

The Life-Giving River

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SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Based on the sermon by Pastor Mirek Hufton

1. SERMON RECAP

In this message, I took us into Revelation 22 to explore what it means to drink deeply from the river of God -- His very presence and Spirit flowing through our lives. I contrasted the life-giving river with the cracked, broken cisterns we build when we try to find life outside of an intimate relationship with Jesus. The central invitation of the whole message is simple but urgent: stop settling for desert living and wade deeper into the river of God's presence.

2. KEY SCRIPTURE

Revelation 22:1-2 (NKJV)

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

3. ICE BREAKER

Have you ever been to a river, waterfall, or any body of moving water that genuinely took your breath away? What was it about that moment that made it feel so alive and refreshing?

4. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Question 1 -- Opening Up the Theme

In the sermon, I described four "depths" from Ezekiel 47 -- ankle deep, knee deep, waist deep, and swimming. Without overthinking it, where would you honestly say you are in your walk with God right now -- and why did you pick that depth?

Question 2 -- Digging into Scripture

In John 7:37, Jesus stands up on the greatest day of the feast and cries out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink." Why do you think Jesus chose that particular moment and setting to make this declaration? What does it tell us about how urgently He wants us to receive His Spirit?

Question 3 -- The Cistern Problem

Jeremiah 2:13 says people commit two evils -- they forsake God, the fountain of living waters, and they dig their own broken cisterns that can't hold water. What are some of the "cisterns" people in our culture -- and even in the church -- tend to build in place of a genuine relationship with God? Have you ever leaned on one of those cisterns yourself?

Question 4 -- Getting Honest

I talked about how it's possible to be a genuine believer and still end up living in a spiritual desert -- dry, frustrated, going through the motions. What are the warning signs, in your own life or in a community of believers, that the river has slowed to a trickle? What usually causes that to happen?

Question 5 -- Joel's Promise

Joel 2:28 says, "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh." The word "pour" is extravagant -- it's not a drip or a trickle. How does it change the way you approach prayer, worship, or time with God when you actually believe He wants to pour His Spirit out rather than just give you a little taste?

Question 6 -- Living in the River

I said that the clearest sign you're living in the river is joy -- and that everywhere the river flows, it brings life, including into marriages, finances, and health. Where in your life right now do you most need the river to start flowing? What would it look like if it actually did?

5. APPLICATION CHALLENGE

This week, choose one specific time slot of at least 20 minutes -- same day, same time, every day for seven days -- and guard it entirely for being with God. No agenda, no prayer list to race through. Just worship, wait, and invite the Holy Spirit to flow. At the end of the week, write down one word that describes what shifted, even slightly, in your spirit. Bring that word back to the group next week and share it.

6. PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for genuine thirst. Ask God to stir up a fresh hunger and dissatisfaction with spiritual shallowness -- in each group member personally and in our church as a whole.

- Pray for dry places to be revived. Name the specific "deserts" in your lives -- a struggling relationship, a difficult work situation, a season of discouragement -- and ask the river of God's presence to flow directly into those places this week.

- Pray for an outpouring. Stand on the promise of Joel 2:28 together and ask God to pour out His Spirit on your families, your neighborhood, and your city -- not just in meetings, but through the everyday lives of people who are learning to swim in His river.

7. MEMORY VERSE

John 7:37b-38 (NKJV)

"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

Leader's Note: Don't rush through these questions to get them all done. If your group gets stuck on Question 3 or 4 and the conversation goes deep -- that's the river. Let it flow.