

- I. An earthly verses a heavenly mindset
  - A. John 7:32-36 . . . The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about Him, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to seize Him. [33] Therefore Jesus said, "For a little while longer I am with you, then I go to Him who sent Me. [34] You will seek Me, and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come." [35] The Jews then said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go that we will not find Him? He is not intending to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks, is He? [36] What is this statement that He said, 'You will seek Me, and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come'?"
  - B. Prayer
  - C. The value of a spiritual, heavenly, and eternal mindset and perspective
    - 1. Once again, I want to remind you that John wrote this gospel to confirm that Jesus is God in human flesh, that He is the Messiah, or as the OT says, He is Immanuel – God with us.
    - 2. In this section, Jesus is affirming His origin – that He is from heaven, that His father is God, and that one day He will return to heaven and to His father.
      - a. Obviously, Jesus is speaking of truths that are spiritual, heavenly, and eternal in nature.
      - b. And most of us have at least a general idea of what Jesus is talking about because either we have been told their spiritual, heavenly, and eternal significance, or because we have a spiritual, heavenly, and eternal perspective or mindset.
    - 3. However, the Jews to whom Jesus was talking were not filtering His words through a spiritual, heavenly minded, and eternal perspective, but rather through an earthly perspective. In other words, their mindset was first and foremost earthly rather than heavenly.
      - a. Now this would be understandable if these Jews were ignorant of spiritual, heavenly, and eternal truths. But they weren't ignorant. In fact, it is reasonable to assume that these Jews were sent by the chief priests and Pharisees because they supported the thinking, beliefs, theology, and practices of the chief priests and Pharisees.
      - b. In other words, these Jews would have been the conservative, evangelical, and probably even the fundamental Jews of their day.

- (1) They believed in God. They held to the sacredness of the scriptures. They believed a Messiah was coming. They intentionally and faithfully practiced their faith – reading the scriptures, praying several times a day, teaching their families the OT stories and works of God, offering their required sacrifices, fasting at least once a week, tithing, and keeping the Sabbath day holy.
  - (2) And yet, in spite of their conservative, evangelical beliefs and practices, they were filtering Jesus' words through an earthly mindset and perspective.
4. My purpose in pointing this out is because our mindset and our perspective have a strong influence over how we hear and understand what is said, what we read, what we see, and what is done. In other words, our mindset and perspective powerfully influences what we think about God, how we interpret His activity – or seeming lack of activity – in our world and in our lives, how we interpret God's word, how we view the origins of the world and the beauty of nature, how we relate to people, and how we deal with the situations and circumstances of life.
  - a. For example, even though you may identify yourself with the conservative, evangelical part of the Christian community, if you are proud and view your pride as an asset rather than a sin, that earthly mindset will influence how you see God, relate to people, and deal with life's situations and circumstances.
  - b. If you are greedy, covetous, or believe money is a primary source of security, those earthly perspectives will effect what you agree with and what you ignore in God's word, and how much you trust or distrust God in these areas.
  - c. If you fear what other think of you so that you commonly choose to speak and behave in ways that keeps others thinking well of you or keeps them happy with you, that earthly mindset will effect the way you listen to and respond to the prompting and conviction of the Holy Spirit as you deal with the people in your life.
  - d. If you do not trust God to deal fairly or to be good and loving in all His ways, that earthly mindset will influence you to interpret events in a way that reinforces your distrust of God rather than in a way the reinforces the fact that God is good, faithful, loving, and wise.
5. It is possible those examples are enough to help you see that you can have a spiritual, heavenly, and eternal mindset in some areas while

holding to an earthly mindset or perspective in one or more other areas. And my reason for pointing this out is that aligning with that part of the church that is commonly recognized as spiritual does not guarantee your mindset and perspective will be spiritual in all situations and under all circumstances.

- a. And the weakness or failure of any earthly mindset is that it leads you to overlook or causes you to misunderstand what God is saying in the scriptures, or what Jesus taught while here on the earth, or what the Holy Spirit is endeavoring to teach you and where the Holy Spirit wants to lead you.
  - b. Just as the earth-bound mindset and perspective of the Jews of Jesus' day prevented them from seeing and understanding the spiritual, heavenly, and eternal significance of Jesus' words and deeds, so any earth-bound mindset and perspective in your life will have the same result.
6. Now you may be wondering how to be more spiritually, heavenly, and eternally minded.
- a. First, you must want such a mindset enough to pursue such a mindset. And to pursue such a mindset requires driving away any attitude, way of thinking, desire or fear, and way of living that competes with a spiritual, heavenly, and eternal mindset. And then you must feed, reinforce, strengthen, and protect a spiritual mindset and perspective.
  - b. Second, you must choose to believe that God is real, that He is active in your life and in the world, that He is perfectly good and eternally loving, and that you can often discern – in some way or another – God's presence and activity in the situations and circumstances of your life.
  - c. Third, as you continue reading the Bible, you must continue seeking to understand God and His ways so that have a growing and rational basis for discerning His presence and activity.
  - d. Finally, you must keep your eyes and mind open to discerning God's presence and activity – be it displayed in words, deeds, nature, and other benevolent or disciplinary actions.
7. Once again, our mindset and perspective powerfully influences what we think about God, how we interpret His activity – or seeming lack of activity – in the world around us and in our lives, how we interpret God's word, how we view the origins of the world and the beauty of nature, how we relate to people, and how we deal with the situations and circumstances of life.

II. A strong sense of need; believing results in receiving the Holy Spirit

A. John 7:37-39 . . . Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. [38] He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers (*that is, an abundance*) of living water.'" [39] But this He spoke of the [Holy] Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

1. There is much we could say about these verses, but I want to focus our attention on just two of the truths conveyed here.
2. First, we will look at who Jesus invites to come and drink.
3. Second, we will look at what the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit means for us today.

B. In vs 37, Jesus begins by inviting all who are thirsty to come to Him for something to drink. And what I hope you can see here is that Jesus' invitation is not universal in nature, but rather it is extended to those who are thirsty.

1. Now you may be wondering what is so important about that? It is important because only the thirsty have a strong sense of need, and Jesus is making it clear that what He is offering, He offers to those who have a strong sense of need. In other words, Jesus is not inviting those who are generally satisfied with what they have yet still want something more. He is inviting those who have, at the very least, a reasonable recognition of their need.
  - a. Jesus said something similar in Matthew 5:4, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst (*that is, who have a strong sense of need or longing*) for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."
  - b. And later on in Matthew, Jesus said, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden (*that is, all who have a strong sense of need and longing for the kind of help Jesus gives*), and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).
  - c. God said something very similar through Isaiah in Isaiah 55:1-2, "Every one who thirsts (*has a strong sense of need and longing to be satisfied*), come to the waters; and you who have no money (*are in a desperate condition and want help*) come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. [2] Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in abundance."

2. This raises the question: Why does Jesus make a strong sense of need or desire for what He gives an important condition for receiving from Him what He has to give?
  - a. It is my opinion that the answer is obvious when I look at the overall spiritual condition of Christianity in our country today.
    - (1) To fill the seats and have larger crowds, many churches and church attendees are selling Christianity to the masses.
    - (2) And to sell any product that the public is not eager to buy, you must create a sense of need – which is done best by appealing to people’s self-serving interests, such as promising them they can go to heaven instead of hell after they die.
    - (3) And so I ask you, how many of those you know who call themselves Christians, hunger and thirst for righteousness?
      - (a) How many believe in Jesus for eternal life yet continue to practice some sins – like anger, resentment, dishonesty, Americanized greed, and forms of sexual immorality because they don’t trust God to provide for them and protect them in the daily concerns of life?
      - (b) How many of them give at least a tithe of their income?
      - (c) How many of them love others as themselves, starting in their own homes, work place, neighborhood, and church?
      - (d) How many of them are divorced or are part of perpetuating broken relationships because they won’t do what they can to live in peace with all men, and they won’t love their enemy, and they won’t kindly and respectfully treat those who mistreat them?
  - b. We pursue what we hunger and thirst for. Therefore, in regard to the world, our flesh, and the devil – on the one hand, and God and righteousness – on the other hand, we become what we have a strong sense of need or longing for.
  - c. To fill the Christian church with those who continue to hunger and thirst for just some of the ways of the world, and some of their fleshly desires, is to dilute godliness, and to damage the church’s spiritual health, and to lower the reputation of Christianity, and to give the world more reasons to dishonor and reject God.
3. Jesus invited those who are thirsty, those who are hungry, those who are weary and heavy-laden because it is these who know the desperation of their need and who have a longing for their need to be satisfied by Jesus, himself, and by what He alone gives.

4. If you realize, today, that you hunger and thirst for one or more things that are of this world or of your fleshly desires, you can change that. If you realize, today, that you do not hunger and thirst for Jesus and what He give, as you ought or would like to, you can change that.
  - a. And one of the places to begin changing that is to daily feed, reinforce, strengthen, and protect a spiritual mindset and perspective.
  - b. There are other things you can do, but those we can talk about at another time if you want such help.
- C. I said there were two truths I wanted us to consider from vs 37-39, and the second truth has to do with what the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit means for us today.

(Insufficient time to complete – pick up next Sunday)

### III. Conclusion

- A. May we guard against an earthly mindset and perspective, and feed a spiritual, heavenly, and eternal mindset and perspective.
- B. May we pursue, nurture, and protect a strong sense of need for God, His son, and all that they have for us.
- C. And may we willingly yield to, and even seek, the inward working of the Holy Spirit.
- D. Truly, the way of God is the way of life.