



Community Group Discussion Guide

“Live in the Overflow”

February 23, 2014

Read John 7:25 – 44

Jesus came to Jerusalem secretly to attend the Festival of Tabernacles, because the Jewish leaders wanted to kill him. He faced increasing resistance and opposition from the Jewish leaders and some of the Jews because of his teaching about his identity and for the miraculous signs he performed.

The Festival of Tabernacles was a seven-day event that commemorated Israel’s 40 years of wandering in the desert, living in tents, struggling for food and water (This points to how our temporary life in this world is like living in a dry, barren desert). They celebrated how God provided for Israel in the desert by providing running water from a rock that accompanied them; a bread-like substance called manna; and even quail as meat to eat.

They also celebrated how God would continue to provide for them. The Festival of Tabernacle was the final harvest festival of Israel’s year. Jews would come to Jerusalem and live in tents for a week and take part in a water pouring ceremony every day. The priests and the people would process to the pool of Siloam with joyful singing and music, and then draw water out with clay jars and process back to the temple. There they poured the water out on the altar for the burnt offering sacrifice. They repeated this for six days and on the seventh day they would repeat this procession six times. The Jews did this as a prayer that God would pour out rain on their fields and provide abundant crops. But, they also did this water pouring ceremony to strengthen their hope that one day God would fulfill his promise through the prophets to pour out his Spirit on all people (Joel 2:28). One day God would cause the living water of the Spirit to flow from the temple to provide healing for the nations (Ezekiel 47:1-12)

On the last and great day of the festival, Jesus invited everyone to see him as the fulfillment of this festival. He invites everyone, “come to me and drink.” As God in human flesh, Jesus is the temple of God’s presence. And he has come to pour out the love of God for us. Just as the water was poured on the altar of sacrifice, so on the altar of the cross God the Father poured out his love, when Jesus sacrificed his life for us. There at the cross Jesus was glorified in his sacrifice of love so the Spirit could pour God’s love into our hearts, and overflow from our hearts like rivers of living water. By putting our trust in Jesus each day we receive the living waters of the Spirit that fill up the empty love tanks of our hearts with the love of God. Jesus now calls us to live in the overflow of the Spirit’s love that comes from him in our marriages, our families, and in all our relationships.

Describe a time recently when your “love tank” was empty and you didn’t respond well under pressure. How would your life be different if you daily lived in the overflow of the Spirit’s love?

Keeping in mind this life we have in Jesus, discuss together the questions at the end of chapters 7 and 8 in the book *Real Simplicity: Making Room for Life*. How can the life we have in Jesus change the way we live our lives?