

Jesus Christ: The Rock

John 4:5-26

Introduction

This week, we look at **CHRIST** as the **ROCK**. He is not to be confused with Dwayne Johnson, but is the Rock of ages of the hymn, found in *Isaiah 26:4*—*Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting rock*. We begin our study with the **Old Testament** reading.

Water from a Rock

The children of Israel are thirsty. I think it would be fair to say that this is not a casual thirst, but they really could **die** from this thirst. They are, after all, in the desert. But, instead of having faith in God, they complain to Moses, who in turn goes to God out of **fear** for his life. God directs Moses to *“Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink” (Exodus 17:5-6)*. Moses does as the Lord commands and water comes out, just as the Lord had said.

Christ Is the Rock

(Read **1 Corinthians 10:1-4**). St. Paul calls this **water** and the **rock spiritual**. By this he means that they were *supernaturally affected by God*. The rock and water were real, physical things. They were spiritual in the sense that God miraculously brought the water out of the rock. Paul is clear that *the rock was Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4)*. So, **CHRIST IS THE ROCK** that gives **water**.

The Water Christ Gives

The Israelites thirsted for **water**. They got **water**. Does Christ give this simple water? That seemed to be what the Samaritan woman thought. But it was a different kind of water that Christ was talking about (Read **John 4:10-15**).

Living Water

Jesus identifies this water in **verse 10** as *living water*. AUGUSTINE says: *Water issuing from a spring is what is commonly called living water. Water collected from rain in pools and cisterns is not called living water. It may have originally flowed from a spring; yet if it collects in some place and is left to stand without any connection to its source, separated, as it were, from the channel of the spring. It is not called “living water.” Water is designated as “living” when it is taken as it flows. This is the kind of water that was in that fountain.* This water flows from Jesus, its only Source. We can't get it anywhere else. We must be connected to Him to get living water.

Water of Righteousness

Jesus says that if you drink from this well (the Samaritan well), you will *be thirsty again (John 4:13)*. AUGUSTINE relates this to the *pleasures of the world*. They may be fun, but they don't satisfy. The pleasures of this world produce a neurochemical called **dopamine**. It creates a feeling of euphoria. But when it wears off, it leaves you with a craving for more. But the living water Christ offers is the water of

righteousness. Jesus says: *“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied” (Matthew 5:6).* His righteousness satisfies our longing; it doesn’t leave us craving more.

Water of Eternal Life

APOLLINARIS OF LAODICEA says: *Visible water can quench one’s thirst for a little while, but the unseen water cures one of thirst altogether because there is no longer a thirst for life when immortality is gushing forth on you. ... The Holy Spirit is what is freely being promised here.* The Spirit, given by Christ, produces **eternal life** in us, quenching our thirst for this life.

Christ’s Spirit and Power

HERACLEON says: *The water that the Savior gives is of His spirit and power.* His spirit and power are never **consumed** and never **perish**. They can never be **taken away** from us. They work life in us.

Water of Baptism

MAXIMUS OF TURIN says that *this is the water of Baptism that quenches the fires of hell.* At Baptism, hell loses its power over us, as one of the last three enemies defeated by Christ on the cross, **hell, death** and the **devil**.

Grace of the Spirit

CHRYSOSTOM identifies this water with the *grace of the Spirit.* This water alludes to the work of the Spirit in **cleansing** us and bringing **life**, so that, like a **productive garden**, we produce the **fruit of the Spirit**.

Means of Grace

When we look at what the church fathers say, it’s not a matter of choosing which one we think is best but seeing the water of Christ as a **combination** of all of these. It informs us of the richness of the blessings we receive in **Communion**. When we receive the **body and blood of Christ**, we receive His **RIGHTEOUSNESS, His SPIRIT AND POWER, the CLEANSING AND NOURISHMENT OF THE SPIRIT and ETERNAL LIFE**. Come to **CHRIST, OUR ROCK** and receive His living water today.

*May the peace of God,
Which passes all understanding,
Keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
