

Warm Water

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Preamble

Hi, I am John from Willows, and thank you for joining me for today's devotion on this Thursday, the 16th of October, 2025. A PDF with the full text, references, and some study resources can be downloaded from willows.org.za/devotions.

Introduction

In thinking and praying about today's devotion, two expressions came to mind. The first speaks about landing in hot water, while the second is basically a parable, which I'm sure you've heard. In short, it is about how if you put a frog in water and then slowly turn up the heat, it realises the danger once it is too late — after the heat has sapped it of the strength it needs to jump out. When we land in hot water, we know about the heat immediately, and would most likely get out as soon as possible, but if we are in warm water, we need to be very careful that we get out before it's too late, but before we continue, let us pray.

*Dear Lord God, thank You for not only showing us Your Way, but through Jesus living Your Way. Thank you, Jesus, that You offered Yourself for us and that in You we have the strength of overcome the wiles of Satan. Help us to be attentive to You, O Holy Spirit, as we live our lives in the light of Your love.
Amen.*

Devotion

Over the past number of years, God has been showing me more and more how important it is that our lives bear witness to the fact that we have been made new. It's one of those things which is so obvious when we think about it for even a moment, but it's actually *really hard*. Hard as in a lot of *hard work*, and also as in *difficult to do*. Yet, The Bible is chock-a-block with exhortations to live our lives well. The point always, though, is that it is meant to be in full reliance on God, and also that it is meant to be an expression of our love for God. This means that how we live our lives has nothing to do with wanting to get God's love, because we have it already, but rather that we live our lives *as He wants us to* because we have been made new and *want* to please Him.

Because we have been made new, we are not the same as we were. Jesus put it this way in Luke 6:43–45

For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

We have all probably heard or even read this, yet when I look at my own life, I see years of selfishness and being oblivious to the hurt I was causing simply by how I lived my life — not to mention my so-called witness. Here's the thing: I know that this is the case for many of us in the church, and I know it in the same way that the world does — by looking at how we live.

There is hope, though! In Luke 11:9–13 Jesus speaks of us receiving when we ask, and it is in the context of having a need fulfilled. He concludes in verse 13 by saying this:

If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!

In John chapters 14, 15, and 16 Jesus promised The Holy Spirit¹ and that He would guide us into all the truth. The hope we have in this context is that we simply need to ask God! Just be ready for the answer, because it will include letting go of ourselves and following Him, taking on His burden and His yoke.²

Now back to that frog I mentioned. If we allow ourselves to remain in so-called warm water when we are instead meant to be in the stream of living water, then it is possible that we will wake up to that fact when it is too late, because over time it numbs us to the fact that we are where we are not meant to be. There are signs, and we need to be aware of them. In Mark 13:28 Jesus says 'From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near.' Just as no-one becomes a star athlete in a day, so people take time to fall. It is time spent in warm water which slowly became too hot.

Conclusion

This has not been a long devotion in terms of time, but my prayer is that its effects will be very long — in fact, eternal. Ask God to show you where in your life you are in warm water, but not of the good kind. Ask God also to help you to get out of the situation, whether by removing yourself, removing any external factors, by His intervention causing things and people to change, or a combination.

If God has been tugging at your heart and your words or deeds have been pricking your conscience, then call out to Him for help! Remember David's cry in Psalm 139:23–24 and make it your own:

Search me, O God, and know my heart!
Try me and know my thoughts!

And see if there be any grievous way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting!

We know that The Bible tells us that while God *loves* everyone, there will be a day where punishment and reward are both in play. Then we will see the effect of Jesus's sacrifice on both those who believe and those who deny it. So my plea is this: get out of the warm water and into the stream of living water. Drink from the fountain of life and may your life be a witness of the change that God has done in you and which you are now living out on purpose, and not by accident.

1 See John 14:15–17, 25, 15:26, 16:12–15.

2 See Matthew 11:25–30.

I conclude with recommending that you read Ezekiel chapter 18, thoughtfully and prayerfully. Core to understanding it is verse 23: ‘Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord God, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live?’

Let us pray.

O Father, thank You so very much for giving us Your Son. Thank You, Jesus, that You did nothing of Your own accord, but only what You saw The Father doing³. Help us, O Lord, to do the same. You sent Your Holy Spirit to guide us into all the truth: please help us to follow your guidance, O Holy Spirit, that our lives may reflect Your glory and that we may be pure vessels as You shine Your light through us.

Amen.

Specific References

What is the significance of Meribah in the Bible?, an article at <https://www.gotquestions.org/Meribah-in-the-Bible.html>, retrieved 2025-09-22.

Why was Moses not allowed to enter the Promised Land?, an article at <https://www.gotquestions.org/Moses-promised-land.html>, retrieved 2025-09-22.

General Bible Resources

[Most of the original language information (including Strong’s concordance) is via the Bible Hub site.]

This list is alive in that I update it as I go along — I just don’t update all the instances of it, so see my latest devotion has the then-current one. At some point I’ll probably put it on the web somewhere and update that, but for now this is it. Also note that I don’t check each link for its continued existence... .

There are some points in these resources where you (and I) may think differently. Just don’t throw the baby out with the bath water — consider what is said, read widely in The Word, and pray to God that He would keep you from heresy as you continue in your study of His Word. Though I find the following resources useful in many ways, *each* has its points where at the very least I go, ‘Mmm. Not so sure about that. I need to look into that more deeply.’

<https://www.stepbible.org/> is an incredible resource if you want to look at the original language. When you use it on a PC and you hover over certain links you get more information without having to click.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+1%3A1&version=ESVUK> is a brilliant collection of Bible translations. I tend to use the ESV-UK version: a solid translation in English.

<https://biblehub.com> is an enormous collection of resources. They have commentaries, concordances, Bible dictionaries, and more. Unless otherwise specified, this is where I get the information on the original languages.

<https://www.gotquestions.org> intends to provide answers to common questions about The Bible. While there is a core doctrinal point (predestination) on which I differ, there are many insightful answers.

<https://www.thebibleunpacked.net> is a rather unusual set of resources. At its core is a free book exploring core concepts of Christianity, but the book is available in seven editions! The smallest is just four ‘pages’ (each the size of a credit card) while the largest is 2,424 pages of A4 material. The two main areas are

3 See John 5:19 ff.

‘What to Know’ and ‘What to Do’, which is an excellent balance. You can get an overview of the structure and topics at <https://www.thebibleunpacked.net/whats-inside>.

These should be sufficient to get you going, but a word of warning: many ‘fringe’ sites (and some sects) go to great lengths to make their public / introductory material seem completely main-stream, so you really need to be on your guard.