

# Pools of Heshbon - His Reflectors

by John Follette

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God and trusting in His plan for our lives, rather than comparing ourselves with others.*

**Topics:** "Spiritual Reflection", "Personal Sanctification"

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## Description

John Wright Follette preaches about the beauty and mystery of the sacrament of truth that God reveals in nature, using the analogy of a quiet pool reflecting the image of the Bridegroom. He emphasizes the importance of not comparing ourselves with others in our walk with God, but rather focusing on our personal relationship with Him. Follette encourages believers to allow God to dig deep into their hearts, creating a pool of reflection where His power, beauty, and character can be seen and experienced.

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## Transcript

THE SACRAMENT OF THE HILLS

I have seen beauty my heart cannot sing!

How can I tell in words the sacrament

Of truth God spreads upon the autumn hills?

How strange the silence deep within my breast

When I beheld this miracle of grace!

The wine is mighty--drink deeply, my soul,

And taste the dregs of beauty that convict.

My heart, so long athirst for truth and light,

Drink of this wine and know its subtle tang.

O hungry eyes within, look and behold

The glory and the mystery of truth

Eternal and sublime upon the hills.  
God's finger traces there in language sure  
The message of His strength and endless love.  
Beauty translates it and I understand.  
A feast is spread--my hungry heart must feed!  
The broken bread of glory sacrificed,  
Strong meat for thee, O heart of mine, is here.  
How can I sing? My heart convicted stands.  
O Beauty, how you challenge me to prayer!  
Upon my spirit etch thy image fair.  
And sing, O heart, this likeness all divine,  
Interpret then in life this sacrament  
O! truth--the beauty at the autumn bills.

---John Wright Follette

This evening I would like to share with you a little word which has been a comfort and also a means of inspiration to me. One of the precious things about the ministry of the Holy Spirit is that while we are occupied with our daily duties and hungry for a deeper fellowship with our Lord, He is able to whisper to us and draw our attention to some thought in the Word, of which we have been hitherto unconscious.

As consecrated Christians there is something I am sure we share together--a deep desire to please our blessed Lord. The revelation brought to us of possibilities in the realm of the Spirit and degrees of fellowship sometimes overwhelms us. This is due to a consciousness of our limitations and our unlikeness to Him. The ideal is ever there before us and with the inner man we desire its realization. But before we know it we become occupied with natural limitations; our faith weakens and we feel very far short of our objective.

Another thing which helps to weaken the personal relation to God and hinders His working in our hearts is to compare our hearts and lives with those of other Christians. This is ruinous and really unscriptural. 2 Cor. 10:12: "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves, but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise."

One reads or hears of the mighty or spectacular doings of such and such a brother or sister and he wonders at the display of power and glory. A certain evangelist is a "flame of fire" and hundreds are swept into the kingdom through his ministry. Then we hear of a teacher who opens the Word in a marvelous way and many Christians are deepened in the things of the Lord. Next there is a missionary opening up fresh fields to the Gospel in mighty fashion. And here is a pastor feeding and building up his flock until it

becomes phenomenal. And so if one compares, as the Bible says, he is soon snowed under amid the storm of wonderings, doubts and questions which blow across his little horizon; and he feels he is just nowhere. And yet all the time he is enjoying sweet fellowship with the Lord and is not conscious of any cloud between; he is not self-seeking nor is he self-willed. But as he reads of the doings of the "mighty men of faith" he feels more than ever out of the game. Then if he is not careful he will do what the children of Egypt did when they saw the children of Israel pass through the sea--they tried it too, and "assay-ing to do were drowned." Never try to be Paul or Moody or Finney or anybody else. Please be yourself. An attempt at anything else is extremely ridiculous.

This message is "from the abundance of my heart." It is very personal but since we are all of the household of faith and of one family I will share it with you. May you, too, be helped as it helped me. I used to wonder where I was in the great plan and what I was to do to please my Lord. He had redeemed me and given me a very wonderful baptism in the Holy Spirit, and had called me to a life of peculiar separation unto Himself. Of this I was, and still am, very conscious. I, too, had heard of others being wonderfully used in His service and of some going as missionaries. It was while walking under a cloud of such reports and wonderings in my mind that the Holy Spirit began to deal with me. Knowing that I was not a flanking evangelist and that I was not called to take up a pastorate and that God had checked my going as a missionary, I felt there was little left for me to do. But I kept yielded and in my heart and will surrendered to the Lord. That does not mean I did not have a thousand thoughts. My heart was restless at times and I did not want to lose time in moving on into the things I knew were possible for a yielded heart.

While in that mood the Holy Spirit kept whispering to me, "Pools of Heshbon. Pools of Heshbon!" And there came a sense of quiet and rest. As soon as my heart began to grow restless I was conscious of His presence and again the whispering of the Spirit in my heart, "Pools of Heshbon! Pools of Heshbon!" I was not sure where the words were in the Bible, being new in the way and not knowing much about the Word, but I found them in the Song of Solomon 7:4, "Thine eyes (are) like the fishpools in Heshbon," etc. In the Song of Solomon we have a very graphic description of the love affair between the Bridegroom and the bride and this is one of the most spiritual bits of Scripture we have. It is the Lord dealing with a heart that has been separated from the world and dedicated unto Himself, a heart that has been wooed and won by the power of the love of God until it stands separated from the world and from itself, and is espoused unto this Bridegroom.

As I read that phrase, Thine eyes like the fishpools of Heshbon, I wondered, "What is the Lord saying to me?" And to think it should come just when my heart was distressed and fearful lest it might not bring forth the desired manifestation of His power and grace and beauty which is so evident in other lives! It was just when my heart felt its limitations that the Lord brought to me this picture of the Bridegroom dealing with his bride. Then it was that the Spirit opened to me the meaning of the text as I am giving it in this message.

Let us look at this picture. He is talking about her eyes. The bride is described here from the top of her head to the soles of her feet with every part of her anatomy reflecting some desirable characteristic of beauty. What are the eyes of the bride ? What are the eyes of my experience ? Eyes always signify intelligence, a seeing power, a discerning power, a beholding power. Many times they mean the power of perception. The eyes are the windows of the soul and often much of the inner life of a person is portrayed in the look of his or her eyes. I might hold up my hand or my foot but it would not tell half as much as when you look me straight in the eyes. I do not like people who cannot look me straight in the eyes; I always feel there is something radically wrong somewhere with them.

The Lord delights to look at us fight in the eyes--He says so. Sometimes it is much easier to hold up folded hands before Him but He looks right through the folded hands and into our eyes--the eyes of our heart. Have you ever felt that you did not want Him to look you straight in the eyes ? His penetrating and sometimes searching look is melting. Oh, the look of those eyes! What penetrating, convincing power! What pleasing, quieting, assuring, and understanding in His eyes! I am sure all He had to do many times was just to look at a person and that would mean more than a thousand words. You know what I mean, I am sure, for have we all not had Him look at us?

So we find that the eye is the symbol of the window or the outlook of the soul; that which portrays our intelligence, our conception. It is the spiritual part of our being without shadow or blur. Open the eyes of your spirit to Him. Do you remember anyone who gave us a little word about this? To the Ephesians Paul says that ever since he had heard of them and their faith he had not failed to pray for them. For what did he pray? "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints" (Eph. 1:17, 18).

That is exactly in harmony with the reference concerning the Pools of Heshbon. The eyes are likened unto the deep places--the eye of the soul, the eye of the inner being. Paul was praying that their eyes might be opened and that they might behold the glorious revelations, the wisdom and knowledge hidden away in this wonderful Lord and Master.

Have you ever made a study of the prayers of Paul? In doing so I am sure you will be surprised to find the general burden of them to be different from what we might think. He does not ask God to bless the groups whom He has taken out of the world for His name and in all the services and undertakings in which they might be interested. No, his prayers always center about the question of their growth and development and understanding in the things of God. "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness" ( Cor. 1:9-11). And so in Ephesians 3:14-19, Galatians 4:19, etc.

His great desire is that they might behold. He wanted their eyes to be opened. What do they see when they do look ? Doctrines ? Philosophies ? Creeds ? Theology ? Not these at all. They are to behold wisdom and knowledge in Christ area'us. So He becomes the center, the objective towards which their vision is cast. "While we look not at the things seen but at the things not seen." How can you look at something you cannot see? Oh, I see many things which are invisible! And I am finding more and more how very possible it is to behold the things invisible till they become more real than the visible. Look up! Look up! Look up into the eyes of the Beloved.

Why does He say the eyes of the consecrated are like pools ? You know water, as an element, is a very wonderful item in the universe. We are mute as we try to think of it in its boundless reaches as manifested in the ocean. But our text does not say, "Thine eyes are like the rolling, tossing sea." And yet how magnificent the sea is! Think of its ministry--binding together the various continents. It is the power of the ocean to touch each shore and to have kingdom fellowship with every portion of the world. It is a great ministry the ocean has--to touch the ends of the earth. Upon its heaving breast the mighty steamers ply

their way from one corner of the globe to another. It is the ocean which makes this possible. Yes, the ocean may lift its tossing waves and serve in a marvelous ministry that touches the ends of the earth--but He does not say, "Thine eyes are like the ocean."

Look at the rivers which, in their definite locations hidden away in the hills and mountains, find their courses and come rushing down till finally they reach the sea. The rivers nourish the land, they bring vegetation and life to all the countryside. Upon them the steamers sail and they become arteries of life, of navigation and are a blessing to all the inhabitants where they thread their graceful ways. But He does not say, "Thine eyes are like a river."

Then think of the beautiful waterfalls, the cascades that come rushing down hundreds of feet over the rocks in wondrous beauty. I have so many times gazed on Yosemite Falls and have never tired of its beauty and grandeur. There a stream tumbles down 1,600 feet from a sheer cliff, way, way up in the granite rock. It pours down a thousand, six hundred feet without any interruption at all, a height equal to nine Niagara Falls piled one on top of the other (though not equal in volume). There it comes dashing down the edge of the mighty cliff to a great, foaming basin; then off the edge of that rocky ledge it makes a six-hundred-foot cascade and then one grand leap of four hundred feet to the floor of the valley below. What a gorgeous display it is! The wind gets into it sometimes and blows it all around, giving the appearance of a great, beautiful lace veil. Think of it, a thousand, six hundred feet of lace! God's lace that no man can imitate or make; beautiful patterns that nobody can duplicate. That is just one of God's beautiful displays of water in motion. There are thousands of others, showing His marvelous creative work, wonderful to behold. The face of nature is ever a source of wonder and inspiration to me. I love her in all moods and at all seasons. Nature is the inarticulate voice of our Father speaking to us; the first, primitive, simple revelation of God to all people who are supposed to discern Him back of the manifestation. So I am a lover of the primitive and elemental things. I enjoy the simplicity and beauty of their power. I like to feel my relation to them--I am of the dust and I am very conscious of it. Well, that was a water-fall spectacular and wonderful! But he does not say, "Thine eyes are like the waterfall." What does He say ? He looks down at our broken hearts washed in His precious blood, now dedicated to Him and filled with His love and Spirit and He says, "Thine eyes are like the pools of Heshbon."

How does the pool differ from the ocean? the river ? the waterfall ? Where did the pool come from ? Oh, dear ones He dug the pool; He dug it deep in our lives. Whence came my pool? Way down, in the inner, hidden parts of my life and nature, the penetrating power of God dug deep, deep, DEEP. It makes me think of my boyhood days spent on a farm and the old well on it which my ancestors dug more than a century ago. They dug deep into the side of the hill with hard, laborious work; and then they carded stones, firm and strong, from the fence-rows and fields. Then somebody went down into the well and laid it ail about with stones, packed and fitted them into the sides and walls of the well, stone by stone, clear to the top. At the bottom was a spring which flowed freely until the well was filled with clean, cool water -- the best I think I ever tasted.

Listen I He is saying, "Thine eyes are like the pools off Heshbon." He saw the possibilities of making in your heart and in mine a beautiful, deep pool. Who made it? The Lord, dear soul, the Lord. Did you never hear Him digging in the deeper places of your life? Until you have said, "But Lord, this is so hard. Why do You have to dig so deep?" Do you wonder now at the severe measures of His discipline? Do you still question the loving demands He made when you laid down your heart and life at His feet ? "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you .... "Have you not yet learned to love the blow that sets you free? I like so very much what Robert Browning said,

"Then welcome each rebuff  
That turns earth's smoothness rough,  
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!  
Be our joys three-part pain!  
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;  
Learn, nor account the pang; dart,  
Never grudge the throe."

Such are the experiences of a loving, dedicated heart. Then it is that we hear the thud, thud, thud, of the power of God digging down to the very roots of our being. But it is only there that He can release the springs of water bubbling, gurgling and gushing up with eternal freshness. He did not pour the water into the pool. It came bubbling up from hidden springs. And then lest the mud and slime of the natural (the old creation) might pollute the water He lined the pool with the stones of truth. These He dug from the quarry of His Word. He brings these heavy stones of truth and packs them all around the sides of the Pool. Has He not sometimes brought you a truth which seemed very hard and heavy, and before you had it properly placed it seemed He brought another? Do not worry. He brought them that the precious water of life might not be polluted by human touch.

Then He comes near--oh, so very near, and stands so still by the side of the pool! As I was conscious of His presence and did not hear His voice I wondered why my heart was so quiet and hushed? The Holy Spirit kept saying, "Pools of Heshbon! Pools of Heshbon!!" And like a revelation He flashed this word across my heart--"The charm of the pool is its power to reflect." The vast ocean roaring with its might and reaching out its great heaving tides is too boisterous to reflect. The river, turbulent and muddy, sweeping onward, ever onward, is never still enough. It is too busy to reflect. It has great burdens to bear and ships to float and so cannot tarry. And alas! the dashing, crashing, thundering waterfall is hopeless as far as ever gathering up its waters into a quiet pool is concerned. Not even a stately tree is reflected in it. The Bridegroom is not looking for the ocean. He does not tarry long in the presence of a spectacular waterfall, nor does He linger by the rapidly flowing river. He does come, thank God, by the side of a quiet pool, which He has dug deep in the very nature and life of one who loves Him and has dared to let Him work there.

Oh, the mystery and beauty of such a fellowship! Is it not most humbling to any pride of the human? Have we one thing of which we can boast? Nothing! Only a pool of limpid, clean, quiet water. Yes, water, that weak element--even a by-word among men, "weak as water." Blessed weakness! "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence" (I Cor. 1:26-28).

Can you not be a pool, dear heart, for God? The pool in itself has no strength but it can reflect a whole range of mountains. The lofty mountains of His strength are in our hearts when we let them reflect there. We cannot produce them; we only reflect them. He is made unto me all I need--wisdom, righteousness,

power and all else. The sky--His sky of eternal blue and of heavenly character--is over me. My sky is dull and very limited, but I can reflect His sky. Only a pool--not destined to traverse the road-ways of the world, but called to a commonplace and uneventful life. Yet when turned to Him it may reflect the very passions and burdens of His loving heart. I hear someone say,

"My life is so full of shadows and at times I am called upon to count the lonely vigils of the night."

Yes, I know. There are others who have known the glory of the sun in noonday splendor. Now they have seen it set beyond the distant hills. The glory of the past, now a haunting memory, would still lighten up the deep twilight like a friendly afterglow. Yes, yes, dear souls! But listen! I asked about the night saints, those who are called to tarry and know the language of the night watches. Though the shadows darken and the night be dark--look for one little token of His love--a star. What could be more thrilling than to behold in the deep, dark blue--the unspeakable deep of midnight, a point, a luminous, brilliant twinkling point of light--a star? That is His promise of hope. It is there. Yes, it is there. Oh, the power it has to transport the heart! One becomes detached from material things and the here and now.

It is the distant point in the eternal bosom of the Father, to which my redeemed soul is journeying. It is the point of the mystical union of my soul with that of my heavenly Bridegroom, the sequel for which all this process of becoming is intended. A star! I cannot create one. I cannot fathom the meaning of its message and the story of my destiny but I can reflect one. I have no mountains of strength, no heavenly sky, no pageantry of sunset, no star of hope. I can produce none of these. I am but a pool of limpid, weak, clean water within the embrace of these stones of truth packed down in the innermost parts of my being. But the strength of His character, the purity of His heavens, the glory which is only His, and the Hope which He Himself is, may all be reflected in my pool, even my heart.

Dear one, do you want to please Him ? May I encourage you? He has many oceans, countless rivers, and innumerable waterfalls, but so few pools. Pools are costly. You might as well learn that now as later. He digs them Himself, but only in loving, yielded hearts. Do not try to make one! He longs that there be a fresh revelation (by way of reflection) of His power, beauty and character to the needy world. Do not grieve if you are not one of the other water manifestations. He may want a Pool of Heshbon in your heart. Let Him dig. And oh, He will fill it (from hidden springs) sweet, clean and refreshing. Let Him work. And please be still while He deals with you. It saves a lot of time. To let Him line your inner life with the hard, heavy stones of truth from His quarry will stand you in good stead.

Yes, there is the temptation to be any or all of the other water displays, but remember, none of them reflect. There were no eyes in them for Him. He wants to look into the eyes and be satisfied. Only to know He has looked into the eyes of the soul as it stands before Him (alone and unafraid) to hear Him say gently, "Pools of Heshbon!" is not to be compared with any earthly experience. It is divine, celestial and spiritual. Let Him dig down, down, into the deep, hidden places of your life. Let Him make room in the heart and He will fill it. Let there be one more Pool of Heshbon for the Bridegroom of the soul.

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