

WONDER OF WONDERS

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.'

John 7:37

Patience had her perfect work in the Lord Jesus, and until the last day of the feast He pleaded with the Jews, even as on this last day of the year He pleads with us and waits to be gracious to us. The long-suffering of the Savior is truly admirable as He bears with some of us year after year despite our insults, rebellions, and resistance to His Holy Spirit. Wonder of wonders that we are still in the land of mercy!

Mercy expressed herself most plainly, for Jesus "cried," which implies not only the loudness of His voice, but the tenderness of His tones. He entreats us to be reconciled. "God making his appeal through us," says the apostle, "we implore you on behalf of Christ . . ." What earnest, pathetic terms are these! How deep the Father's love that causes Him to weep over sinners and, like a mother, to tenderly call His children to Himself! Surely at the sound of such a cry our willing hearts will come.

Provision is made most generously: Everything that man needs to quench his soul's thirst is available. To his conscience the Atonement brings peace; to his understanding the Gospel brings the richest instruction; to his heart the person of Jesus is the noblest object of affection; to the whole man the truth as it is in Jesus supplies the purest nourishment. Thirst is terrible, but Jesus can remove it. Even if the soul were utterly famished, Jesus can restore it.

Proclamation is made most freely, that every thirsty one is welcome. No other distinction is made but that of thirst. Whether it be the thirst of greed, ambition, pleasure, knowledge, or rest, he who suffers from it is invited. The thirst may be bad in itself, and not be a sign of grace, but a mark of inordinate sin that longs to satisfy itself with deeper lust; but it is not goodness in the creature that brings him the invitation-the Lord Jesus sends it freely and without respect of persons.

Personality is declared most fully. The sinner must come to Jesus-not to works, ordinances, or doctrines but to a personal Redeemer who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree. The bleeding, dying, rising Savior is the only ray of hope to a sinner. Oh, for grace to come now and drink, before the sun sets upon the year's last day!

No waiting or preparation is even hinted at. Drinking represents a reception that has no special requirements. A fool, a thief, a harlot can drink; our sinfulness is no barrier to the invitation to believe in Jesus. We need no golden cup, no fine china, in which to convey the water to the thirsty; the mouth of poverty is welcome to stoop down and drink of the life-giving stream. Blistered, leprous, filthy lips may touch the stream of divine love; they cannot pollute it but will themselves be purified. Jesus is the fount of hope. Dear reader, listen to the dear Redeemer's loving voice as He cries to each of us, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink."