

The Power of Water

I just returned last Friday from a short getaway to Pedernales State Park near Johnson City. And what a beautiful park it is! You can tell from the name that the park surrounds a number of falls on the Pedernales River just to the east of Austin. Although they are nothing in size or magnificance when compared to, say, Niagara Falls, they are awe-inspiring nonetheless.

I have admitted to many who know me that I have a “thinking” problem. I said as much to the small group that met last Sunday night. I think I think too much sometimes. Things that I witness and experience generate thoughts in my mind that I can’t seem to stop. This is true of my trip to the Pedernales River.

The main thing I noticed was the powerful current. My son's family and I went to the only place that allowed “swimming” on the river, and the current was somewhat overwhelming, even though it was downstream a long distance from the actual falls for which the park is named. When we went to the actual falls, where there is no swimming, I understood why swimming was prohibited. The sheer power of the current could (and has) cause people to drown.

We all know that the power of water has been used to turn huge turbines that create electricity. Many of the first industries in the Northeast, mainly the textile industry, used water power to run their spinning machines and weaving looms. I went a number of years ago to the San Jose Mission in San Antonio and saw how Spanish priests diverted water from the San Antonio River to turn the grindstones in the mission granary.

Which brings me what I “thought” when I witnessed the power of water. Water is an integral part of the Christian life, and it has the power to do a number of things in our daily walk with Jesus Christ.

1. Water is used metaphorically to describe the Christians power to teach others about Christ. Jesus said in **John 7:37-38**:

“Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.”

John mentions that Jesus was referring to the Holy Spirit's power to change the lives of those who heard the words of Jesus and believed and obeyed them. The “sword of the Spirit”, God's word, Has the power to change the hearts of even the most sinful.

2. Water has the power to cleanse us as a church and make us presentable to God.. In **Ephesians 5:25-27**, Paul tells his readers:

“Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.”

3. Water, as contacted in baptism, has the power to save us. Peter says in **1 Peter 3:21-22**:

“this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities

and powers in submission to him.”

Just as Noah was saved from the sinful world by the waters of the flood, the waters of baptism also save us from our corrupt life.

4. Finally, water has the power to give us eternal life. John said in **Revelation 22:1, 17**:

“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb... The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let the one who hears say, “Come!” Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.”

A drink from the ***“river of the water of life”*** has the power to cause us to become immortal. Our resting place will be beside the ***“still waters”*** David speaks of in **Psalm 23**. Recognizing the power of God's water will assure us of our reward.

--- Johnny Stephens