

WEEK 2: PERSPECTIVE – HE GIVES LIFE THROUGH PRISTINE CHURCHES

Series: Perspective (Holy Church Vision Series)

Date: 9 February 2026 (Week 2 of 3)

Subtitle: The Waters Are Already Flowing

Text: Ezekiel 47:6-12 + John 7:37-39

BRIDGE FROM WEEK 1

Last week we saw that our job as a Church isn't to dream up a vision for our lives and then ask God to bless it. Rather, it is to:

Henry Blackaby - *Experiencing God*

| Watch to see where God is working and join Him in His work

And so our first perspective - what we see God doing - is:

PERSPECTIVE 1: HE IS RAISING UP PRISTINE CHURCHES.



Pure, clear, uncluttered. **Beauty in the simplicity**-type Churches. Pristine isn't polished performance. It's pure dependence on God.

But pristine doesn't mean static or inward. The Spirit who makes us holy is the same Spirit who flows within and through us.

I want to look again at Ezekiel 47:1-12, which we took a quick glance at last week, but this week it holds the essence of our second perspective for the year. The second answer to: **WHAT DO YOU SEE?**

PERSPECTIVE 2: HE GIVES LIFE THROUGH PRISTINE CHURCHES.

For Ezekiel's audience - Israel in exile, the original temple has been destroyed and lies in ruins, they're longing for freedom and restoration. God gives Ezekiel a vision to encourage Israel.

Ezekiel 47:1-12 - nrsv

¹ Then he brought me back to the entrance of the temple; there, water was flowing from below the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east); and the water was flowing down from below the south end of the threshold of the temple, south of the altar. ² Then he brought me out by way of the north gate, and led me around on the outside to the outer gate that faces toward the east; and the water was coming out on the south side. ³ Going on eastward with a cord in his hand, the man measured one thousand cubits [~450m], and then led me through the water; and it was ankle-deep. ⁴ Again he measured one thousand, and led me through the

water; and it was knee-deep. Again he measured one thousand, and led me through the water; and it was up to the waist. ⁵ Again he measured one thousand, and it was a river that I could not cross, for the water had risen; it was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be crossed. ⁶ He said to me, "Mortal, have you seen this?" Then he led me back along the bank of the river. ⁷ As I came back, I saw on the bank of the river a great many trees on the one side and on the other. ⁸ He said to me, "This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah; and when it enters the sea, the sea of stagnant waters, the water will become fresh. ⁹ Wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish, once these waters reach there. It will become fresh; and everything will live where the river goes. ¹⁰ People will stand fishing beside the sea from Engedi to En-eglaim; it will be a place for the spreading of nets; its fish will be of a great many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea. ¹¹ But its swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they are to be left for salt. ¹² On the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing."

The temple was the heart of Israel's worship, the place where heaven met earth. The river Ezekiel saw flowing from its threshold was never just water. It was God's own life-giving presence, inviting His people ever deeper into relationship, obedience, trust, and fellowship.

For Israel, even their deepest devotion often felt limited - like walking ankle-deep, but never fully surrendering to the current, held back by idolatry - taking their eyes off of God so never plunging into the depths with Him. The river called, but they could never quite let go.

We read the measuring: ankle-deep, knee-deep, waist-deep, swimming-deep. But notice what the guide was actually doing. He wasn't just marking distance. He was **leading Ezekiel through the water, step by deepening step.**

the man measured one thousand cubits and then led me through the water. Again he measured ... and led me through the water.

God's ancient question to Israel, and His question to every one of us today, is the same: **How deep will you let Me take you?** When you consider your fellowship with God: **What do you see, mortal?** Is it:

- **Ankle-deep?:** You're in the water, but still in control. Walking normally. You can step out anytime. This is spiritual interest. Awareness. Not dependence. For Israel, this might be the initial call to obey the law - dipping toes into God's ways.
- **Knee-deep?:** The current tugs. Movement is affected. Harder to turn quickly. The Spirit has influence, but you're still upright, still choosing your path. Participation, but not surrender. Here, devotion deepens to prayer and sacrifice, yet self-reliance lingers.

- **Waist-deep?:** Balance shifts. The current could sweep you. You're vulnerable now. Working *with* the water, not just through it. Reliance - you know you need God - but your feet still touch bottom. Wading in His fellowship/friendship, but still walk where you want.
- **Swimming depth?:** No ground. You either float or drown. The river carries you completely. You're not walking anymore - you're **borne along by the current**. Pure dependence. Total immersion. For Israel, this full surrender often felt elusive - achievable in glimpses, yet never fully sustained. Always turning back to the idols in shallower waters.

What's noticeable is that: The shallow waters don't heal the Dead Sea.

The ankle-deep riverbanks don't produce trees. The knee-deep current doesn't fill nets with fish. The waist-deep flow doesn't make the most barren place teem with life.

When the waters reach swimming depth and flow out from the temple:

- Trees line both banks, bearing fruit every month. Leaves never wither; they bring healing. Sustained, effortless, seasonal nourishment.
- The Dead Sea - the most hopeless, salt-dead place - becomes fresh. Fishermen stand from En-ge-di to En-eglaim. Nets spread in the sun. Absurd. Impossible. **Except by God's full presence.**
- Swamps and marshes remain salty. Not everything nor everyone yields. Some places refuse the current.

The river has purpose. Wherever it arrives: **life**.

Ezekiel followed. Four measures. One thousand cubits each. 2km in total. Until he stood on the bank of the un-crossable river, surrounded by life, and the guide asked: **"Mortal, have you seen this?"** (v. 6).

WHAT DO YOU SEE GOD DOING? Seeing it changes everything.

MOVEMENT 2: THE RIVER FULFILLED – JESUS REVEALS THE SPIRIT AND LEADS US DEEPER

What Ezekiel saw was life-giving water surging from the temple's threshold - a vision not frozen in ancient scrolls, but a prophecy reenacted yearly at the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem.

Picture this:

600 hundred years after Ezekiel wrote this, Jesus stood in the rebuilt temple's courts during the Feast of Tabernacles. Tents sprawled across the city and for seven exhilarating days, celebration and joy. Each day a priest strode to the Pool of Siloam. With a golden pitcher/jug in hand, he scooped up the cool waters - symbol of renewal - and led a triumphant procession back through the Water Gate.

Trumpets blared, voices soared singing and quoting Psalms (113–118). As the priest ascended the altar for the sacred water offering - he poured it forth alongside wine, while the crowds declared Isaiah 12:3: "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation!"

The core text of Jewish oral tradition written down around 200 AD, states:

anyone who has not seen the incomparable Rejoicing at the Water-Drawing - has never known real joy.

This was an elated invocation, drawing from Zechariah 14 and imploring God to unleash Ezekiel 47's river anew - healing the barren, reviving the Dead Sea, making desolate places burst with life.

In this whirlwind of worship ...

On the last day – the great day, the climax, when the ceremony reaches its highest point – Jesus stands up and *cries out*:

John 7:37-39 - nrsv

³⁷ ... "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, ³⁸ and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" ³⁹ Now he said this about the Spirit.

No longer "from the temple will flow." Not "someday God will restore it." **Now, the believer's heart will flow . Your heart. My heart.**

He's standing there watching them pour water at the altar, re-enacting Ezekiel, and He says: *I am the fulfilment. I am the temple Ezekiel saw - the source of the river of living water. This source will spring up in the heart of anyone who believes in Me.*

Paul saw it: "You are God's temple... the Spirit dwells in you" (1 Cor 3:16 – plural you). The whole structure grows into a holy temple (Eph 2:21-22).

There is a dual invitation here:

1. **Are you in the water?** Do you believe in Jesus. Has He given you His Spirit?
2. **How deep have you gone?"** How far have you followed Him into the depths of fellowship and devotion - where this life extends beyond you and is given/flows to others.

The deeper the surrender, the greater the Gospel impact. The more completely you are carried by the current, the more rivers of living water pour out - making disciples, healing the broken, reviving the barren.

The Priesthood of All is not decoration. Every household, every DG, every saint in Liberty is a channel for the river of the Holy Spirit. The same Ezekiel river - now fulfilled in Christ and powered by the Spirit - flows from hearts at work, at gym, at braais, at the school gate, at dinner tables, at family devotions, at the beach, while cleaning the house.

Rivers flowing from Christ → into every believer → out into the world.

Christian, Let Him take you deeper. And watch what flows out of you when He does.

The **personal depth** → **outward life** connection is unmistakable and repeated - so the hearer cannot miss that surrender and impact are two sides of the same movement of the Spirit.

FOR US AS LIBERTY,

God showed us this years ago.

MICHELE

As I prayed on Tuesday for Mat and Lynzi, the Lord gave me a picture of a beautiful dam, the surface of which was smooth and glass like. It was full to the brim. I could see the dam wall and on the other side there was a big drop to another rather empty river below, and a sluice gate was open, and water was pouring from the sluice gate into the empty river below. As I asked the Lord what this was all about, the only sense I got was that Liberty was the full dam, and that the water pouring out was the overflow, maybe teachings/gifts being poured out into another pool/fellowship??? No further explanation came, and no specific scripture. Then this morning, a word came as I lifted Mat and Lynzi into His presence again:

"Don't hesitate or move to the left or to the right. Stay firm on the path I have set before you. You will feed many people with My heavenly food and anoint those who have a calling upon their lives. Set boundaries and produce the fruit that I have commanded. You know My voice, listen, and come to Me when you are in doubt. I will make your path clear. You will feed many nations and I will supply your need. I have spoken and I will do what I have said. Do not be afraid, I am with you. I will do all you ask of Me. Be still and know that I am God."

A beautiful dam - smooth, glass-like, full to the brim. Sluice gate open, water pouring into the empty river below.

That was five years ago. Do you hear the Ezekiel echo - now fulfilled in Jesus through the Spirit? Temple waters flowing outward, bringing life wherever they go. A dam full, sluice gate open, water pouring out. Similar picture. Same Spirit.

And it is not future tense. It is **present tense**.

The dam is Liberty. Full. Pristine. Glass-like. And the sluice gates are already open.

Look at what is already flowing:

- **Serving other churches.** People carrying what they received here to other fellowships - not lost, **released** with blessing. When someone leaves Liberty carrying the Spirit's deposit, that's the sluice gate working exactly as designed. We celebrate it.

- **TryPraying.** A simple booklet - a tool - to move the thirsty towards the Spring of Life.
- **Alpha.** A space where the fishermen along the Dead Sea shore can cast their nets out.
- **LibertyCare.** Trees bearing fruit, leaves for healing being offered.
 - Amani is going to her forever family.
- **Personal invitations.** The simplest, most powerful gate: "Come, just come!" Opening your home. Inviting someone to a gathering. Many of us are here because someone loved us enough to bring us to the Spring of Life - Jesus.
- **Discipleship Groups / Equip Groups.**

Mission/reaching the lost/disciple-making/ministering/serving/evangelising/a thousand other activities - all terms for sharing the rivers of living water with others.

One Church, different gifts in different spheres of life, but the same life-giving water to be shared with the parched and thirsty.

These are **disciple-making realities already happening.**

The river is not waiting for us to become perfect – it's flowing **because followers of Jesus have heeded His call to go deeper with Him.** And the Spirit is moving through them and bringing life and hope, not just to them, but this life is flowing from their hearts into the lives of others.

LANDING (PREPARATION FOR COMMUNION)

WHAT DID JOHN SEE?

Revelation 22:1-2 - nrsv

¹ Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

John sees the end: the river of life flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb, trees on both sides, leaves for the healing of the nations (Rev 22:1-2).

Ezekiel's vision → Jesus' promise → our present overflow → one day and eternal reality.

But, right now, our attention on Jesus, the two questions posed to you are:

1. **Are you in the water?** Do you believe in Jesus. Has He given you His Spirit? Have you stepped into the River of Life? Have you stood looking at your life and found yourself to be thirsty as in a parched land. Is Jesus

bidding you, COME, drink, and be satisfied? Believe in Me. Now is the time.

2. Christian, **How deep have you gone?"** How far have you followed Him into the depths of fellowship and devotion - where this life extends beyond you and is given/flows to others. This is not future reality. It is answering: **Mortal, what do you see? What has God been saying? Where has He been leading you, but you've refused to go?** Watch to see where God is working and join Him in His work.

IDOLS will keep us from devotion or DEVOTIONS will keep us from idols.

LINKED NOTES

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