

# Springs of Living Water

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If you have read the Introduction to the Hymns Analysis section, then dive right in. If not, please read the Introduction here, and then come back and read the analysis. I strongly suggest this as you need to understand from whence these analyses come prior to proceeding.

## *Springs of Living Water*

*Words and Music: John W. Peterson*

*I thirsted in the barren land of sin and shame.  
And nothing satisfying there I found.  
But to the blessed cross of Christ one day I came.  
Where springs of living water did abound.*

*[Chorus]*

*Drinking at the springs of living water  
Happy now am I  
My soul they satisfy  
Drinking at the springs of living water  
Oh wonderful and bountiful supply*

*How sweet the living water from the hills of God.  
It makes me glad and happy all the way.  
Now glory, grace and blessing mark the path I've trod.  
I'm shouting "Hallelujah" every day.*

*O sinner won't you come today to calvary.  
A fountain there is flowing deep and wide.  
The Saviour now invites you to the water free.  
Where thirsting spirits can be satisfied.*

One of the first things to note about this particular hymn is the chorus. It is unfortunate that the chorus states what it does as it is probably the most egregious error of the hymn. The chorus is as follows:

*Drinking at the springs of living water.*

*Happy now am I.*

*My soul they satisfy.*

*Drinking at the springs of living water.*

*Oh wonderful and bountiful supply.*

Now, the Scripture is quite plain about salvation and the analogy to living water. The clearest and most familiar statement the Lord Jesus made about living water is found in John, chapter four when He spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well in Sychar.

Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest 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, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever 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 of water springing up into everlasting life. (*John 4:10-14*)

Notice particularly what the Lord Jesus Christ told the Samaritan woman about the living water He had to offer.

Whosoever 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 of water springing up into everlasting life.

It seems quite clear to me that this hymn is contradicting what the Lord Jesus expressly and plainly stated about the living water He gives to anyone who will come to Him for salvation. The hymn states plainly in every chorus that the individual continues to go back to the "springs of living water," and drinks again and again. However, the Lord Jesus Christ said that the condition of the born-again believer is such that they will never thirst, as the living water He gives is in them, and springs up in them and they can never thirst again. Hence, there is no need to drink the living water again. Once is sufficient for all time and eternity.

This, of course, speaks directly to the doctrine of the eternal security of the believer, which is now contradicted by this hymn which continuously states that the singer of the hymn must go back to drink again and again. Hence, the hymn teaches there is no eternal security of the believer. This is plainly unscriptural and opposed to the doctrine of salvation clearly taught in Scripture.

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, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) (*John 7:37-39*)

Now, I love the doctrine of the eternal security of the believer in Christ Jesus. Not because I can supposedly sin and have no eternal consequence for it. Rather, it is because it is based solely and strictly upon the work of Christ on the cross, and consequently, the believer's new birth by the Holy Ghost in Christ Jesus. In short, the doctrine of the eternal security of the believer glorifies the LORD God in that it makes every part of the work of salvation something that the LORD God does, and diminishes man's work to nothing. In fact, the only thing we can do in salvation is make a clear,

conscious choice as to whom we will trust – ourselves, or the LORD God.

Now, the fact that a plain error exists should cause us to examine further the teaching of this hymn. If we do this, we should also notice that this hymn teaches that there are “springs” of living water which is plural. However, in Scripture, there is only one fountain, or spring of living water, which is singular, not plural.

And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.  
(*Revelation 22:1*)

Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house *stood toward* the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south *side* of the altar. Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side. (*Ezekiel 47:1-2*)

The above verses demonstrate very plainly that there exists only one source of living water, and only one spring – that is the River of Life that flows from the throne of God. Interestingly, this spring is of such abundance that it is referred to as “rivers of waters” in the same way that Jeremiah stated that “rivers of waters” flowed from his eyes, meaning that there is water in abundance. Moreover, this river that flows from the throne of God is shown to continue to grow in abundance in Ezekiel until it became a river that could not be passed over.

Of course, the parallel here is that the living water the Lord imparts in salvation is of such abundance that it is sufficient for everyone, at every time in the entire history

of the earth, from beginning to the end. Indeed, the salvation of the Lord is infinite in its abundance and when we are born-again, we have that living water imparted to us so that it abides in us permanently, and we never have need to drink of it again. Thus, we are eternally secure in Christ, and are already partakers of the river of life. Hence, the Scripture teaches us that we have a single source for our eternal salvation, and that in abundance, which is contradictory to this hymn.

The last issue of this hymn is its focus. Plainly, our music ought to glorify the LORD God and all he has done. Hymns ought not focus on our pleasure, or how well we do, but should humbly, and joyfully acknowledge the holiness, judgement, lovingkindness, mercy and grace of the Lord. In this the Scripture is also plain.

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty *man* glory in his might, let not the rich *man* glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD. (*Jeremiah 9:23-24*)

If we examine the lyrics of the hymn without the intervening chorus and music we should be able to perceive the tone and focus of the hymn.

*I thirsted in the barren land of sin and shame.  
And nothing satisfying there I found.  
But to the blessed cross of Christ one day I came.  
Where springs of living water did abound.  
How sweet the living water from the hills of God.  
It makes me glad and happy all the way.  
Now glory, grace and blessing mark the path I've trod.  
I'm shouting "Hallelujah" every day.  
O sinner won't you come today to calvary.*

*A fountain there is flowing deep and wide.  
The Saviour now invites you to the water free.  
Where thirsting spirits can be satisfied.*

Now, in contrast to the passage from Jeremiah, it is easy to discern that in this hymn the focus is not on the Lord and His work and glorying in the Lord. Rather, the focus seems to be upon how 'happy' the individual is because he drinks of the springs of living waters. It is sad that there is no depth to this hymn, and there is nothing imparted as to the seriousness of the state of the sinner. Rather, it is as if salvation from sin and being passed from death to life in Christ Jesus is a trite and light affair that can be taken or left at the pleasure of the individual, instead of pointing out that unless there is conviction of the Holy Ghost, repentance from sin and faith in Christ, there is no salvation. Salvation in Christ is not about being 'happy.' Rather, it is about being reconciled to God through Christ and no longer in conflict with the our Creator. Our joy in Christ is directly connected to our obedience and service to God, not for maintenance of our salvation, but for witness and testimony, to the end and purpose of the salvation of others.

In all the above, what I have issue with here is that many who profess to be born-again believers sing this hymn and do not understand that it flatly contradicts the Scripture and its teaching of the eternal security of the believer in Christ. In short, we sing a song that teaches something that opposes our very own doctrine, and we sing it without question or qualm. Plainly, there is something wrong here, and it is serious enough to make one wonder what else Bible-believing Baptists are involved in that also plainly contradicts the Scripture.

*Finis*