

John 4:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Jesus shifts from physical water to 'living water,' a rabbinic term for running water but here meaning the Holy Spirit and eternal life. His statement 'If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is' points to two connected truths: salvation as gift (not earned) and Christ's identity as giver. Reformed theology emphasizes that regeneration by the Spirit is prerequisite to recognizing Christ's person and benefits.

Historical Context

'Living water' in Judaism referred to spring water versus cistern water, used for ritual purification. Jesus transforms this physical metaphor into spiritual reality, as He does with many Jewish concepts throughout John's Gospel.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing salvation as 'gift' rather than wage transform our approach to God?
2. What must happen for us to truly 'know' who Jesus is, beyond intellectual acknowledgment?

Interlinear Text

ἀπεκρίθη	Ἰησοῦς	καὶ	εἶπεν	αὐτὸν	Εἰ	ᾔδεις	τὴν		
answered	Jesus	and	said	of him	If	thou knewest	G3588		
G611	G2424	G2532	G2036	G846	G1487	G1492			
δωρεὰν	τοῦ	θεοῦ	καὶ	τίς	ἐστίν	ὁ	λέγων	σοι	ἔδωκεν
the gift	G3588	of God	and	who	it is	G3588	that saith	thee	Give
G1431		G2316	G2532	G5101	G2076		G3004	G4671	G1325
μοι	πιεῖν,	σὺ	ἂν	ἤτησας	αὐτὸν	καὶ	ἔδωκεν	ἂν	
me	to drink	thou	he would	have asked	of him	and	Give	he would	
G3427	G4095	G4771	G302	G154	G846	G2532	G1325	G302	
σοι	ὕδωρ	ζῶν							
thee	water	living							
G4671	G5204	G2198							

Additional Cross-References

John 4:14 (Parallel theme): 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.

Revelation 7:17 (References God): For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Isaiah 44:3 (Parallel theme): For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

Revelation 21:6 (Parallel theme): And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

John 3:16 (References God): For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Jeremiah 2:13 (Parallel theme): For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

Revelation 22:17 (Parallel theme): And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Zechariah 14:8 (Parallel theme): And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.

1 Corinthians 10:4 (Parallel theme): And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

Romans 8:32 (Parallel theme): He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?