

BOOK OF JOHN WEEK 14: GO WITH THE FLOW

OPENING ILLUSTRATION //

Has there ever been someone in your life that just goes with the flow? No matter how severe or pressing the situation may be, they just glide through with little sense of urgency as if the matter at hand is miniscule?

What if I told you that when we live life in the Spirit, there is an unexplainable peace and easiness to everything that comes our way....and that peace and easiness is made accessible to you today!

SET UP SCRIPTURE //

- **Author:** John
- **Main Character:** Jesus
- **Audience:** Jesus is speaking to the Jews
- **Location/Gathering:** All the Jews are gathered in Judea for the Feast of Tabernacle. The Feast of Tabernacles is a multi day celebration of the Jewish People to celebrate the harvest and remember how God provided for them as they wandered in the desert for 40 years following their freedom from Egypt!
- **Purpose:** As we dive into the scripture, we see that the disciples are asking Jesus to go to Judea to attend the Feast Of Tabernacles to show his miracle working power to the world! At this time, Jesus had made some powerful, yet controversial teachings and the people of Judea (the Jews) did not like it. The Jewish people were ready to capture and kill him, and Jesus tells his disciples the time had not yet come for Him to reveal himself. The disciples go ahead of Jesus and attend the feast. Jesus attends the feast in secrecy, but halfway through the feast Jesus heads up to the temple courts and begins teaching. This leads us to our passage....

READ SCRIPTURE // JOHN 7:37-39 (pgs. 139+140)

37 On the last day, the climax of the festival, Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds, 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. But the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not yet entered into his glory.)

MAIN POINT // THE STREAM IS FLOWING.....

POINT ONE // FIND THE FLOW

- In this passage, Jesus is making a prophetic declaration not only about his death and resurrection, but also the Holy Spirit that is coming and that is GOD!
- Who is the Holy Spirit?
 - He is one with God and in perfect union with the trinity, meaning HE IS GOD!
 - The Holy Spirit's job is to empower and guide all believers to live out of the overflow of life that IS the Gospel.
 - The work of the Holy Spirit is seen in the gifts that he brings and the fruit that he produces inside of us.
- Vs 38 - Jesus makes the statement that rivers of living water will flow from his heart.
 - In this single statement, Jesus is affirming that we can find a direct reflection of his heart from the Holy Spirit!
 - If you want to know the desires of Jesus and the love of Jesus, we must know the Holy Spirit....for they are one.

Fun Fact: We see 'water' used as reference/in the Bible 722 times! If we know anything about the Bible it's that if something is repeated, it is worth looking into. If the Holy Spirit is God, and Jesus himself is saying streams of living water will flow....what does that mean? To fully understand, let's look at what streams do.

ILLUSTRATION // FUNCTION OF A STREAM

According to National Geographic....

Streams provide many benefits to humans. Besides providing drinking water and irrigation for crops, streams wash away waste and can provide electricity through hydropower.

- In the same way, the Holy Spirit comes and will cleanse us of ALL unrighteousness and create a CLEAN slate through the power of the cross! One of His jobs is to convict us of sin so that we can be made in right standing with the Father.

Streams create channels by wearing down rock and carrying it and other sediment downstream.

- In the same way, it is the work of the Holy Spirit that softens our hearts and does the work of sanctification. Sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit that purifies us from sin and matures us to look more like Christ.
- He will wear down the very parts of you that hinder you from Jesus, and will begin to move them out of our lives to create open spaces for Him to flow through us and make us more like Jesus.

- The Holy Spirit wears down the 'old man' so that the new life in Christ can spring up!

Streams provide an important ecosystem for many plants. Different plants have evolved to thrive in streams. Plants often have strong root systems that act as anchors, and long, flexible stems that can move with the current.

- In the same way, the Holy Spirit provides the atmosphere for your spirit man to thrive through his presence! When we are with the Holy Spirit, he builds up the fruits of the Holy Spirit that acts as anchors for our lives.

Many factors can harm a stream's health. Dams stop the natural flow of sediment and water, and prevent wildlife, nutrients, and water from flowing freely through the stream system. Urban areas sometimes flush untreated sewage into streams, causing algal blooms that suffocate wildlife. Pollutants can wash into streams from farms and factories, and harm wildlife and humans who depend on the water.

- Living waters can only flow where there is open spaces for life...
- In the same way, what we allow into our streams will have an effect on the health of our streams.

HEALTH CHECK //

- Many of us sit and wonder why we do not 'feel' close to God or 'feel' the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives.....
 - I would like to argue, if you are feeling an immense absence from God it may be because there are some unwanted pollutants in your stream. What you put in your stream is what will flow out.
- The Bible tells us in Matthew that out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks and in the same way Jesus is telling us that out of HIS heart, streams of living water will flow.
 - Friends, if the only things coming out of your mouth is gossip, slander, corruption, lies, deceitfulness, disobedience, acts or words of unrighteous anger, immoral + sexually displeasing discussions or crude jokes, etc....check your stream.

LUKE 11:33-36

"No one lights a lamp and then hides it or puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where its light can be seen by all who enter the house. Your eye is like a lamp that provides light for your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is filled with light. But when it is unhealthy, your body is filled with darkness. Make sure that the light you think you have is not actually darkness. If you are filled with light, with

no dark corners, then your whole life will be radiant, as though a floodlight were filling you with light.”

- What we allow into our streams is SO important! The things we watch, the people we hold close to us, the music we listen to, the things we read, the video games we play, etc.
- EVERYTHING has an affect on your stream.
- In order to follow Jesus, and to live a life led by the Holy Spirit it WILL require sacrifice.
- It requires work to clean up pollutants from a stream, so we cannot expect an easy clean up; BUT, what we can expect is a life filled by the Spirit that gives us the strength and the necessary tools to clean.
- When it gets hard, we must learn how to just go with the flow...

POINT TWO // GO WITH THE FLOW

ILLUSTRATION // Just keep swimming song from Dory...

- Dory is faced with some road blocks on their mission to find nemo.
- In the face of adversity, Dory sings the famous / iconic / most inspirational song of our time...JUST KEEP SWIMMING.
- As Dory sings, she continues to swim deeper and deeper as they continue to face even MORE adversity...
- As the scene goes on, we see both Nemo and Dory make it out alive as they continue on their journey to reunite with their family.

- Jesus has never taught that life would be easy; HOWEVER, he did teach that we can have ease as we go through life....
- We need the Holy Spirit because He is the one who

FRIENDS WE HAVE GOT TO KEEP SWIMMING!

- We must continue to swim in the streams of Living Water that Christ has given to us through the Holy Spirit.
- When life gets tough and relationships get hard and it seems like you are trying to live for Jesus, but roadblocks keep getting in the way....the only thing that will sustain you and navigate you through the journey are the streams of living water that are promised by Christ THROUGH the Holy Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit is our guide. We must learn to listen for His voice and carry the boldness to move any boulders or dams that are in our way.

- The Bible says that there is new grace and new mercies available to us, but these things are only found in the stream!

Encouragement -

- Just like a stream has such an ease to flowing, as we learn to live life with the Holy Spirit and in the living water God has promised us...there is an ease that takes place!
- Why is there an ease? Because
 1. The Holy Spirit is our Helper // John 16:7
 - “Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, **the Helper** will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you,”
 2. The Holy Spirit is our Sanctification // I Cor. 6-11
 - “But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by **the Spirit of our God**,”
 3. The Holy Spirit Develops us to be like Christ // 2 Cor. 3:18
 - “And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is **the Spirit**,”
 4. The Holy Spirit Empowers us to Accomplish the Will of the Father // 1 Cor. 12:7-11
 - Lists the gifts of the spirit: Wisdom, Word of Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Miracles, Prophecy, Distinguishing of Spirits, Tongues + Interpretation
 5. The Holy Spirit Emparts Love // Romans 5:3-5
 - “Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through **the Holy Spirit** who has been given to us,”
 6. The Holy Spirit Gives Hope // Romans 15:13
 - “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of **the Holy Spirit** you may abound in hope,”

HE DOES THE WORK! All we must do is submit to him!

ALTAR //

What does your stream look like? Is it clean and moving, or is it polluted and stagnant? Have you allowed the Holy Spirit to create the channels in your life that provide life in Christ?

Are there factors in your life that are blocking you from fully living + walking in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit?

Create space for students to experience the Holy Spirit in their lives! Allow time for students to process and lay down any 'roadblocks' or 'dams' in their spiritual streams.

Break into small group to discuss how students can better be lead of the Spirit, and get around some of the dams they feel are in their lives.