, but all too soon the darkness of despair surrounds him. Only those who fear misrepresenting a holy God through sinful word or deed can enjoy a satisfied life.”

As we live for God, expressing reverence for Him and His ways, we will find great satisfaction in life. Only a healthy fear of God can produce true fulfillment in life. Yes, even when difficulties arise in relation to the wicked plans of others against us, or when God directly allows times of suffering in our life, we can be reassured that when we fear God, we will certainly experience true satisfaction in life. Yes, satisfaction during the trials of life, refreshment during the down times of life, fulfillment even when we cannot see any light at the end of the tunnel.



Wanting to please God with our life, and not wanting to offend Him, promises to us a real life of wonder, amazement, and refreshment.

Ecclesiastes 12:13

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man.”

It's not only a duty - it's a way of life that results in wonderful enrichment, peace, and satisfaction. When I reverently fear God, honor His character, live for Him, worship Him, and please Him with my overall life, I will not only discover the true meaning of life, I will also experience a most fulfilling life.

Someone wrote out “My to-do list” for today:

- Count my blessings
- Practice kindness
- Let go of what I can't control
- Be productive yet calm
- Fear God
- Just breathe and live again.

There are a lot of weird people who will try and tell you the key to being satisfied in life. Don't follow their artificial methods and ways. Follow the true path of life which is to fear God, keep His commandments, and experience the Lord's personal blessing and satisfaction in your life.

Suppose someone would offer you a plateful of crumbs after you have eaten a T-bone steak. You would say, “No, thank you, I am already satisfied.” This is the secret to living the Christian life. We can fear God, want to please Him, be so filled with the things of God, so caught up with the things of God, that we do not have time for the sinful pleasures of this world which present a false type of satisfaction that does not last (“the pleasures of sin for a season” – Hebrews 11:25).

Jesus once again taught something wonderful in John 6:35:

“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”

The truth is that we shall never hunger and thirst from a spiritual perspective if we experience the Lord's satisfaction. We don't have to live being hungry and thirsty. We can be satisfied with the life of Jesus Christ being lived out in us (Phil. 1:21). When we are hungry and thirsty for worldly or carnal things, we won't be satisfied. Only as we experience our refreshing life in Christ can we find true satisfaction.



Music is another way that we can experience inner refreshment and satisfaction in life. Music can also be used in the ministry of refreshment. When we are Spirit-filled and being ministered to in song, we can experience a great sense of refreshment, encouragement, and blessing. But there is one qualification

or stipulation. It must be God's music! It must be godly music. Not all music, even Christian music, is necessarily God's music. When music reflects the pagan world, it cannot produce the type of spiritual refreshment that God wants to bring in to our life.

If we want to experience true inner refreshment from music, we need to school ourselves and listen to godly music. Rock rhythms and confusing self-gyrating sounds stir up the flesh, but they cannot stir up the true spiritual part of us – the inner man where God's life and nature exist (Eph. 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:4). Refreshment through music is seen in 1 Samuel 16:23. We find that King Saul at different times in his life experienced a temporary alleviation of his condition through the ministry of refreshing music.

1 Samuel 16:14-23

"But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul (God's Old Testament economy), and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him (God's sovereignty over temptation). And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee. Let our lord now command thy servants, *which are before thee*, to seek out a man, *who is* a cunning player on an harp: (not a contemporary Christian rock artist who plays jazzy Christian hip-hop

music) and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well.

“And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring *him* to me. Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, *that is* cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the LORD *is* with him.

“Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me David thy son, which *is* with the sheep. And Jesse took an ass *laden* with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent *them* by David his son unto Saul. And David came to Saul, and stood before him: and he loved him greatly; and he became his armourbearer. And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before me; for he hath found favour in my sight.

“And it came to pass, when the *evil* spirit from God was upon Saul (God’s sovereignty over temptation), that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed (God’s refreshment during temptation), and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.”

It would seem that at this point in Saul’s life, he was being harassed by an evil spirit or demon. We have all been here, with knowingly or unknowingly. Demon harassment is very real in the Christian life. The powers of darkness are trying to defeat us, depress, us, and distance us from God. Instead of living a life of joy and satisfaction in God’s will, demons want to dissatisfy us by presenting us with false expressions of satisfaction, but also by promoting thoughts in our minds and hearts that cause us to become emotionally unstable, unbalanced, and even psychotic in life which is a state of deep emotional stress, where we lose contact with reality, even the reality of God’s life being experienced in our own personal life.

Apparently, King Saul had this condition which erupted from time to time when he was under extreme pressure. It seems there was very little that could be done. Saul would just "lose a few bricks from his load" temporarily!

But we see here that a spiritually mature teenager by the name of David came into the life of Saul and was able to help. What did he prescribe for Saul? Music!

1 Samuel 16:23 says that whenever an evil spirit from came to Saul, David would take his harp and play it, and Saul would be refreshed and become well. Relief would come to Saul; he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him when music was played. This informs us that music can refresh and revitalize our soul. It also informs us that there is a type of music which demons are not comfortable with! David did not play on his harp Contemporary rock music, or any type of rebellious sound that reflects paganism, which is fueled by demonism. Instead, he played music which produced refreshment and satisfaction in his heart.

I remember purchasing some old cassette tapes at a yard sale. This was many years ago. I wanted to reuse them for recording purposes. When I put one of the tapes in my player, I heard the most despicable and hellish music start to play. It was so terrible that I knew that it came straight out of the pit of hell. It sent chills down my back. I took that cassette outside and smashed it and threw it away. Folks, there is a certain type of sound that demons love and another type of sound that they flee away from.

This text does not say that David sang along with his harp playing. The Bible says that he just played the musical sound of the harp and this type of music caused the evil spirit to depart from harassing Saul.

This reminds us that the sound of music is very important. The claim of contemporary artists is that music is amoral like the alphabet. If this is really true, then someone needs to tell Hollywood. They use music to lead people into feelings related to fear, pain, sexual promiscuity, and rebellion without a single word ever being spoken or sung. Musical notes speak forth a certain message in relationship to the way they are arranged. Musical notes may be like letter in the alphabet but the way they are arranged can send drastically different messages.

How did Saul become refreshed and well? He was refreshed by the music David played on the harp, even without any lyrics attached to the music! Of

course, this does not mean that we should not add lyrics to our music, it simply reminds us that there is a certain musical SOUND that is soothing and satisfying.

This is a rather interesting account. Whenever David sang and played that music, it reached right into Saul's soul and brought his soul back to reality and temporarily relieved him from his departure from God and what may have been somewhat of a psychotic condition. Again, this may have been a condition of mental and emotional despair. In other words, refreshment came to Saul's soul and the refreshment alleviated his suffering and caused the harassing evil spirit to leave him, which in return caused him to calm down.

In general, refreshment from music, whether it's just melody, or both the melody and lyrics of music, can be used for soul recovery from an adverse condition, whether it's caused by being backslidden or the influence of demons. Admit it, we all get 'bummed out' from time to time and can experience the temptation and harassment comes from demons.

Ephesians 6:12

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.”

One way to recover from demonic harassment is to listen to godly music which tends to drive demons away from us! The words and melody of a hymn or a gospel song can bring us victory, refreshment and blessing, so that we experience a revival or recovery within our soul from adverse conditions, which can be promoted by the influence of the underworld.

Whenever Paul remembered his past he was seen turning his past memories into times of praise and thanksgiving for how God had saved him and transformed his life (1 Cor. 15:9-10; Eph. 3:8, 1 Tim. 1:12-15). Praise to God, which can be reflected in the expression of godly music, can actually liberate us from Satan's temptations and harassment. Try praise when Satan attempts to disrupt your life. Praise works. Praise changes things! I don't know about you, but on many occasions, when I was scared and sensed I was being harassed by demons, I would start singing and praising God.

"In heaven's eternal bliss,  
The loveliest strain is this,  
May Jesus Christ be praised.  
The powers of darkness fear,  
When this sweet chant they hear,  
May Jesus Christ be praised."

Ephesians 5:19 speaks of the type of music that refreshes:

"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

This Bible verse informs us that God's truth ("word of Christ") can dwell or find a home in our hearts as we put God's truth to music and worship Him. This means that when truth is reflected in song, it can bring inner refreshment to our souls.

The important note is that our songs are to be "spiritual songs."

Colossians 3:16 speaks of the type of music that is refreshing:

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

A Christian friend sent me a Christmas song that was played by a rock band. We were both Biblically conservative in our music stand. As a joke, he wanted me to try and decipher which Christmas song was being played. There were not words to the music. I listened and I could not even decipher which song it was because it was so heavily syncopated and accompanied with synthesizers and rock beats. He showed me the name of the song. It was my favorite Christmas hymn, "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen." For the life of me, I could not determine what was being played. I thought to myself, "How can you mess up, so badly, this timeless classic?"

What are spiritual songs and where do they come from? Spiritual songs are generated from the spiritual part of man's existence, the realm of our human spirit, which is the place where the new nature and God's life operate, where the Holy Spirit works, and where all true worship takes place (1 Cor. 14:15;

John 4:24). Spiritual songs, as opposed to fleshly songs, are those songs that originate from the spiritual part of man's existence and are manufactured and directed by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Spiritual music and songs reflect our new nature. They strongly contrast with our carnal, old nature which was crucified with Christ.

We must remember that refreshing music is not worldly music, but music that reflects God's nature of peace, order, and holy character. This is where we find true refreshment. What actually refreshes us in a musical piece is truth which is reflected in a proper expression of both melody, rhythm, and lyrics. In fact, when proper sound (melody and rhythm) is joined with spiritual lyrics, we can experience the highest level of refreshment that God wants to give to us. This is seen in the experience of King Saul. If you want to be spiritually refreshed by music, then keep your music pure in all of its forms – both words and sound.

Don't confuse entertaining and carnal music for spiritual refreshment. Much of today's music in the church is not designed to produce true spiritual refreshment. Instead, it's designed to produce the carnal expressions in man, a party spirit, a physical reaction – instead of a spiritual reaction. When it comes to music, both the sound and lyrics and the words to the song should convey an accurate doctrinal message or testimony, word of praise, or thanksgiving which reflects God's nature – not paganism or worldliness (Rom. 12:2).

Spiritual music has become like an oasis in a desert of sound! This is what I keep telling people. Whenever we adopt an orderly sound (proper melody and rhythm) and join it to God's truth (proper lyrics), we get the best results and God's true results from music. We can find spiritual refreshment, relief from Satan's harassment in our lives, and become revitalized once again in life.

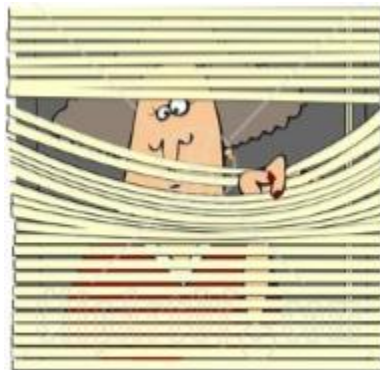
Don't stop singing! Don't stop playing the type of music that reflects God's holiness. Through the truth and melodious sound of music, you will find yourself being refreshed, revitalized, and revived to live for God. Music can pick us up spiritually, move us to serve God, and point us Heavenward.

A Christian once told me that they don't really like to listen to any kind of music. At first, we might think that is a good position to take. However, I advised the person to learn what good and godly music is and then allow it to become part of their life. God created us to respond to music. I did not say groove to music, but to have a proper spiritual response to music that can produce inner refreshment and spiritual revitalization to our soul.

If you want revival, then listen to revival music! If you want renewal, then listen to the type of music that renews the inner man and causes the devil to get out of your life! We must remember once again that when we really want to worship the Lord, we are taken into the throne room of God, as Isaiah, and sense the holy presence, wonder, and majesty of God (Isa. 6:1-6).

Someone said:

“Music leads us to the window of Heaven and lets us gaze within!”



A pastor said that he wrote an article in the “Daily Bread” about an unexpected delay in New York kept a Christian from catching Flight 191 in Chicago, which crashed with all 254 aboard. The article brought this note from one of his readers: “I just had to let you know about one of God’s great saints who ran to make Flight 191—and made it!” His name was

Edwards E. Elliott, beloved pastor of the Garden Grove Orthodox Presbyterian Church in California.



His plane from Pennsylvania was late, and a friend who had accompanied him to Chicago said he last saw him “dashing forward” in the terminal to make his connection.

As I read about Pastor Elliott’s fruitful ministry, the question I raised in the June devotional challenged me with a new urgency: “Was Divine providence operating only in New York and not in Chicago?” Immediately the words of my correspondent came alive, we said: “At the same time, Pastor Elliott didn’t know he was indeed running to Heaven. Mrs. Elliott and her four married children comforted the entire church when sharing this truth. Their Christian faith and testimony in the providence of God and during their time of sorrow was most extraordinary.”

The Bible also reveals that we can find inner refreshment and contentment in life through surrendering to the sovereignty of God.

Psalm 115:3

“But our God *is* in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.”

We need to be reminded that we can find rest and refreshment in the sovereignty of God. God is sovereign, which means that either in a direct way, or indirect way, He is in control and responsible for everything that happens in our world. Of course, this is also true in connection with our lives. God allows particular events to happen to us in order to reshape our lives, so we might become more like Christ, and that He might in His own unique way be glorified through all of it.

It is comforting and even refreshing to know that God is controlling the events of our lives, even when something horrible happens that is completely outside of our control. We can even find comfort and refreshment in the truth that God sometimes allows us to suffer in order to serve some greater purpose in life.

Psalm 46:10

“Be still, and know that I *am* God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.”

This verse is placed in the prophetic context of the Second Coming of Christ and His established rule over planet earth. When Jesus returns as the King, He will destroy the soldiers throughout the land of Palestine, cause great desolation, but then bring about His glorious kingdom reign. The readers are called upon and just “be still” and know that God will be in control of everything that occurs during this time and that His will and purpose will come to pass in the earth. Being still in God’s sovereignty means to find inner rest, quietness, and refreshment that comes from accepting God’s ways and purposes connected with your life.

By way of application, God has also called us to “be still” and realize His providential and sovereign control over the events of our lives. Don’t misunderstand what I’m teaching here. We cannot blame God for our sinful actions and the predicaments we find ourselves in because of our own wrong choices. However, we can through everything, know that God in His providence is working a plan together for our lives, even when the plan involves His hand of chastening, teaching us responsibility, repentance, and transformation in our living.

In other words, there comes a point when we need to “be still” and become relaxed and refreshed in the sovereignty of God or His providential actions which He allows to come into our lives. The words “be still” are one Hebrew word (raphah – raw-faw) which means “to cease, rest, experience stillness, relax, be quiet.” It indicates the need to just sit down, take some time off, and rest, which indicates discovering refreshment and reviving of one’s soul.

Resting or being still not only indicates acceptance of God’s purpose for my life but also refreshment and revitalization while passing through His purpose. When I learn the secret of being still in God’s providence, resting in His overall purpose and work in connection with my life, I can then experience refreshment and comfort, knowing that my life has purpose, my trials have purpose, and my future is in His hands. Being still means that I can live by faith in God’s purpose and discover refreshment during His providential workings connected with my life and the lives of others.

Have you been still in:

- God's purpose for your own life?
- In your older age?
- In your retirement?
- In your illness and pain?
- In your change of life?
- In the loss of a loved one?
- In times of heartache?

Exodus 14:13

“And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.”

Being still, relaxing in God's providence over my life, results in being comforted, rested, and refreshed in our inner man. We can find stillness and satisfaction in the ways of God's providence over our lives. By faith we can discover the stillness, rest, and refreshment that comes by just trusting in an all-wise God to plan out and purpose the events of my lives. You know, God, in His providence, even allows for us to make mistakes, so that He can teach us the lessons that we need to learn.

I always remember my days at the doctor's office as a young boy. The doctor we went to was of the “old school.” He had one main room and you simply went to his office, without appointment, and waited in the big room with everyone else. The TV was always on. They would always be playing old soap operas (“Days of our Lives” or “As the World Turns”) and you would sit there as a little guy and endure the waiting period, especially when you were sick. There was also a lava lamp which used to sit on the top of the TV. It kept moving two blobs up and down, sometime they would join together. It was kind of memorizing.

Anyway, when you finally got into the doctor's office, he would examine you and tell you what was wrong with you and what you needed! First things first, you needed a shot! Yes, they gave plenty of shots in the olden days of doctoring. The doc would go into a side room to get everything ready. And I

knew when he came out he would have a shot in his hand with penicillin in it. The interesting thing that I remember about the whole procedure, among other things, is a particular sign that was inside of his office. As I sat there waiting to get a shot, I always read that sign, which said, “RELAX.” How can a young boy relax when he was about to get a shot in “the you know where” area! This was old-fashioned doctoring! But there it was. The words stand out to me this day – RELAX!

This is what being still means. God says, “Relax, I’m in charge, rest in my providence over your life and find fulfillment and refreshment in the fact that I have ordained your path and way. Be still and be refreshed that my overall purpose is coming to pass in your life.” I don’t know about you, but I need to be reminded about this today. I need to be reminded of the stillness, comfort, peace, and refreshment that comes from just trusting in God.

“I trust in God wherever I may be,  
Upon the land, or on the rolling sea,  
For come what may, from day to day,  
My heav’nly Father watches over me.

I trust in God, I know He cares for me;  
On mountain bleak or on the stormy sea;  
Though billows roll, He keeps my soul;  
My heav’nly Father watches over me.”

The Bible also speaks about physical and spiritual rest, satisfaction, and refreshment that we can experience though following God’s example of rest. God sets the example for us and reminds us at different times in Scripture how we should experience a Sabbath rest and time of refreshment in our lives.



According to a Greek legend, in ancient Athens a man noticed the great storyteller Aesop playing childish games with some little boys. He laughed

and jeered at Aesop, asking him why he wasted his time in such frivolous activity.

Aesop responded by picking up a bow, loosening its string, and placing it on the ground. Then he said to the critical Athenian, "Now, answer the riddle, if you can. Tell us what the unstrung bows implies." The man looked at it for several moments but had no idea what point Aesop was trying to make. Aesop explained, "If you keep a bow always bent, it will break eventually; but if you let it go slack, it will be more fit for use when you want it."

People are also like this. This is why we all need to take time to rest. In Scripture, Jesus prescribed time off for His wearied disciples after they had returned from a prolonged period of ministry. They needed rest. And in the Old Testament, God set a pattern for us when He "rested from all His work." We are now going to see how we can experience refreshment and satisfaction that comes from simply resting in life.

Shouldn't we take His example seriously? Perhaps we need to start by setting aside a special time to relax physically and renew ourselves emotionally and spiritually. We will be at our best for the Lord if we have taken time to loosen the bow.

Genesis 2:1-3

"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."

God sanctified or set apart the seventh day to be a constant reminder of His creative work. He did not set any timeless and universal standards that people of all time must follow. He simply established this day as the day that commemorates the completion of His creative week ("the heavens and the earth were finished").

The Bible says that God rested from His creative activity on the seventh day. Of course, God did not cease from His labors on the seventh day because

He did not need to rest physically. This is not the rest that follows weariness because God cannot get tired and weary since He is the Almighty God.

Isaiah 40:28

“Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, *that* the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? *there is* no searching of his understanding.”

To say that God rested is an anthropomorphism, which means it is a description of God’s activity in terms in which man can understand. Although God did not physically rest on the seventh day, He did pause and experience satisfaction and completion in all of His work.

God resting on the seventh day is a rest that is related to God’s satisfaction and completion of a job well done. When God rested He was teaching that He was satisfied with His completed work of creation. God Himself was satisfied with His work. I’ll have more to say on this in just a moment.

It’s interesting that God never commanded man to observe the Sabbath prior to the time of Moses and the giving of the Law on Sinai (Ex. 20:8). Noah and Enoch did not observe the Sabbath and it is said that both of these men walked with God (Gen. 5:22, 24; 6:9). The Hebrew word for “rest” that appears in Genesis 2:2 is shabbath which is related to God’s rest on the seventh day. But the command to actually observe the seventh day as a day of rest was later given to Israel. It was to be a time of cessation from normal activities (Ex 16:29; 20:10–11; Deut. 5:15; Jer. 17:21; Amos 8:5). It would not be until later on until God commanded Israel, under the Mosaic Law, to obey the Sabbath, which was actually on the seventh day of the week.

Exodus 23:12 reveals:

“Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed.”

The Sabbath day provided rest for animals as well as for humans. They could be refreshed for another six days of work that followed. In Scripture, we read

of refreshment that came to the Jewish people by physically resting on the Sabbath (Saturday which was the seventh day).

We should understand that the practice of observing the Sabbath was not given to the Church nor mandated by God.

Colossians 2:16

“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*.”

The New Testament clearly reveals that we are not to be judged in relation to refusing to worship on any of the Old Testament Sabbath days (including the Sabbath day – the seventh day – Saturday) which were strictly given to Israel. This is because we are no longer obligated to live under the Mosaic Law with all of its ceremonially rules and regulations.

If we were to obey all 613 Mosaic Laws we would be bound by rules that would restrict shellfish and eating pork (Lev. 11), picking up sticks or making a fire on Saturday (Ex. 35:3; Numb. 15:32-33), planting different seeds in our garden, or the wearing of clothing which are made from two different fabrics (Lev. 19:19). These ceremonial laws were basically object lessons designed to teach practical holiness in the Christian life (Lev. 11:44-47; 19:1-2; 22:31-33) and worship (Lev. 23:2-4). They could be viewed as teaching tools to help the people understand that God was holy and they were required to live in a holy fashion (Ex. 19:3-6).

Here is the clear revelation of the New Testament. The *ceremonial* laws of the Mosaic code were not passed on to the church to observe. However, the universal and unchanging *moral* laws of God, which appeared in the Mosaic Law, have been passed on to us. We still observe them through the Holy Spirit’s work taking place in our hearts and lives.

Romans 8:4 reminds us:

“That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

The righteous character and moral aspects of the Mosaic Law are fulfilled in our lives as a result of the Spirit's work.

There is much confusion today over the matter of worshipping on the Sabbath (seventy day) and keeping the Sabbath day. Many still claim that Christians should place themselves under the Sabbath law and that this law is binding upon all Christians today. In some cases, it's being taught that the Sabbath day (Saturday – the seventh day of the week) was somehow magically transferred to the first day (Sunday) and that Sunday now becomes the Sabbath day that all Christians and God-fearing people should observe.

Charles Hodge in his Systematic Theology devotes twenty-eight pages to this subject. He attempts to prove that the Sabbath was mandated at creation and should be observed by all Christians today on Sunday. However, our Sunday worship is established on the basis of Christ's resurrection – not the Sabbath day given to Israel (Matt. 28:1; Rev. 1:10). The underlying basis of the Church worshipping on Sunday does not originate from Augustine but the practice of the early church and the commands of the apostles (Acts 20:7, 1 Cor. 16:2).

Other Sabbath-day worshippers, such as the Seventh-day Adventists, claim that the Sabbath should still be observed on Saturday and that all who claim to be Christian should worship on Saturday instead of Sunday. Some groups even impose the fear of God's reprisal upon those who fail to worship on Saturday.

Let us remember something in the midst of all this Sabbath talk and sometimes babble talk. God rested on the seventh day – not man. While it is true that the Sabbath originated at the end of the six days of creation (Gen. 2:1-3), this was clearly God's rest - not a universal pattern designed for man. There is no record in Genesis that God gave the Sabbath to Adam or man and there is no record of men keeping the Sabbath before Israel kept the Sabbath in the wilderness. The saints in Genesis built altars, prayed, and offered sacrifices but the Scripture is silent in regards to Sabbath keeping prior to the Mosaic Law.



In short, God did NOT establish a universal law to observe the Sabbath at creation week nor did He give the Church any specific or direct mandate to follow Israel's Sabbath law. However, this does not mean there are not lessons connected with God's Sabbath rest and the day of rest He gave to Israel.

There are three universal lessons we can learn from God's Sabbath rest.

1. The practice of God's Sabbath rest from creation reminds us that we can experience refreshment in His creative wonders.

God established a universal principle for us to follow from His own Sabbath rest after creation. As God was satisfied with His creation, we too can be satisfied and refreshed with His creation. God's rest from His creation reminds me that we also are to find and experience satisfaction in life which comes when we REFLECT upon His creative work and wonders. As we meditate upon God's glorious wonders of creation, we experience a certain sense of enjoyment and satisfaction. God was satisfied with His creation and rested. In another sense, we too can find satisfaction and rest with the God of creation as we are refreshed by the wonders of His creative hand.

Psalm 19:1

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork."

As we reflect upon the handiwork of God's creation, it drives us to worship the Creator Himself and the wonder and greatness of His person. All creation points to the Creator.

Romans 1:20

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead ..."

Here is my point. God rested on the seventh day, which means He was satisfied with His complete work of creation. In a similar way, we can find a sense of satisfaction in God's creation, since His creation points us to Him.

Creation reminds of God's power and goodness which He extends to us, and the fellowship we can possess with Him on a daily basis.

Acts 14:17

"Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

Instead of worshipping creation, we can worship the God of creation. Creation points us to the skies; it points us to the God we love, serve, and treasure. As a result, we can experience a sense of satisfaction in the wonder of God's creation.



As we look at a beautiful sunset or sunrise, we know that behind the sunset is a beautiful, gracious, loving, and intimate God that wants to have fellowship with us.

"This is my Father's world,  
And to my listening ears  
All nature sings, and round me rings  
The music of the spheres.  
This is my Father's world:  
I rest me in the thought  
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas--  
His hand the wonders wrought.

This is my Father's world:  
The birds their carols raise,  
The morning light, the lily white,  
Declare their Maker's praise.  
This is my Father's world:  
He shines in all that's fair;  
In the rustling grass I hear Him pass,  
He speaks to me everywhere."

2. The practice of God's Sabbath rest given to Israel reminds us that we should take time to be refreshed in life.

God gave the Sabbath to Israel specifically and only, but the principle behind the Sabbath rest should not be forgotten. There is an application to our lives today.

Exodus 23:12 once again reveals:

“Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed.”

The Jewish people needed a day of physical rest which would help refresh their lives from a physical perspective. As human beings, they needed some time off from normal activities to find physical refreshment which would give them a better outlook on life in general.

Although we are not commanded to follow any specific model of Sabbath day rest, we do need rest. Friend, we need specific times in our life when normal activity should cease, so we can get physical rest and refreshment. God did not create us as robots or as the energizer bunny! Let us not forget this. Our work schedules and pace in life can keep us from the physical rest that God intends us to have and experience.

To continue the rapid pace of work without rest, will eventually take a toll on our bodies, which can also raise havoc on our spiritual life and walk with God. Slowing down at specific points and times in our life is needful. We need to make time and take time for rest and relaxation. In doing so, we not only rest our bodies, we can also spend more time with God, recuperate from life's physical demands, and also take time for spiritual reflection and refreshment.

Someone said:

“If we don't come apart and rest a while, we will come apart.”

As Christians, we not only need physical rest, but also times of spiritual rest and refreshment which can only come from slowing down in life, reflecting

on God, and finding time for Him in life. We need to take time to be holy and refreshed in life. If we don't have our own personal sabbath breaks in life, we will eventually crumble, not only from a physical standpoint, but also a spiritual standpoint. If we are always running around, working, and doing all the things which are demanded of us, we can eventually become weakened and drained – both physically and spiritually.

God established several universal principles for us to follow from the Sabbath rest He gave to Israel. We are reminded that we need to take care of ourselves, spend time in relaxation, recuperate our bodies, and allow God to minister to our hearts. We should take time off, stop burning the candle at both ends, spend time with God, family, and enjoy life. We need to stop and smell the roses once again.

One man challenged another to an all-day wood chopping contest. The challenger worked very hard, stopping only for a brief lunch break. The other man had a leisurely lunch and took several breaks during the day. At the end of the day, the challenger was surprised and annoyed to find that the other fellow had chopped substantially more wood than he had.

"I don't get it," he said. "Every time I checked, you were taking a rest, yet you chopped more wood than I did." "But you didn't notice," said the winning woodsman, "that I was sharpening my ax when I sat down to rest." Here is the point (no pun intended!). If we want to stay sharp in life, both physically and spiritually, we need to take time to rest.

3. The practice of God's Sabbath rest for us today points to our salvation rest in Christ.

The Church's relation to the Sabbath teaching of the Old Testament is given to us in the New Testament. It does not involve observing the seventh day in a strict, physical observance, but to understand the picture that was being portrayed to us in the Sabbath rest.

Hebrews 4:9-10

"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his."

We are once again taken back to Genesis 2:2 and God's Sabbath rest. The writer of Hebrews is saying that this was a spiritual picture which was intended to be given for the Church today. We are not called upon to observe the strict rules of the Sabbath day but to experience our spiritual rest and satisfaction even as God did when He ceases from working after six days.

What the epistle of Hebrews is teaching is that we are to experience a Sabbath rest that is related to salvation. Instead of trying to work for our salvation, we should cease from trying to work our way to Heaven, earn God's favor, and think that somehow God will accept us on the basis of human achievement. The Sabbath rest that we are to observe and experience today is salvation rest which comes when we trust only in the saving merits of Jesus Christ and know that we are saved on the basis of His grace alone. This is the only way we can find true spiritual rest and satisfaction in regard to salvation.

When we know that our sins are forgiven forever, that we are justified in the presence of God through the righteousness of Jesus, then we can find the rest that only comes through rejecting legalism as the way of salvation, or man's achievements and human endeavors.

- Are you resting in Christ alone for your salvation?
- Have you been experiencing the true Sabbath rest that the New Testament commands of us?
- Have to stopped trying to earn God's favor and your salvation?

The rest and refreshment that comes from believing the Gospel message of grace brings me to another point in this series of study on refreshment.



Yes, we are also refreshed through the promise of the Gospel message. Sometimes we forget to live with the Gospel (the good news) as a daily emphasis in our Christian life. The old-timers such as the puritan writers, teach us of the importance of

dwelling upon the Gospel message, allowing it to permeate our heart and refresh our lives on a daily basis.

Of course, the Bible also mentions about the importance of reflecting upon the good news of the Gospel, what Christ did to keep us out of hell, so that we might be refreshed in our personal walk with God.

Revelation 22:17

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

This reference speaks of the refreshment that comes into our life through responding in faith to the Gospel message. As we have already studied in this series, the metaphor of water speaks of refreshment and satisfaction that can only come through placing faith in the Gospel message about Jesus Christ – the good news that Christ died for us, was buried, and rose again the third day (1 Cor. 15:1-3).

When we understand that the Gospel is free to receive (“take the water of life freely” – Rev. 22:17) we can be free from the fear of condemnation and find inner, daily refreshment, knowing that our sins are forgiven and that God accepts us through the Gospel work of Jesus Christ. When we come to the Gospel waters, embracing Christ as our only Savior, it’s comparable to drinking a refreshing glass of water that quenches our thirst. The Gospel message and the eternal life that it promises should be like an eternal, refreshing glass of spiritual water that we drink every day of our lives. The salvation drink that comes through the Gospel, is an eternally, refreshing drink! As we reflect upon its content, remember what Christ has done for us, we are refreshed and moved to live for Him (Titus 2:11-12).

Jesus taught in 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.”

This is the third time I have mentioned this verse in our study. The result and truth of the Gospel, which results in the experience of eternal life, should

produce a constant supply of refreshment in our hearts and lives. The promise of the Gospel and the hope of eternal life should produce inner refreshment in our souls. The oft-repeated figure of “water” speaks of this refreshment and satisfaction which comes from the message of the Gospel of grace and the hope of eternal life. Reflecting on the Gospel and experiencing its life-changing results in our lives is to be a constant source of refreshment to us.

When we experience the wonder of the Gospel message in our hearts, remembering what Christ has done for us, reflecting on the grace that was given to us, we discover refreshment and revitalization in our lives.

Isaiah 55:1-2 reveals the Gospel in the Old Testament:

“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for *that which* is not bread? and your labour for *that which* satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye *that which* is good, and let your soul delight itself (be satisfied) in fatness.”

This passage is referring to the offer of the Messiah’s salvation to the nation of Israel at His Second Coming, which is made possible through His death and resurrection. The Gospel will be officially offer to His ancient people before He sets up the Kingdom and the Gospel witness is identified as “the sure mercies of David” (Isa. 55:3) promised through the Davidic Covenant.

You will notice that the presentation of this Gospel message is compared to refreshment and satisfaction. This should not go unnoticed. A contrast is made between the physical things which do not satisfy us and the Gospel message of the Messiah which does satisfy us (“let your soul delight itself”). Once again, we discover that receiving this message by faith is all that is required. The expression of buying wine and milk (refreshing juice and milk were staple drinks of that day) without money and price certainly depicts the free expression of faith alone in Christ (without legalism) as it pertains to the Gospel message.

Folks, the freeness of the Gospel message, meditating on the Gospel message, experiencing the fruit of its wonder and amazement in our daily lives, should result in refreshment and satisfaction. When we remember the freeness of the water of life, the freeness of the wine and milk, the constant bubbling spring that Jesus spoke about in John 4:14, we should experience a real sense of spiritual satisfaction, fulfillment, and refreshment in our lives which comes through the liberating message of the Gospel.

“All my life I had panted,  
For a drink from some cool spring,  
That I hoped would quench the burning  
Of the thirst I felt within.

Well of water, ever springing,  
Bread of life so rich and free,  
Untold wealth that never faileth,  
My redeemer is to me.

Hallelujah!  
I have found Him my soul so long has craved!  
Jesus satisfies my longings,  
Thro' His blood I now am saved.”

Through the Gospel message and the assurance that it brings to our hearts regarding salvation from hell and eternal life, we find great refreshment. The Gospel should in a very practical way refresh our lives every day as we ponder its meaning and message, proclaim it to others, and personally claim its wonderful promise for our lives. Once again, the Gospel message and the eternal life that it promises should be like an eternal, refreshing glass of spiritual water that we drink every day. It should bring reassurance to our hearts, which results in refreshment, and real satisfaction in our lives. Can you say, “I am satisfied with Jesus?”

Joseph Parker, a famous London preacher in the last century, experienced this. At one point in his life he began to dabble with some of the liberal theology of his day. Many scholars were undermining the truth of the Scriptures, and as Parker read their books and attended their meetings, he



began to lose his grip on the foundational truth of salvation through faith in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.

Then he was hit with the worst sorrow he ever had to bear. His wife, whom he loved dearly, became ill and died in a matter of hours. He was unable to share his grief with others. He paced back and forth in the empty rooms of his house, his heart breaking. In his misery, he felt for some footing in the liberal theology he had been slowly embracing, but he found no comfort or hope.

As Parker later told it publicly:

“And then, my brethren, in those hours of darkness, in those hours of my soul’s anguish, when filled with doubt and trembling in fear, I bethought myself of the old gospel of redemption alone through the blood of Christ, the Gospel that I had preached in those earlier days, and I put my foot down on that, and, my brethren, I found firm standing. I stand there today, and I shall die resting upon that blessed glorious truth of salvation alone through the precious blood of Christ. (In H. A. Ironside, *In the Heavenlies* [Loizeaux Brothers], pp. 56-57.)

Parker faced the death of his wife with realism concerning the pain, but also with faith in the promises of God about salvation and eternal life through Jesus Christ alone. The Gospel message, and hope that we have through it, refreshes us. It refreshes us when we remember that it brings the promise of eternal life to us at the end of the road.



Is this a picture of your life? Are you passing through a dry season because you have lost focus of the refreshment that comes through God’s presence, God’s Word, God’s House, God’s people, God’s Spirit, God’s fear, God’s music, God’s sovereignty, God’s rest, and God’s Gospel?

We have learned in this devotional study that you don't have to pass through dry seasons of living. Instead, you can experience inner refreshment in your life and live in a state of revival, instead of deadness, dryness, and dullness. Allow God to refresh your soul once again, get your soul restored and rejuvenated by following the ways God has provided for your refreshment. Be refreshed! Live refreshed!

