

Filled to Overflow: A Cup of Cold Water & the Empty Chair

Recap of Last Week's *No Water No Guests*

- You're Disconnected from the Source...
- No Invited Guests with No Refreshment to Offer Them...

John 15:1-8

He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce **fruit**, and he prunes the branches that do bear **fruit** so they will produce even more...For a branch cannot produce **fruit** if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be **fruitful** unless you remain in me...Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much **fruit**. For apart from me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned.... When you produce much **fruit**, you are my true disciples...

What is *Fruit*? "If Fruit is leading unbelievers to Christ...then...I'm in big trouble!"

- Many Christians Struggle With a Very Different Perspective
 - Exhausted... Works Driven
 - Hard – Confused – Afraid
 - Heavy Guilt -- Trying to do good – but never or rarely seeing any "fruit"

Being Led by the Holy Spirit Is Nothing Like That
Being Connected to the Vine is Nothing Like That

"Restful," "Easy," and "Light"

Matthew 11:28-30

"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Getting into the Flow...Stay Connected to the Vine

John 7:37-39

³⁷ On the last day, the climax of the festival, Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds, "Anyone who is thirsty may come to me! ³⁸ Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! For the Scriptures declare, 'Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.'" ³⁹ (When he said "living water," he was speaking of the Spirit, who would be given to everyone believing in him...)

- He Overflows **THROUGH** You....He Produces Fruit **THROUGH** You...

- It's Called "Fruit of the Spirit" for a Reason (Galatians 5:22-23)
- You don't have to create / manufacture the opportunities
- You don't "lead people to Christ" or "convert people to Christ"
- You don't have to talk people into faith...or Wow them with appeal...

**This is Where the American Church & Modern Christians
Deeply Misunderstand...**

We Just Plant...We Just Water..."God Gives the Increase!" (1 Cor. 3:6)

When the Holy Spirit Comes He (NOT YOU) will convict the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment..." (John 16:8)

He does it through you...

**You Simply GET INTO THE FLOW or STAY CONNECTED to the VINE:
(Restful....Easy....Light)**

1. Simply Look for the opportunities the Holy Spirit sends You;
2. Then, Just Respond to them in faith

Think of it in these simple terms and symbols...

- **A Cup of Cold Water** (Matthew 10:42)
 - Think in terms of the metaphor of "Rivers of living water" inside you...
- **The Empty Chair**
 - I understand now why our Life Groups are struggling with this...
 - You see it as a symbol of Your Failure
 - Instead it's simply a reminder of the Holy Spirit's continual generation of opportunities that He will work through you...**just look for and respond...**

"Don't Lose Heart" – "Keep On Loving"... "Keep On Doing Good"

Hebrews 6:7-12

7 When the ground soaks up the falling rain and bears a good crop for the farmer, it has God's blessing. 8 **But if a field bears thorns and thistles, it is useless. The farmer will soon condemn that field and burn it.** 9 Dear friends, even though we are talking this way, we really don't believe it applies to you. We are confident that you are meant for better things, things that come with salvation. 10 **For God is not unjust. He will not forget how hard you have worked for him and how you have shown your love to him by caring for other believers, as you still do.** 11 Our great desire is that you will **keep on loving others as long as life lasts, in order to make certain that what you hope for will come true.** 12 Then you will **not become spiritually dull**

and indifferent. Instead, you will follow the example of those who are going to inherit God's promises because of their faith and endurance.

Galatians 6:9-10

Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. ¹⁰ So then, **while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people,** and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.