

**Living Water**

*“Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well” Proverbs 5:15*

As it is with physical life, water is crucial to spiritual life—without it life ceases to exist. Jesus drew a distinction between two kinds of water when He spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well. The first kind was ordinary water that He said *“Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again”* (John 4:13). To which He added, *“But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst”* (John 4:14). With these simple words Jesus revealed to the Samaritan woman, and to the world, that He has the *“living water”* (John 4:10) to which she replied, *“Sir, give me this water; that I thirst not...”* (John 4:15). This second water, the living water, is the word of God as revealed by the Holy Spirit to the heart of a hungry and thirsting soul, *“I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst...”* (John 6:35).

Our subject text warns us that we (believers) are to drink out of our own cistern and to allow running waters to emanate from our own well. That is, we are not to look elsewhere for the living water other than in His word, the Bible, and we are to draw only from the waters that He has given to us personally *“...lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes”* (Deut 11:18). Thus, we are to consume the spiritual meaning of every word that God opens up to us from the scriptures and nothing else should come before our eyes when we search for God’s guidance. The Israelites failed to heed this advice as they allowed their carnal quest for godly knowledge to get the best of them, *“Take heed to thyself ... that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise”* (Deut 12:30). We, like the Israelites just mentioned, are prone to subsume spiritual understanding and wisdom from other seemingly Godly sources and to adopt them as our own norm for Christian living. Moreover, when we teach others of the way of salvation, our teachings must come only from what He gives to us (as opposed to what He has given to others), *“the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life”* (John 4:14). This well of water represents the reservoir of wisdom given to a believer by the Holy Spirit and God gives the Holy Spirit to a penitent soul who confesses his sin and hears and believes that

his *“...sins are forgiven you for his name's sake”* (1 John 2:12). Only from that personal well, a believing heart, is one able to truly produce living words that spiritually flow to others. Otherwise, our well-meaning words are just good-sounding but not scripturally sound words, *“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal”* (1 Corinthians 13:1).

Many Jews during Jeremiah’s day followed the same path to eternal destruction as did their ancestors, *“For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water”* (Jeremiah 2:13). They voraciously gathered knowledge and teachings, drinking in an abundance of wisdom gleaned from wide-ranging sources, much to God’s dislike, *“Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that steal my words every one from his neighbor”* (Jeremiah 23:30). Thus, as it was then and still is today, those who diminish the importance of His word by gravitating toward other men’s wisdom become reduced to being only able to repeat what they have learned from others. Jeremiah says that God will no longer open the scriptures to these self-taught, false prophets.

What we today do in our finite wisdom holds no spiritual water when that wisdom comes from our neighbor, even though we work very diligently at it, *“How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?”* (John 5:44). Thus, we will be no more successful at imparting the truth to others than were the Israelites of old if we don’t study and teach solely from *“living waters”*.

May God grant us the grace to truly drink from our own cistern.

God’s Peace,

*Charles Korhonen*

Aug 6	Ken Storm	Holy Communion
Aug 13	Earl Kaurala	
Aug 20	Ken Storm	
Aug 27	Jesse Matson	

Looking ahead: our winter schedule will begin Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>. Sunday School and Adult Bible Study at 9:45, Church at 11am.

TAPIOLA APOSTOLIC LUTHERAN CHURCH  
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**Summer Schedule:** Church at 10am Bible Study at 7pm on Wednesday. **Winter Schedule begins Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>.**

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