

Message Ten

The Flow of Life with the Ministry of Life out from and for the Magnificent House of God

Scripture Reading: Ezek. 47:1-12; 2 Cor. 3:6; 1 Cor. 9:11; 3:6, 9; 4:15; 3:2, 12

- Ezek 47:1 Then He brought me back to the entrance of the house, and there was water flowing out from under the threshold of the house to the east (for the house faced east); and the water flowed down below the south side of the house, on the south of the altar.
- Ezek 47:2 Then He brought me out by the way of the north gate and led me around on the way outside to the outer gate, on the way to the gate that faces east; and there the water was running out on the south side.
- Ezek 47:3 When the man went out to the east with the line in His hand, He measured a thousand cubits; and He led me through the water, water that was to the ankles.
- Ezek 47:4 Then He measured a thousand cubits and led me through the water, water that was to the knees. Then He measured a thousand cubits and led me through the water, water that was to the loins.
- Ezek 47:5 Then He measured a thousand cubits, and it was a river that I could not pass through; for the water had risen, enough water to swim in, a river that could not be crossed.
- Ezek 47:6 And He said to me, Son of man, have you seen this? Then He led me and brought me back along the bank of the river.
- Ezek 47:7 And when I returned, there were very many trees on the bank of the river, on one side and on the other.
- Ezek 47:8 Then said He to me, This water flows out toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah and goes to the sea; when it flows into the sea, the water of the sea is healed.
- Ezek 47:9 And every living creature which swarms in every place where the river goes shall live, and there will be very many fish when this water comes there. And the water of the sea shall be healed, and everything shall live wherever the river comes.
- Ezek 47:10 And fishermen will stand beside the sea from En-ge-di even to En-eglaim; it will be a place for the spreading of nets. Their fish shall be according to their kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea, very many.
- Ezek 47:11 But its swamps and its marshes will not be healed; they shall be left for salt.
- Ezek 47:12 And on the banks on both sides of the river will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail; but they will bring forth new fruit every month, because the water for them flows out of the sanctuary. And their fruit shall be for food, and their leaves for healing.
- 2 Cor 3:6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.
- 1 Cor 9:11 If we have sown to you the spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap from you the fleshly things?
- 1 Cor 3:6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth.
- 1 Cor 3:9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's cultivated land, God's building.
- 1 Cor 4:15 For though you have ten thousand guides in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.
- 1 Cor 3:2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food, for you were not yet able to receive it. But neither yet now are you able,
- 1 Cor 3:12 But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble,

I. In order to participate in God's ultimate move, we need to experience the flow of life out from the house of God—Ezek. 47:1-12:

- Ezek 47:1 Then He brought me back to the entrance of the house, and there was water flowing out from under the threshold of the house to the east (for the house faced east); and the water flowed down below the south side of the house, on the south of the altar.

Ezek 47:2 Then He brought me out by the way of the north gate and led me around on the way outside to the outer gate, on the way to the gate that faces east; and there the water was running out on the south side.

Ezek 47:3 When the man went out to the east with the line in His hand, He measured a thousand cubits; and He led me through the water, water that was to the ankles.

Ezek 47:4 Then He measured a thousand cubits and led me through the water, water that was to the knees. Then He measured a thousand cubits and led me through the water, water that was to the loins.

Ezek 47:5 Then He measured a thousand cubits, and it was a river that I could not pass through; for the water had risen, enough water to swim in, a river that could not be crossed.

Ezek 47:6 And He said to me, Son of man, have you seen this? Then He led me and brought me back along the bank of the river.

Ezek 47:7 And when I returned, there were very many trees on the bank of the river, on one side and on the other.

Ezek 47:8 Then said He to me, This water flows out toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah and goes to the sea; when it flows into the sea, the water of the sea is healed.

Ezek 47:9 And every living creature which swarms in every place where the river goes shall live, and there will be very many fish when this water comes there. And the water of the sea shall be healed, and everything shall live wherever the river comes.

Ezek 47:10 And fishermen will stand beside the sea from En-gedi even to En-eglaim; it will be a place for the spreading of nets. Their fish shall be according to their kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea, very many.

Ezek 47:11 But its swamps and its marshes will not be healed; they shall be left for salt.

Ezek 47:12 And on the banks on both sides of the river will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail; but they will bring forth new fruit every month, because the water for them flows out of the sanctuary. And their fruit shall be for food, and their leaves for healing.

A. God's ultimate move is His move in man to deify man by saturating man with all that He is in His life, nature, element, and essence for the glory, the expression, of God—2 Cor. 3:18; 1 John 3:2.

2 Cor 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been manifested what we will be. We know that if He is manifested, we will be like Him because we will see Him even as He is.

B. The water flows out from under the threshold—Ezek. 47:1:

Ezek 47:1 Then He brought me back to the entrance of the house, and there was water flowing out from under the threshold of the house to the east (for the house faced east); and the water flowed down below the south side of the house, on the south of the altar.

1. In order for the water to flow, there must be a threshold, an opening—cf. Psa. 81:10.

Psa 81:10 I am Jehovah your God, / Who brought you up out of the land of Egypt; / Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.

2. If we draw closer to the Lord and have more contact with Him, there will be an opening that will allow the living water to flow out from the church—Hymns, #846.

Hymns #846

(1) Oh, may my spirit flow, Oh, may it flow!
 Now I beseech Thee, Lord Oh, may it flow!
 My past I would forsake, The iron walls would break,
 My spirit free would make; Oh, may it flow!

(2) Oh, may my spirit flow, Oh, may it flow!
 Now I implore Thee, Lord, Oh, may it flow!
 No more self-satisfied, No more in self-bound pride,
 No more my spirit tied; Oh, may it flow!
 (3) Oh, may my spirit flow, Oh, may it flow!
 For this I plead with Thee, Oh, may it flow!
 High-minded not to be, Pride shall not prison me,
 I'd flow unceasingly, In spirit flow.
 (4) Oh, may my spirit flow, Oh, may it flow!
 For this I seek Thee, Lord, Oh, may it flow!
 No more to isolate, Nor self to perfect make,
 My spirit nought abate, Deeply to flow.
 (5) Oh, may my spirit flow, Oh, may it flow!
 I ask Thee, gracious Lord, Oh, may it flow!
 My trust in self o'erthrow, Down from self's throne I'll go,
 That living water flow In spirit, Lord.
 (6) Oh, may my spirit flow, Oh, may it flow!
 Answer my prayer, dear Lord, Oh, may it flow!
 Not just commune with Thee, I long to builded be,
 Mingle with others free In spirit, Lord.

C. The flow is toward the east—Ezek. 47:1:

Ezek 47:1 Then He brought me back to the entrance of the house, and there was water flowing out from under the threshold of the house to the east (for the house faced east); and the water flowed down below the south side of the house, on the south of the altar.

1. The river of God flows in the direction of God's glory—cf. Num. 2:3; Ezek. 43:2.

Num 2:3 And those who encamp on the east side toward the sunrise shall be of the standard of the camp of Judah, according to their companies; and the leader of the children of Judah: Nahshon the son of Amminadab;

Ezek 43:2 And the glory of the God of Israel was there, coming from the way of the east, and His voice was like the sound of many waters, and the earth was illuminated with His glory.

2. If everyone in the church seeks and cares for God's glory, the living water will flow out from the church—John 7:18; 1 Cor. 10:31.

John 7:18 He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of Him who sent Him, this One is true, and unrighteousness is not in Him.

1 Cor 10:31 Therefore whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

D. The water flows out from the right side of the house—Ezek. 47:1:

Ezek 47:1 Then He brought me back to the entrance of the house, and there was water flowing out from under the threshold of the house to the east (for the house faced east); and the water flowed down below the south side of the house, on the south of the altar.

1. In the Bible the right side is the highest position, the first place—cf. Heb. 1:3.

Heb 1:3 Who, being the effulgence of His glory and the impress of His substance and upholding and bearing all things by the word of His power, having made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

2. The flow of life must have the preeminence within us, becoming the controlling factor in our living and work—Rev. 22:1; Col. 1:18b.

Rev 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

Col 1:18b ...He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

- E. The flowing is by the side of the altar, showing that we need the dealing of the cross and a full consecration to enjoy the flow of life—Ezek. 47:1.

Ezek 47:1 Then He brought me back to the entrance of the house, and there was water flowing out from under the threshold of the house to the east (for the house faced east); and the water flowed down below the south side of the house, on the south of the altar.

- F. For the increase of the flow of life, we need to be measured by the Lord as the man of bronze—40:3; 47:2-5; Rev. 1:15; cf. John 7:37-39:

Ezek 40:3 And He brought me there, and there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze, with a line of flax and a measuring reed in His hand, standing in the gate.

Ezek 47:2 Then He brought me out by the way of the north gate and led me around on the way outside to the outer gate, on the way to the gate that faces east; and there the water was running out on the south side.

Ezek 47:3 When the man went out to the east with the line in His hand, He measured a thousand cubits; and He led me through the water, water that was to the ankles.

Ezek 47:4 Then He measured a thousand cubits and led me through the water, water that was to the knees. Then He measured a thousand cubits and led me through the water, water that was to the loins.

Ezek 47:5 Then He measured a thousand cubits, and it was a river that I could not pass through; for the water had risen, enough water to swim in, a river that could not be crossed.

Rev 1:15 And His feet were like shining bronze, as having been fired in a furnace; and His voice was like the sound of many waters.

John 7:37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.

John 7:38 He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.

John 7:39 But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

1. To measure is to examine, test, judge, and possess—Isa. 6:1-8; Ezek. 42:20.

Isa 6:1 In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting on a high and lofty throne, and the train of His robe filled the temple.

Isa 6:2 Seraphim hovered over Him, each having six wings: With two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.

Isa 6:3 And one called to the other, saying: Holy, holy, holy, Jehovah of hosts; / The whole earth is filled with His glory.

Isa 6:4 And the foundations of the threshold shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke.

Isa 6:5 Then I said, Woe is me, for I am finished! / For I am a man of unclean lips, / And in the midst of a people of unclean lips I dwell; / Yet my eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts.

Isa 6:6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me with an ember in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs.

Isa 6:7 And he touched my mouth with it and said, Now that this has touched your lips, / Your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is purged.

Isa 6:8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send? Who will go for Us? And I said, Here am I; send me.

Ezek 42:20 He measured it on four sides. It had a wall all around, the length five hundred reeds and the width five hundred reeds, to make a separation between what was holy and what was common.

2. The four measurings of a thousand cubits, which is a complete unit (cf. Psa. 84:10), indicate that as creatures we need to be thoroughly measured by the Lord so that He may take over and thoroughly possess our entire being—Ezek. 47:2-5.

Psa 84:10 For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand; / I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God / Than dwell in the tents of the wicked.

Ezek 47:2 Then He brought me out by the way of the north gate and led me around on the way outside to the outer gate, on the way to the gate that faces east; and there the water was running out on the south side.

Ezek 47:3 When the man went out to the east with the line in His hand, He measured a thousand cubits; and He led me through the water, water that was to the ankles.

Ezek 47:4 Then He measured a thousand cubits and led me through the water, water that was to the knees. Then He measured a thousand cubits and led me through the water, water that was to the loins.

Ezek 47:5 Then He measured a thousand cubits, and it was a river that I could not pass through; for the water had risen, enough water to swim in, a river that could not be crossed.

3. The more we allow the Lord to examine, test, and judge us to possess us, the deeper the flow becomes; the depth of the flow depends on how much we have been measured by the Lord—cf. 1 John 1:5, 7.

1 John 1:5 And this is the message which we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from every sin.

4. The more we are measured by the Lord, the more we are restricted and limited by the flowing of the grace of life until eventually we are lost in and carried along by the flowing Triune God as a river in which to swim; in one sense we lose all our freedom, but in another sense we are really free—Ezek. 47:4-6.

Ezek 47:4 Then He measured a thousand cubits and led me through the water, water that was to the knees. Then He measured a thousand cubits and led me through the water, water that was to the loins.

Ezek 47:5 Then He measured a thousand cubits, and it was a river that I could not pass through; for the water had risen, enough water to swim in, a river that could not be crossed.

Ezek 47:6 And He said to me, Son of man, have you seen this? Then He led me and brought me back along the bank of the river.

G. The river causes everything to live—v. 9a:

Ezek 47:9a And every living creature which swarms in every place where the river goes shall live, and there will be very many fish when this water comes there....

1. Where the river flows, everything shall live and be full of life.

2. The flow of the river produces trees, fish, and cattle—vv. 7, 9-10, 12.

Ezek 47:7 And when I returned, there were very many trees on the bank of the river, on one side and on the other.

Ezek 47:9 And every living creature which swarms in every place where the river goes shall live, and there will be very many fish when this water comes there. And the water of the sea shall be healed, and everything shall live wherever the river comes.

Ezek 47:10 And fishermen will stand beside the sea from En-gedi even to En-eglaim; it will be a place for the spreading of nets. Their fish shall be according to their kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea, very many.

Ezek 47:12 And on the banks on both sides of the river will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail; but they will bring forth new

fruit every month, because the water for them flows out of the sanctuary. And their fruit shall be for food, and their leaves for healing.

H. The river waters the desert and heals the Dead Sea—v. 8:

Ezek 47:8 Then said He to me, This water flows out toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah and goes to the sea; when it flows into the sea, the water of the sea is healed.

1. The river waters the dry, parched land and heals the death waters.
2. This watering and healing are for the purpose of producing life.

I. The river is unable to heal the swamps and marshes—v. 11:

Ezek 47:11 But its swamps and its marshes will not be healed; they shall be left for salt.

1. A swamp or marsh is a neutral place, a halfway place, a place of compromise and lukewarmness—cf. Rev. 3:15-16.

Rev 3:15 I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot.

Rev 3:16 So, because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I am about to spew you out of My mouth.

2. For the flow of life and for the church life, we need to be absolute.
3. “If you are in the Lord’s recovery, be in the recovery absolutely, not halfway...The Lord Jesus desires and requires absoluteness...By being absolute we will be in the flow, and the flow will not be a trickle but a river to swim in. Then everything shall live where the river comes” (Life- study of Ezekiel, pp. 311-312).

II. Our enjoyment of Christ as the flow of life, the life-giving Spirit, is for us to be sowers, planters, waterers, begetters, feeders, and builders with the ministry of life for the marvelous organic building of God, the magnificent house of God:

A. A sufficient minister of the new covenant is a person who ministers life to others in order to help them grow in life—2 Cor. 3:6.

2 Cor 3:6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

B. A minister of life is a sower who sows spiritual seeds:

1. In 1 Corinthians 9:11 Paul says to the Corinthians, “We have sown to you the spiritual things”; the spiritual things refers to spiritual seeds.

1 Cor 9:11 If we have sown to you the spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap from you the fleshly things?

2. A seed is a container of life, and to sow a spiritual seed is to impart life in, with, and out of our spirit.

3. The Lord Jesus came as a Sower to sow Himself as the seed of life into the human race—Matt. 13:3, 37.

Matt 13:3 And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, Behold, the sower went out to sow.

Matt 13:37 And He answered and said, He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man;

4. In the Lord’s recovery we, as ministers of the new covenant, need to be sowers who impart life to grow and produce Christ in others.

- C. A minister of life is a planter who plants Christ into God’s people—1 Cor. 3:6:
 1 Cor 3:6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth.
1. The believers, who have been regenerated in Christ with God’s life, are God’s cultivated land, God’s farm, in God’s new creation—v. 9.
 1 Cor 3:9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's cultivated land, God's building.
 2. In order for us to plant Christ into others, we need the genuine experience of Christ as life in our spirit.
- D. A minister of life is a waterer who waters people with Christ—v. 6:
 1 Cor 3:6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth.
1. Once we plant Christ into others, we need to water them with the water of life—Rev. 22:17.
 Rev 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is thirsty come; let him who wills take the water of life freely.
 2. We may liken a waterer in God’s farm to an irrigation system with a reservoir that supplies a farm with water; we should be a divine “irrigation system” with a reservoir of living water stored within us to water the church as God’s farm.
 3. We need to have the genuine experience of Christ as the water of life and a living contact with Him so that we can be a channel of living water, a divine irrigation system, that can supply others with the water of life—John 4:14; 7:37-39.
 John 4:14 But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall by no means thirst forever; but the water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water springing up into eternal life.
 John 7:37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.
 John 7:38 He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.
 John 7:39 But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.
- E. A minister of life is a begetter, a father, who imparts life to his children, whom he begets—1 Cor. 4:15:
 1 Cor 4:15 For though you have ten thousand guides in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.
1. To beget is to generate spiritual children, to bring them forth, through the impartation of life.
 2. We need to have the divine “life germ” in order to impart the divine life into others so that they may be begotten as children of God.
- F. A minister of life is a feeder; feeding is a matter of life; it differs from teaching, which is a matter of knowledge:
1. To give milk to drink or food to eat is to feed others—3:2.
 1 Cor 3:2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food, for you were not yet able to receive it. But neither yet now are you able,
 2. What the apostle ministered to the Corinthian believers seemed to be knowledge; actually, it was milk (not yet solid food), and it should have nourished them.

3. The sound teaching of the apostles ministers the healthy teaching as the supply of life to people, either nourishing them or healing them—1 Tim. 1:10b; 6:3; 2 Tim. 1:13; Titus 1:9.

1 Tim 1:10b ...and whatever other thing that is opposed to the healthy teaching,

1 Tim 6:3 If anyone teaches different things and does not consent to healthy words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching which is according to godliness,

2 Tim 1:13 Hold a pattern of the healthy words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

Titus 1:9 Holding to the faithful word, which is according to the teaching of the apostles, that he may be able both to exhort by the healthy teaching and to convict those who oppose.

G. A minister of life is a builder who builds with gold, silver, and precious stones—1 Cor. 3:12:

1 Cor 3:12 But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble,

1. Gold symbolizes God the Father in His divine nature, silver symbolizes Christ in His redemptive work, and precious stones signify the Spirit in His transforming work (this is versus wood, which signifies the human nature; grass, which signifies man in the flesh; and stubble, which signifies lifelessness).

2. Song of Songs portrays that in the proper church life the perfected believers coordinate with the transforming Spirit to perfect Christ's loving seekers by ministering the Triune God to them for their transformation by the Triune God's attributes being wrought into them to become their virtues—1:10-11.

S S 1:10 Your cheeks are lovely with plaits of ornaments, / Your neck with strings of jewels.

S S 1:11 We will make you plaits of gold / With studs of silver.

3. This is for the building up of the church as the organic Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem for the accomplishing of God's eternal economy—1 Cor. 3:12; Rev. 21:18-21.

1 Cor 3:12 But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble,

Rev 21:18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

Rev 21:19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;

Rev 21:20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst.

Rev 21:21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was, respectively, of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.