

Holy Water Study Guide

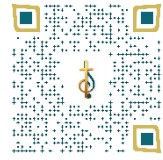
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HOLY WATER by We The Kingdom

Verse 1

*God I'm on my knees again,
God I'm begging please again
I need You, Oh I need You*

It almost sounds cliché, doesn't it? Like "christian-ese" sentiment. Until you've been there, desperately feeling like your spiritual life has shriveled up, and longing for that relationship with God to be restored. Every aspect of your life suddenly feels empty and meaningless. You try digging your way out of a deep funk, but you can barely drag yourself to the edge of the bed to put two feet on the floor in the mornings. "What the heck is wrong with me?" you may wonder.

Maybe it's not just cliché. Maybe the world throws terms like "Christian-ese" around to discredit a need for a personal relationship with our Creator.

In the previous lesson "Make Me A River" we hit on that Biblical truth. We were created with a hungry heart that constantly searches for something to fill the void. Read Psalm 119:20 and Psalm 119:81. How does the scripture describe this deep need for fulfillment?

Verse 1 (continued)

*Walking down these desert roads
Water for my thirsty soul
I need You, Oh I need You*

The second half of verse 1 is ripped almost word for word out of another of King David's psalms. Read and highlight Psalm 63:1, and copy it here.

Later, in Psalm 143, the king describes his longing in much more graphic detail. Read the chapter and highlight verses 3-6. What kind of emotional state is he going through? Are you able to relate to his frame of mind? If you can, write a little about that time below. Remember nobody has to see this other than you.

Verse 2

***Dead man walking, slave to sin
I wanna know about being born again
I need You, Oh God I need You***

Read Romans 6:1-6, highlighting verses 2 and 6. Scripturally speaking, the wording above is a little convoluted, but it does accurately convey the status of an unbeliever, particularly about being enslaved. Ephesians does a little better job with the dead man walking. Read and highlight Eph. 2:1-5, and copy v. 1 below.

The next line says I want to know about being born again. If someone were to ask you what it means to be born again, could you tell them?

There's a classic story about Jesus answering this question to Nicodemus in John 3:1-21. But it may not be the most easily understood. Read and highlight 1 Peter 1:3 and Titus 3:5. In your own words, based on those verses, explain "born again" as you would to someone who is struggling to understand.

Verse 2 (continued)

*So take me to the riverside
Take me under, baptize
I need you, Oh God I need You, oh*

Of course, baptism can happen in any body of water, it doesn't have to be a riverside. The first baptisms as a call to repentance took place in a river and were done by John the Baptist (Matthew 11:3-6). Today, though it still symbolizes repentance, it also represents identifying with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

Chorus

*Your forgiveness
Is like sweet sweet honey on my lips
Like the sound of a symphony to my ears
Like holy water (on my skin)*

There is a little poetic license taken here, as there is no specific scripture that describes forgiveness in this way. However, the description of God's grace is one of being totally immersed, wrapped up in comfort, peace, and total satisfaction.

David was more than just a king, he was a singer and a song writer, and is known for his poetic imagery. In Psalm 19:10 he describes God's righteousness as being more precious than gold and sweeter than honey. When God led the Israelites through 40 years of wandering, their journey eventually ended in Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey. A quick search of you Bible will result in so many references to this throughout the Old Testament that it will make your head spin. Honey was a symbol of richness and delight.

But is God's voice like a symphony? Let's consider some musical terminology. In music, the term "niente" directs the performers to gradually fade the music until you can barely hear it. In 1 Kings 19 Elijah had fled for his life after he had killed Ahab's (false) prophets. He spent the night in a cave and awoke to God instructing him to step out onto the mountain because the Lord was about to pass by. Read chapter 19, and highlight verse 12. How is God's voice described?

Pretty quiet, huh?

Now, a trumpet is an instrument that often precedes a call to action, or the presence of royalty. In Exodus 19:16-19 and in Hebrews 12:19 God's voice is compared to a trumpet blast, loud like thunder, so loud that shook the earth and struck terror into the Israelites. In Revelation 1:15,

and many other places, the voice of our Lord sounds like the rush of many waters, which brings to my mind some percussion instruments, such as the geophone or “ocean drum” which mimics the sound of crashing waves. There are a number of other descriptions of His voice, all conveying majestic authority, but for the purpose of this lyric, a symphony is a reasonable description!

But what about Holy Water on my skin? Is there such a thing? Read Matthew 3:11. In this verse, what is referred to as Holy? Is it the water of baptism, or is it something (someone) different?

Leviticus, a comprehensive book of laws, talks a lot about purifying oneself in the instance of being unclean. There are lots of instances, if you would like to read chapter 15. However, these all refer to bathing or washing. Not one verse refers to bathing with water that is somehow holy. The use of water as being something holy is steeped in Catholic tradition rather than scripture.

There is a but here... maybe a little one, but still a but. The Holy Spirit, as we learned in last week’s lesson on “Make Me A River” is the water of life... the living water. And, He’s holy. But while He flows through us, there’s no reference that I can find of feeling Him on our skin. For that matter, scripture itself never refers to Him as “holy water”.

How is the line about (and the concept of) holy water deceptive? Why does it matter?

This is why we do these lessons. We learn how to examine scripture and make sure what we are hearing lines up. If you recall back in lesson 1, “The Truth”, we discussed how Satan uses subtle deception to lead us astray. In this song, the idea of water being holy falsely attributes holiness with something that was created, rather than He who created it.

Music is one of his favorite methods of deceit. In the KJV and NKJV, the Hebrew language describes Satan as having been of such beauty with all kinds of precious stones as well as timbrels and pipes. Because the English translation of the words for timbrels and pipes is debated theologically, later translations read differently. Still, in Isaiah 14:11 we find this, where Satan was being addressed through the King of Tyre: “Your pomp has brought you down to Sheol, along with the music of your harps” (viols in some translations). That seems to be where the belief that Satan was the “music leader” in heaven before the fall came from.

Whether timbrels and pipes, and harps or viols, are literally Satan embodied in musical instruments or not, there is no doubt that the effect of music on humanity is powerful. When

we're angry, we listen to much different music than we do when we're sad, or happy. Not only does it effect our mood, it affects our physical responses. Mellow music is relaxing, faster or harder beats are going to get our heart rate moving.

It also affects our worldview, including our theological beliefs. We may forget what the sermon topic was about before we get home from church, but a song we heard that morning may stick in our head all week. The repetition becomes part of our belief system, taking our worship and turning it inward instead of upward. Worse, actually, because Satan is the one being honored when God is not. Throughout scripture, music was used to worship false Gods. A couple of examples are the story of the golden calf, and the image of Nebuchadnezzar.

Bridge

***I don't wanna abuse Your grace
God I need it ev'ry day
It's the only thing that ever really
Makes me wanna change***

I love this chorus. We should always be careful not to abuse God's grace. We do need it daily, and His mercies are new every morning. His compassion never fails. Read and highlight Lamentations 3:22-23. His grace and goodness are what call us to turn from our sin. Read and highlight Romans 2:4.

That begs the question, should we be even listening to songs that fail to line up with scripture? That's not for me to decide for you. Personally, I have always loved this song, although the line about holy water always nagged at me. It was only during the writing of this lesson that I understood why. My purpose has always been to teach how to recognize when something is amiss. And I'm learning as I teach! But what you do with that information is between you and God.

For further reading that delves a little deeper into how and why Satan uses music to inject a misunderstanding of scripture, take a look at <https://www.my3bc.com/34852-2/>

When you pray, ask God to give you wisdom and discernment about the music you listen to.

Challenge: This week as you go about your daily life, offer a "hey... you matter" card to at least one person that seems to be hurting. Bonus points if you write a little note on the inside of the card. If you have already met this challenge in previous weeks, up the challenge and pass out two!