

## Jesus Christ -- The Living Water

A person can go without food for 40 or more days, but cannot go without water for more than a few days before serious damage is done to one's body. Prolonged lack of water brings dehydration and death.

Our mature bodies are composed of about 66% water; an infant's body is about 77% water. Water is used often in the Bible to picture life. Water is very necessary to sustain life.

The Apostle Paul identifies Jesus as the **Rock** that provided water for the Israelites in the wilderness. *"For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers... all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ"* (1 Cor. 10:1-4).

Jesus speaks of Himself as the **Living Water**. On the last day of the feast of tabernacles He extended this invitation... *"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water'"* (Jn. 7:37-38).

### God's Gracious Supply for LIFE

Jesus Himself said, *"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly"* (Jn. 10:10b). As the **Living Water**, Jesus is speaking of the abundant, daily LIFE that He is prepared to give to those who follow Him.

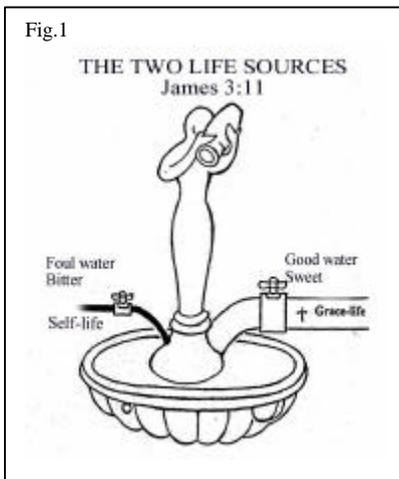
The Living Water LIFE source that Jesus gives is in stark contrast to the dead, stagnant Self-Life source that we received from Adam.

James in his epistle refers to a fountain as an example of these two life sources. *"Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh (sweet) and bitter water?"* (Jas. 3:11)?

### Two Life Sources

The following illustration (figure 1) shows a fountain with two sources of water – Living Water or Grace-Life (the LIFE of Christ), and Self-Life (the life inherited from Adam).

The fountain represents a Christian with two functional life sources from which to choose. Will the choice be the Grace-Life or will it be the Self-Life?



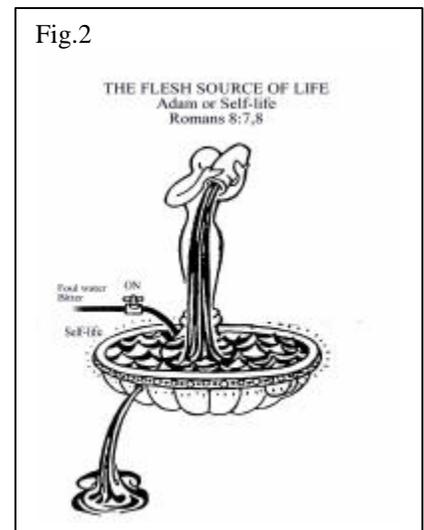
The Apostle Paul states in Romans 6:1-2 that it is unthinkable that once a person is saved and delivered from the bondage of sin that one would continue in sin (the Self-Life).

Paul says in Romans 6:11 that we should consider ourselves dead to sin (the Self-Life), but alive to God in Christ Jesus (the Grace-Life). This implies that a Christian has a choice in regard to which functional life source

is motivating and energizing him or her.

### The Self-Life

Fig.2



In Figure 2 above the flesh (the Self-Life) is pictured as the water supply (functional life source) of the Christian; the water flowing through is also of the Self-Life. Even if the fountain was made out of solid 24 karat gold and encrusted with precious stones – the flowing water will still be Self-Life water.

No matter how good and pious the Christian appears to others, if the Self-Life is the functional life source, then one's life and the overflow will be the Self-Life.

The Self-Life or the flesh functions as its own "god." (The Self-Life was activated in mankind when the serpent deceived Eve by saying that she would be like God if she ate the forbidden fruit). The Apostle Paul says that the flesh is the enemy of God.

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*"The mind set on the flesh [Self-Life] is hostile toward God; for it does not*

subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God” (Rom. 8:7-8).

Paul goes on to reiterate, “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these... ” (Gal. 5:19-21).

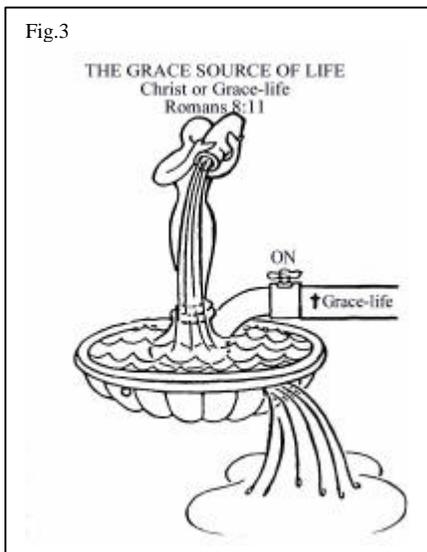
Today much of contemporary Christianity is focused on the Self-Life – what we can or should do for God. This is the false gospel that the Apostle Paul criticized the Corinthians for believing (2 Cor. 11:3-4).

He spoke even stronger with the Galatians, “This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh [Self-Life]” (Gal. 3:2-3)?

The end result of the Self-Life functional life source is not only the filling of the believer with self, but it results in a polluting overflow of self toward others.

## The Grace-Life

Praise God! He has provided another functional life source for the Christian -- Jesus Christ – the **Living Water!**



of the Grace-Life functional life source.

The Apostle Paul speaks of Christ’s Grace-Life. “For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His **LIFE**” (Rom. 5:10). The Apostle John writes, “For of His fullness we have all received, one **grace** after another” (Jn. 1:16 Berk.).

The Lord Jesus Christ explains how He lived. He did not take the initiative as His own functional life source, but He drew upon His Father as His functional LIFE. “I do nothing on My own initiative but I speak these things as the Father taught Me and He who sent Me is with Me. He has not left me alone” (John 8:28-29). “. . . The words I say to you, I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works” (John 14:10).

Paul again speaks, “He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give **LIFE** to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you” (Rom. 8:11).

## The Christian’s Biblical Response

Christians have an ongoing choice of which spigot to turn on. One may turn on the Self-Life spigot and live independently from Christ’s Grace-Life, thereby using all of one’s human wisdom and effort to produce the Christian life.

Or, the Christian may choose to access the Grace-Life spigot. The Lord Jesus Christ desires to become one’s functional Grace-Life source in which Jesus is the initiator and the Christian responds to Him. Christ is the one to take the lead and we are the ones to follow Him.

Paul clarifies, “As you therefore received Christ Jesus (by faith) the Lord, so walk in Him (by faith)” (Col. 2:6).

“I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God . . . do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed . . .” (Rom. 12:1-2).

This transformation comes when the believer turns on the Grace-Life spigot and draws from the very LIFE of Jesus Himself. Entrusting oneself into Jesus’ capable care enables Him to live His **Grace-Life** in and through the responsive believer. .

Jesus promises the believer a gracious overflow of His Grace-Life: ‘from his innermost being will flow **rivers of Living Water**’ to a waiting, weary and thirsty world. ♥

## Retreat Report

Our CUPbearers/Gracestoration 7th Annual Memorial Day Retreat May 25-28, 2001 was truly a blessing. The camp was full with 46 adults and 12 children. It was refreshing to witness the building of relationships and the bonding of families.

### **Some comments are as follows:**

“The conference has been a true blessing to our whole family. The Lord Jesus really ministered to us in such a quiet and relaxing way. The teaching and fellowship were especially meaningful and refreshing.”

“I thought this was a great retreat—completely focusing on our Lord Jesus Christ. The “Living Water” of Christ was very refreshing and invigorating to my soul and very timely in my life.”

“I have been reminded that He is the source of my daily living. This has been a peaceful, calming weekend. My thoughts have been directed to the Lord alone.”

## Revised Gracestoration Notes

If you already own a Gracestoration notebook, you will be interested in the fact that this spring we revised the Gracestoration notes, lessons 1-16. These notes, comprised of about 80 pages, are available upon request. Please sign the tear-off sheet below and send your request to us. A donation would help with the cost of printing and mailing. Thank you!