

Dryness - Roy Hession

by From the Pulpit & Classic Sermons

Roy Hession's sermon emphasizes the importance of coming to Jesus to quench spiritual dryness and experience renewal through His grace.

Duration: 21:23

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 7:38-39

Topics: "Radio"

Description

In this sermon, Roy Hession emphasizes the importance of prioritizing the teachings of Jesus and dropping other distractions. He shares his personal struggle with anxiety and feeling the pressure of people's expectations. Hession encourages the audience to come to Jesus when they feel dry, cold, and dissatisfied, reminding them that Jesus offers refreshment and satisfaction. He urges the listeners to approach the conference with expectancy, hunger, and eagerness to learn, suggesting that attending the entire series is worth setting aside other commitments.

Transcript

Welcome to From the Pulpit and Classic Sermons. Each week we bring you a different message from some of history's greatest speakers in the Christian faith and powerful sermons for modern preachers too. This week we have Roy Hession with his message, Dryness.

It's a great joy to be back in the United States and especially in California where my wife and I have so many precious Christian friends and I do thank God for the way in which this conference has been organized, calling together those are hungry to meet the Lord Jesus from right over this area. And already I'm sure we've been conscious of the Lord Jesus. As we've drawn near to Him this morning, He has drawn near to us.

I'm on my way back to England from Brazil, an old hunting ground of Dr. Pearson's, and God has blessed us very much there. God is doing great things in that land and there's a band of men whose hearts God is newly touching and giving them a fresh vision of revival in the simple gospel way that we shall seek to learn together here in this conference. And so I believe God is working in this simple way in the hearts of His church all over the world just now.

There are two wonderful brothers just now in Australia, two Africans who've been for years leaders in revival in East Africa. And even now they've been spending months going up and down Australia. One is a

bishop through no fault of his own.

He never wanted to be the bishop and they didn't usually appoint revival minded men as bishops, but he said well you know what I am? They said we don't want to be anything else. And another is a schoolteacher. Men on fire who are giving the same message as we shall be seeking to learn together here.

And all over the world God is doing this quiet but new fresh working of His Spirit I believe. Just nothing special, no special emphasis but taking us back to Calvary. Back to learn again those first lessons from which the church is always in danger of departing.

So I believe this conference is fitting into a glorious, gentle, precious working of God to bless and revive and refresh the church that through them the living water shall flow to others. Last June there was an international conference along these lines and Dr. Pearson was there and Mike Markham was there and Ben Lee Masters is coming in a moment, as well as people from 22 different countries. And there we had a wonderful sense of the Lord Jesus adequate for the needs of the world and beginning first with His own church.

So these are great days in which to live and I believe God is purposing to do a fresh work for this great widespread evangelical church in America, beginning with humble people like ourselves. So we don't know where this river will end. I've been on the biggest river in the world, the Amazon, in the last weeks.

At the mouth it's 200 miles across and the fresh water extends two miles, 200 miles into the Atlantic. And yet somewhere that mighty river was just a little tiny stream. Now who can tell from the tiny streams that will begin to flow in our hearts what the God design should come.

So let's be full of expectancy, hungry and eager to learn. And I would like to say do come to as many of these meetings as possible. It's a very short conference and I would say it'll be worth laying aside every other thing to come if possible to the whole series.

The memoirs of Field Marshal Montgomery have recently been published in England and they're some wonderful stories of the inner history of the war. And he tells that whenever there was an acute situation, when perhaps the enemy were adopting new tactics, he would call in his other generals, over whom he was chief, for special consultation. And the notice calling them in was marked priority.

And no matter how many things those men had to do on their own sector, when they got that order they had to drop everything to give this priority. They might meet in the woods somewhere and they'd have that priority conference. Now I believe we could, and I believe it's right to call this a priority conference.

Not because certain people have come to speak, we're just simply pointers to the Lord Jesus Christ. But you know really some people who say they're too busy in the Lord's works to come. We have to say this again and again in Brazil.

But you know a whole ministry can be changed here. What everything used to be so busy with our ministry, which may be for all we know on exactly the wrong lines. The harder we try, the shorter we're going to say.

When here Jesus has come to share with us some secrets that may change everything for us. That may bring a new day. And so I would suggest then that we mark this conference priority.

And though there are other things to do, just as they had to drop them, I believe the Lord is asking us to drop other things for this short time. We might spend it together learning of the Lord Jesus and telling him we're not quite satisfied, we haven't quite got the answer. And I know that he's going to help us.

Then a little word of testimony. In these last days I found a little shadow across my path and on my heart. And it was a shadow of this conscience.

And I found myself getting just a little anxious. The devil was telling me that people were looking to me, which of course isn't true because it's a team of us going to work together. And he was telling me that I hadn't got anything.

And that of course had the effect that it was designed to have, of getting one striving and trying to get something. I believe that's why the devil accuses you of what you haven't got. To get you to strive in your own strength to get it, or to be it.

And he just knows that in that place we're not seeing Jesus as the one who is the supplier of our need. And so I confess to you that that's how it's been with me a little bit. And this morning I found myself getting just that bit tense and striving.

And I praise the Lord for meeting me, showing me that. Because you know the trouble is with all these things, for a long time you don't see them. And the devil designs that you shouldn't see them.

And you know the devil designs that we shouldn't see these things. It's a victory when at last you say Lord something's wrong, will you please show me. And I'm praising him, he showed me.

And he gave me a wonderful verse this morning that's helped me no end. Isaiah 51, 12. I just passed it on, this isn't the message.

But just to start with. Isaiah 51, 12. I even I am he that comforteth you, who art thou that thou shouldst be afraid.

Now you know when you have that phrase who art thou in scripture, it invariably is a rebuke to pride. Who art thou? And I had to see again that my fear, and my striving was pride. I haven't got what it takes.

The Lord said whoever said you had. I'm doing this. What a wonderful scripture.

I am he that comforteth you, who art thou that thou shouldst be afraid. Sheer presumption to be afraid. It's really a funny subtle form of pride.

I feel the Lord put a word on my heart, and it may well be that perhaps before we finish, someone else of our brethren here would like to add something. They're free to do so. Now before we come to the word, I would like us to turn to Ezekiel chapter 47.

Ezekiel 47. And now having read that Old Testament scripture, I want to turn you to the scripture in the New Testament, which I believe refers us back to that. Let that scripture then be in the background of our minds as we turn to John's Gospel chapter 7. Chapter 7. And here's something which I think is going to make us thirsty and full of desire on our first coming together this morning.

John 7 37. In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, what scripture? It can

only refer to one scripture.

I've hunted through my Old Testament to find what scripture the Lord was referring to. Because nowhere do you actually get those literal words. He's referring to the whole passage which we have just read.

He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly, or if you would prefer it, out of his inner man, shall flow rivers of living water. This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive. For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Now I just want to read that verse again in a slightly different way, which I believe is absolutely warranted. In the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, this is the first day actually, but it's message is the same. If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.

And he that doth so, as the scripture hath said, out of his inner man, shall flow rivers of living water. For a long time I regarded those things as two experiences. That to come to the Lord Jesus and drink was one thing, but it was another experience, probably ushered in by a very great climactic blessing, after which rivers of living water would flow from me.

I knew the first, but I didn't know the second, and for long I strove to get to that place, to fulfill whatever conditions were necessary that the rivers might flow from me to others. But I've come to see that I was wrong in thinking that. The man who comes to him is the one who believes on him, and therefore it's the same man.

If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, and out of the inner man of such and one shall flow rivers of living water. As I come to him and drink, those living waters flow to others. And if they're not flowing to others, it's just because I'm not drinking enough.

I'm not coming enough. In other words, we could call this the outcome of the income. A blessed outcome is promised for those who are willing for the blessed income.

As I come to him and drink, in all my need and deceit and thirst, and see grace has got a place for me there, and as I get my burdens lifted and my heart satisfied at the feet of the Lord Jesus, and as I simply testify to that new drink I've had, those living waters will flow to others. Rivers of them, out of a new experience of grace myself, and others will stoop and drink and live too. Let's think for a moment or two about this income.

The Lord Jesus says to us this morning, if you're dry, if you feel a bit cold, you've lost the vision a little bit, he says, come to me and drink. Now most of us feel that when we've got cold, and dry, and we're thirsty, and dissatisfied, that somewhere along the line there's a big stick waiting for us. That we've been very very wrong, which of course is true, and that when we're wrong there can be little more than some sort of a big stick promised from God.

And very often when we come to a conference, in spite of all we may know with our heads, we come just a little penny. Now what's the challenge I'm going to have? What am I going to be told? What terrific, excruciating challenge am I going to face? It's all because we've got such a wrong conception of the Lord Jesus, and of the grace of God. Jesus says come and drink, that's all, what's going to happen? You're thirsty, come and have a real good ice cold drink.

Even if our dryness is the fault, and it always is, of sin. However, whenever I'm dry, whenever I'm dissatisfied, when the grace of God isn't filling my heart, it's because something's gone wrong in my relationship with the Lord Jesus. That's all right with the Lord, doesn't make any difference, come to me then.

We'll get that relationship right so quickly, and you'll drink, and you will be satisfied. And so here's this wonderful word of the Lord Jesus. When I was thinking about our conference, I wondered whether perhaps the word of the Lord might be come and done.

But he said no it isn't, it's come and drink. Well it's all right, in California sometimes you need drink more than you need food, you get so hot. And so the word of the Lord Jesus to us as we come to spend this time together is, if any man says, any of us a little dry, not really on top, a bit down, come to me and drink.

But I'm just for such people, that's what I came for, that's what grace is for. The grace of God is like an ocean of water, seeking depth that it might fill it. And so that's his word to us as we gather.

Anybody thirsty, any knob is not really crazy, anybody down, there's a Jesus, I'm here for just such people. This isn't a conference for excellent people, it's a conference for failure. And deep, if we only knew it were all that.

And there's a place for such people at the feet of the Lord Jesus. And so there's that lovely word, if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. Now I've been asking myself, why is it that we do get dry? Some people have been dry for years.

You can tell they're dry when they pray, dry. You can tell they're dry when they preach or teach, it's all dry. They haven't been melted lately.

They're busy, but dry. As I say, we can be in that condition for years, and come to the place where we believe, well that's the Christian life, we really can't expect too much. Oh I know the hymns say this and that, and there's the wonderful promises, but really that's just what, that's just preacher's talk.

The real thing is always dry, after the first flush. And we just get used to living in a dry, thirsty place, until we meet somebody who's got a testimony. And you see a heart satisfied, praising, raging, having found the answer, having found the solution.

And that makes us thirsty. I praise the Lord it was that which helped me, and my wife, back in 47 we were in evangelistic work, and were utterly defeated. My wife groaned under my ministry, and now I don't blame her.

It was so dry, really dry. It had seemed to be power, and people thought there was the first time they came to a meeting, it was only, but it was a power of self-effort, and later they realized it. Hadn't always been so, but it becomes so.

And the thing that aroused our thirst was to meet some, who might not be very eminent preachers, but they had a testimony. And their hearts, their cups were full, and running over. And they knew Jesus as the one who daily satisfied them.

And things began to happen in a fresh way, as we were challenged by the testimony and lies of those who were coming to Jesus, they got dry too. Oh yes, that was their testimony, they knew what to do. And they

were all the time coming to Jesus and drinking.

And I had to learn again, that simple gospel secret. Well now, why is it that we get dry, with all that that means, of deceit and barrenness? Well now this passage of John 7, obviously links up in our mind with John 4. John 4 is that famous passage where we have the story of the Lord Jesus speaking to the woman at the well. The difference is of course, that John 4 only speaks of the income.

John 7 goes further and talks about the outcome of the income. But for the moment we're thinking about the income. And here's a woman who was dry.

She was thirsty, both physically and morally and spiritually too. And we read in verse 7, Jesus saith unto her, give me to drink. Verse 9, she says, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gifts of God, and who it is that saith to thee, give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. From whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whoso drinketh of this water shall thirst again.

But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well, rather a spring leaping up into everlasting life. Now that woman was thirsty because she was drawing from the wrong well. She was drawing from Jacob's well.

And she knew it was a very deep well. She had a very long rope. And after perhaps sometimes she toiled away on the handle of pulling the water up, it was only to find that she hadn't got to the bottom of the well.

So she would try again. She knew the toil of it, and she couldn't understand what Jesus was speaking. And on many occasions she'd try again, and she really thought she'd got to the bottom of the well, and she was sure there was some water in the pail.

But on the way up it hit against the side, and by the time it got to the top it was empty. And there were many, many occasions I like to imagine when she worked so hard on that well, and so often got so little, sometimes nothing at all. You've been listening to the From the Pulpit in Classic Sermons series.

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