

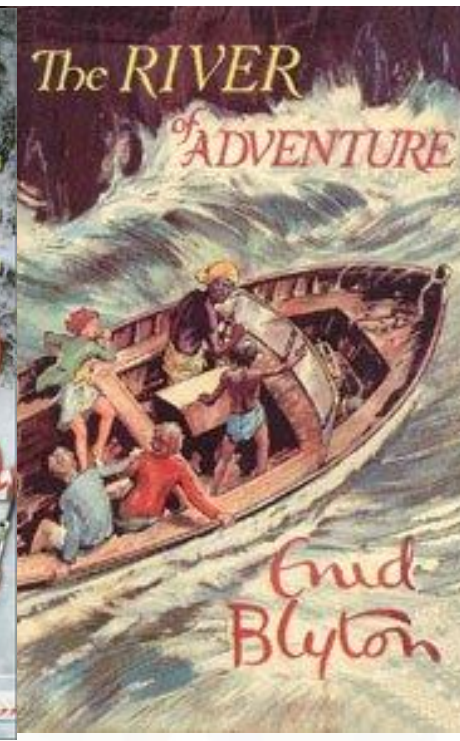
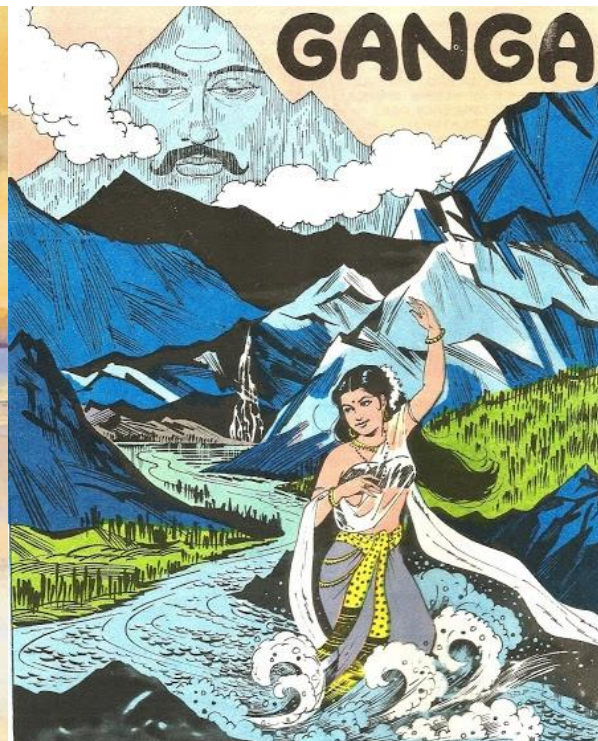
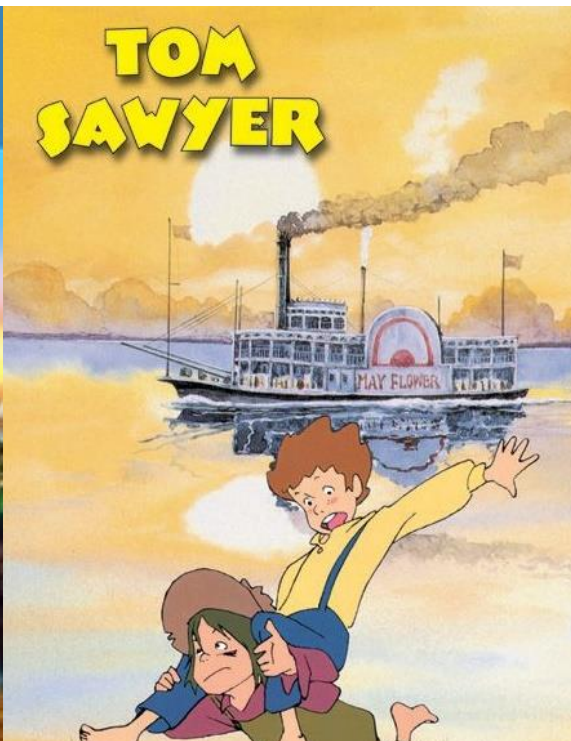
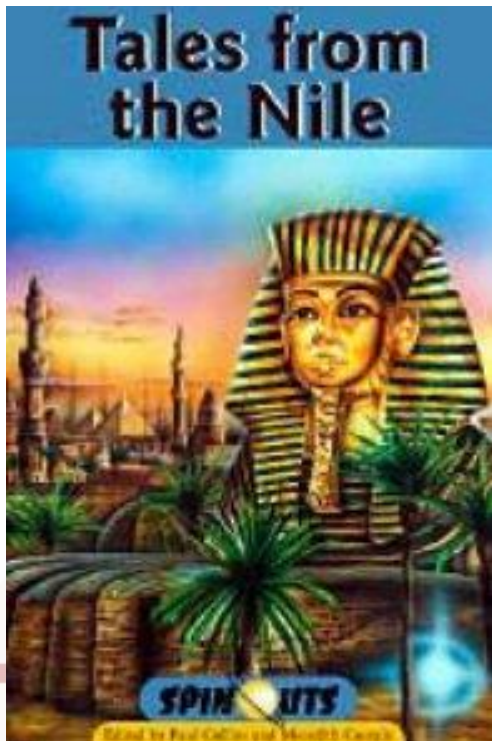


Streams, rivers, seas ... & mission

John 7

Rivers bring life & create stories

- Countless cities have been built on rivers and lakes
- Every culture has stories set on rivers
- And also in the Bible Genesis-Revelation, eg Isaiah 43, Jesus' baptism, and then there is THIS passage ...



John 7: 1-5 and 37-44

Jesus at the Festival of Tabernacles

1. After this, Jesus went around in Galilee. He did not want to go about in Judea because the Jewish leaders there were looking for a way to kill him. But when the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles was near, Jesus' brothers said to him, 'Leave Galilee and go to Judea, so that your disciples there may see the works you do. No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world.' For even his own brothers did not believe in him.

.....

37 On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, '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.' By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

On hearing his words, some of the people said, 'Surely this man is the Prophet.'

Others said, 'He is the Messiah.'

Still others asked, 'How can the Messiah come from Galilee? Does not Scripture say that the Messiah will come from David's descendants and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?' Thus the people were divided because of Jesus. Some wanted to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him.

Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and the Pharisees, who asked them, 'Why didn't you bring him in?' 'No one ever spoke the way this man does,' the guards replied.

A scenic view of a river with white-water rapids. The water is turbulent and foamy, cascading over rocks. The surrounding forest is in full autumn, with trees displaying vibrant shades of yellow, orange, and green. The scene is captured from a slightly elevated perspective, looking down the length of the river.

Questions?

- What festival was “Tabernacles”?
- What’s this about “the last day”?
- Why did Jesus cry out?

Quick background on this festival ...

- One of the big ones – held in Autumn
- “Tabernacle” = portable dwelling place
- For Israel to remember when they lived in tents
- 8 days long - you live in a booth
- For 7 days the priests march to the temple and pour out water
- The last day is special

Zechariah 14

¹⁶ Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord Almighty, and to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles.

... The Lord will bring on them the plague he inflicts on the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles

What was Jesus saying to them?

- Water ALREADY on peoples' minds
- Jesus chooses the moment of maximum impact
- A surprising statement ... but not new
- If anyone desires more ... come ... receive God's spirit ... it will flow
- IF anyone is thirsty ... some may not be

John 4

Jesus with the woman at the well

.... Jesus answered, 'Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.'

The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here

What was Jesus saying to them?

WHY

would they drink?

- The human soul has a natural thirst
- Free!
- Satisfying

HOW

would they drink?

- It's simple!
 - Spend time
 - Learn more
 - Step out ...

WHAT

is this new river?

- God's Holy Spirit
 - Transforms
 - Satisfies
 - You become a river maker

**Jesus's challenge on that day was for anyone wanting to go further
And ... it caused division**



***What does this mean for us?
In Lymm?
Today?***

It's easy to agree and move on ...

- Being salt, light, yeast, even a river of life-giving water – all sounds good
- But what does being a river of life-giving water mean ... specifically?
- Focused on this now for almost 6 months
- Rivers bring life, energy, drive, vitality ... BUT
 - What kind of flowing river is God calling us to here and now?
 - What will make us into a river of life giving water?

In discussion... TBC... TBD ...

RECAP – last week

- Maintain focus on communities and people
- This building ...
 - Is a vehicle for mission, it's not the mission
 - Is a way of directing the flow of this river, it's not the river
- Prepare for several decades – not about 2018
- Focus on the Vision – not bogged down in the detail

Today: continue to “frame” the discussion
So - what is our mission here in Lymm?



Questions?

- How do we know what God's mission is?
- How do we know God is asking US to do it?

What IS God's mission?

A mission to a town, neighbourhood – what does that look like?

Is It Mission?		Yes	No	Not Sure
<input type="checkbox"/>				
1	Trying to attract more church members			
3	Listening to Muslim neighbours explain why their religion is important to them			
4	Helping the local pagan society conserve nearby woodland			
5	Building a hydro-electric power station in Nepal			
6	Working as a doctor in West Africa			
7	Joining in marches as part of the Make Poverty History campaign			
8	Drinking Fair Trade coffee			
9	Trying to persuade your atheist friend to become a Christian			
10	Trying to persuade your Jewish neighbour to become a Christian			
12	Giving an invitation to a carol service to your local shop keeper			
13	Praying for another church member to be healed			
14	Taking an assembly in a local primary school			
16	Helping to plant a new church in Belgium			
18	Playing the piano for worship on a Sunday morning			
19	Being nice to the man at the bus stop			
20	Giving a tract to the man at the bus stop			

Are the above activities mission?

How do you define God's Mission?

People often make one of two mistakes

What IS God's mission?

A really easy definition

1. Is it missional? Check:

- *What kind of God do we have?*
- *What kind of world would he want?*
- *So what kind of church do we have to be?*

Eg God is ... Kind and Loving Just Community ...

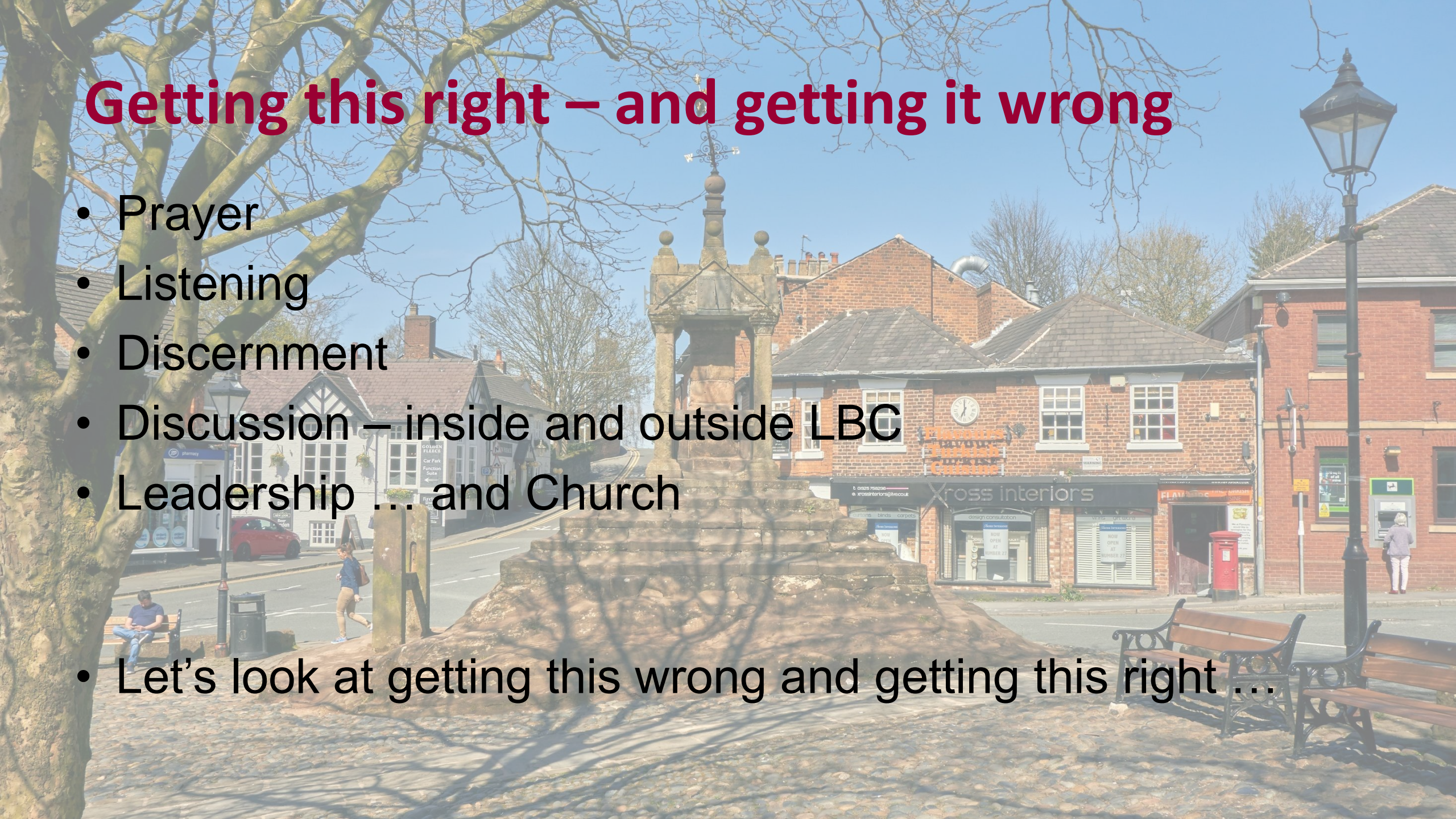
THEN:

2. *Is God calling us to this Here and Now?*

... **NOT** "let's decide what to do and then invite God"

Getting this right – and getting it wrong

- Prayer
 - Listening
 - Discernment
 - Discussion – inside and outside LBC
 - Leadership ... and Church
-
- Let's look at getting this wrong and getting this right ...





*Again...
What does God's mission look like, HERE?*

The dried up river - just ignore any Vision

- “We can get by – we’re doing OK ...
And we are all busy anyway”
- But rivers dry up – flow weakens
- Examples today of churches who talk about “... the good old days”
- There are examples in Scripture

Thank God we are not here

The stagnant river – miss the Vision, see the details

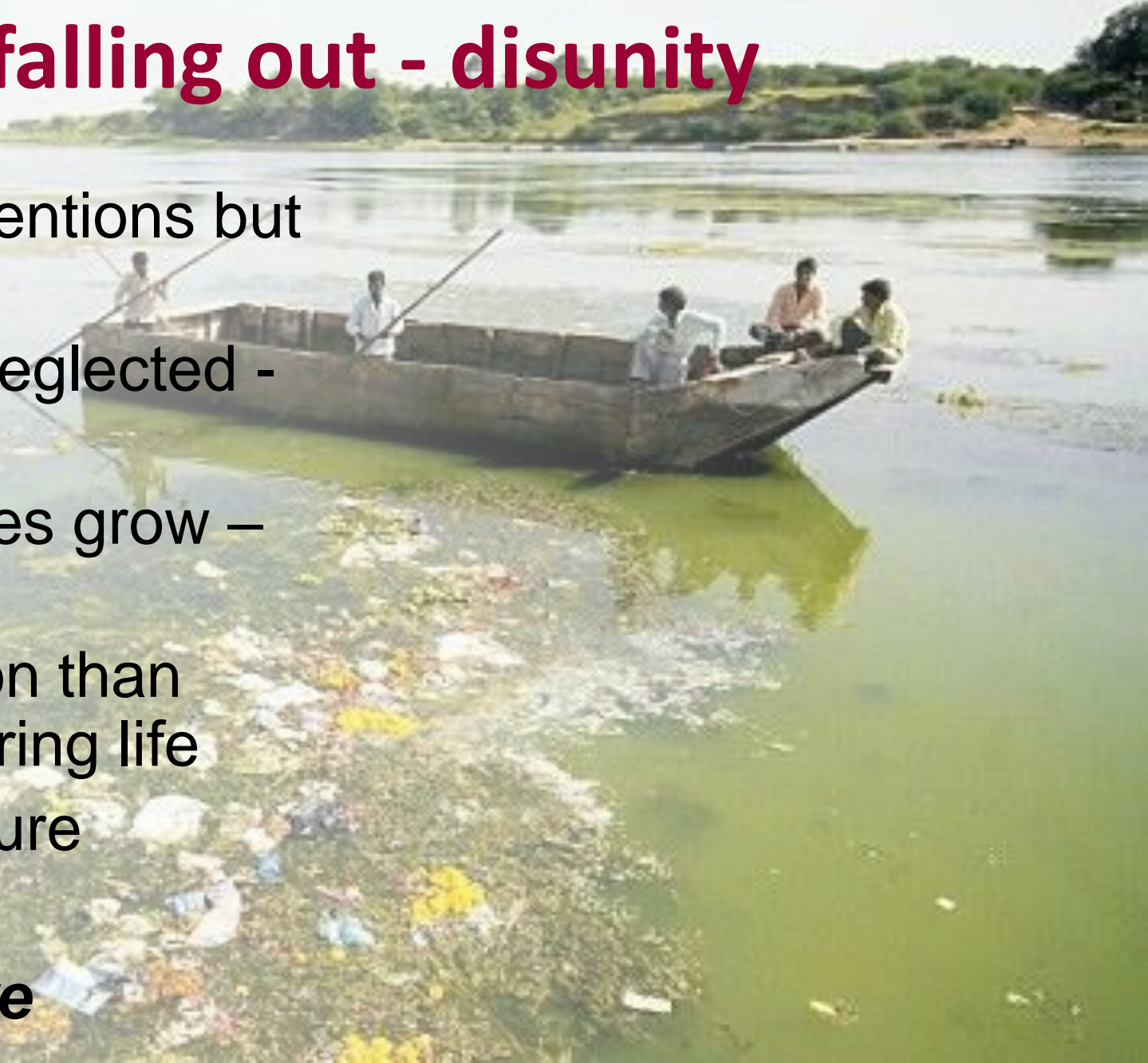
- We lose the idea of a Vision and immediately go for the details
- Analysis paralysis ... Money, Time, and Change ...
- BUT ...the question to us now is:
Is this of God?
- Stagnant water doesn't flow
- Again - examples in Scripture

Thank God we are not here

The polluted river - falling out - disunity

- We may have the right intentions but fall apart in disagreement
- We feel “our concern” is neglected - we point fingers ...
- Unresolved petty squabbles grow – always ...
- Until there is more pollution than water - pollution doesn't bring life
- MANY examples in Scripture

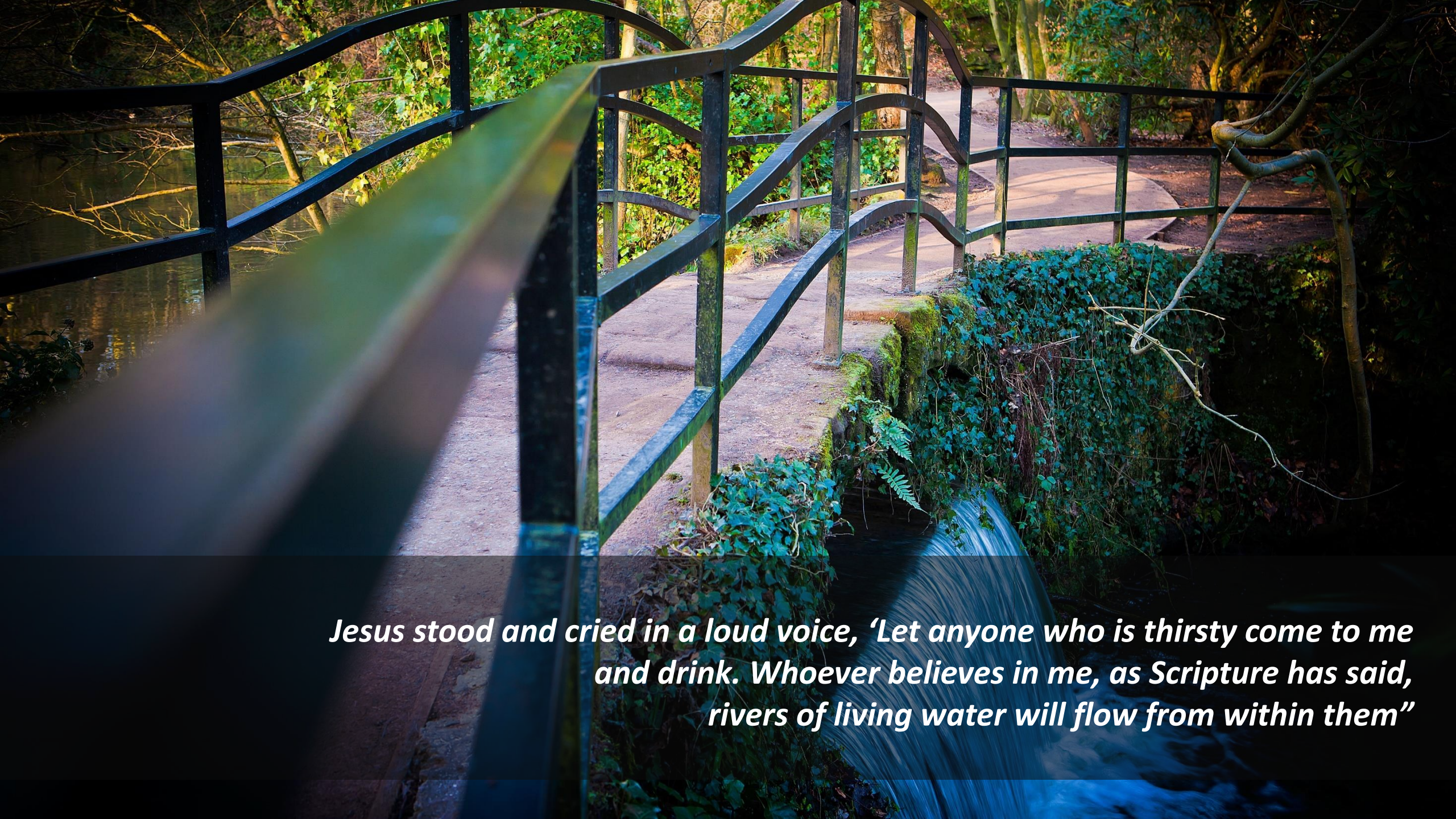
Thank God we are not here



But what happens if – we get this right?

With God's help:

- Rivers bring life - community – a place of refreshing - restoring dry places
- Rivers can be divided into two – bring life to a completely new community
- Rivers carry the power of what's driving them
- And they are amazing to watch, they are exciting, they bring vitality!



Jesus stood and cried in a loud voice, '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''