

A Divine Message
John 4:19-24
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INTRODUCTION

1. We are looking again this morning to that section of Scripture found in John chapter 4 pertaining to the encounter Jesus had with a Samaritan woman.
2. Please take your Bibles and turn with me to John chapter 4.
3. We looked at the first part of the story which took us through the first 18 verses.
4. This morning I want us to look at verses 19-24.
5. Read John 3:19-24
6. In our first look at this section, we saw in verses 1-6 that Jesus leaves Judea for Galilee to avoid a premature confrontation with the Pharisees.
7. His growing popularity, along with John's, was sure to bring about a confrontation.
8. But this was not the time, so He leaves the area for Galilee.
9. According to verse 4, He took a direct route through Samaria.
10. This, of course, was not the only route.
11. One route led through Perea on the eastern side of the Jordan to the northern end of the valley where it crossed over into Galilee.

12. The other route, which Jesus took, went through Samaria, the country west of the Jordan.
13. Normally, orthodox Jews would take the eastern route; it was longer but it avoided Samaria.
14. They did this because of their hostility toward the Samaritans.
15. But again according to verse 4, Jesus had to go through Samaria because He was to have a divine encounter with a particular Samaritan woman.
16. Having traveled some distance, verse 6 tells us that “Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting by the well. It was about the sixth hour.”
17. The sixth hour was either 12 noon (Jewish time) or 6:00 PM (Roman time).
18. Verse 7 tells us that it was at this point when “a woman of Samaria [came] to draw water.”
19. “Women generally came in groups to collect water, either earlier or later in the day to avoid the sun’s heat. If the Samaritan woman came alone at 12:00 p.m., this may indicate her public shame (vv.16-19) caused her to be isolated from other women” (Gordon MacDonald, Believer’s Bible Comm.).
20. John does not give us her name.
21. All we know is that she is from Samaria and came to draw water.
22. When it says she is from Samaria, it is more likely she was from “a city of Samaria called Sychar” (v.5).

23. Verse 7 begins a dialogue that Jesus has with this Samaritan woman that runs through verse 26.
24. From verses 10 through verse 26 Jesus uses the analogy of water to introduce her to the One who had the living water.
25. Now, as we saw last time, Jesus breaks with all social custom.
26. His asking her for a drink of water was a shock in that culture because “men did not speak with women in public—not even their wives. Nor did rabbis associate with immoral women (cf. Luke 7:39). Most significant of all in this situation, Jews customarily wanted nothing to do with Samaritans” (John MacArthur, John 1-11, 143).
27. So the woman’s response in verse 9 is appropriate to the situation.
29. She says, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?”
30. John gives a parenthetical note at the end of verse 9, “For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.”
31. That means, “Jews do not use dishes Samaritans have used” (NIV footnote) “for fear of becoming unclean” (Fritz Rienecker, *The Linguistic Key to the Greek NT*, 226).
32. Jesus answers the woman in verse 10 by saying, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.”
33. The woman responds by saying, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water? 12 ‘You are not greater than our father Jacob,

are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself, and his sons, and his cattle?’ (vv.11-12).

34. Jesus responds again by offering her the living water. He says, “Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again; 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life” (vv.13-14).
35. The woman still perceiving only in the physical asks Jesus for that living water (v.15).
36. She says, “Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty, nor come all the way here to draw.”
37. Jesus purposely changes the subject at this point.
38. Because to have the living water one must acknowledge and repent of their sin.
39. D.A. Carson says, “The change of subject, though abrupt, is not artificial. The Samaritan woman has already failed to grasp who Jesus is, and misconstrued the nature of the living water He was promising. By this turn in the dialogue, Jesus is indicating that she has also misunderstood the true dimensions of her own need, the real nature of her self-confessed thirst” (The Gospel According to John, 220).
40. So Jesus says to her, “‘Go, call your husband and come here.’ The woman answered and said, ‘I have no husband.’ Jesus said to her, ‘You have correctly said, ‘I have had no husband’; for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly” (vv.16-18).
41. It is at this point the woman wants to know who Jesus is.

42. She makes her first guess in verse 19.
43. She says, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet” but later changes her assessment of Him by asking the men in the city, “this is not the Christ, is it?” (v.29).
44. As we look at verses 19-24 this morning, I want us to look more closely at the subject the woman brings up in verse 20.
45. She says, “Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”
46. It is here that we are introduced to the subject of “worship.”
47. The prevailing question the woman poses is where should it take place “in Jerusalem” or on “this mountain” (Mount Gerazim)?
48. D.A. Carson suggests the reason for the question is to test Jesus by bringing up a “point of theological contention between the Jews and Samaritans” (222).
49. He says, “Both Jews and Samaritans recognized that God had commanded their forefathers 'to seek the place the LORD your God [would] choose from among all [their] tribes to put his Name there for his dwelling' (Dt .12:5), but they drew conflicting conclusions from this authorization. Because they recognized the rest of the Hebrew canon and not just the Pentateuch , the Jews concluded Jerusalem was the place: there David determined to build a temple to God, and God solemnly authorized his son Solomon to do so. There sacrifice was divinely sanctioned, the temple site retaining its significance when Zerubbabel rebuilt it after it was destroyed, and when later still Herod embellished it. For their part, the Samaritans recognized none of this. Moreover, their own

textual traditions of Deuteronomy 12:5 read 'to seek the place the LORD your God has chosen'. This prompted them to look to the Pentateuch itself to discover the place. They noted that Shechem, overlooked by Mount Gerizim, was the first place Abraham built an altar once he entered the promised land (Gn. 12:6-7). It was on Mount Gerizim that the blessings were to be shouted to the covenant community, once they had entered the promised land (Dt.11:29-30 ; 27:2-7, 12 ; cf. Jos.8:33). In the Samaritan Bible , both in Exodus 20:17 and in Deuteronomy 5:21, the ten commandments are followed by words very similar to those found in Deuteronomy 27:2-7, thus effectively tying the Decalogue itself to Mount Gerizim. Granted these theological understandings, it is small wonder that the Samaritans built their temple there (cf. notes on v.4) and insisted Mount Gerizim was the highest mountain in the world—even though Mount Ebal, just across the valley, was demonstrably higher.' Even after their temple was destroyed by John Hyrcanus, the Samaritans continued to perform their sacrifices and other rites on this mountain. These were the competing religious claims that the Samaritan woman was inviting Jesus to address” (222).

50. So, beginning at verse 21, Jesus responds by teaching her the true meaning of worship.
51. He tells her:
 - . What worship is
 - . Where worship begins
 - . How we are to worship
52. Let's look first at *what worship is*.

I. What Worship Is

“Whatever worship is, it is to the *Father* (v.21), and it’s related to *salvation* (v.22), and it’s something the Father desires from others in *spirit and truth* (v.24).”

Worship is mentioned 10 times in vv.20-24.

There are two words for worship in the NT:

The first is the Greek word *proskuneo* which means, “to kiss toward, to kiss the hand, to bow down, to prostrate oneself” (Strong).

The second word is *latreuo*, which suggests “rendering honor, or paying homage.”

Both terms carry the idea of giving, because worship is giving something to God.

Worship then is simply “honor and adoration directed to God” (MacArthur).

“When we talk about worship, we are talking about something we give to God. Modern Christianity seems committed instead to the idea that God should be giving to us. God does give to us abundantly, but we need to understand the balance of that truth—we are to render honor and adoration to God. That consuming, selfless desire to give to God is the essence and the heart of worship. It begins with the giving first of ourselves, and then of our attitudes, and then of our possessions—until worship is a way of life” (John MacArthur, *The Ultimate Priority*, 14).

So the, worship is giving to God honor and adoration. It is ascribing to God His worth.

Ps.29:2 says, “Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in holy array.”

II. Where Worship Begins (vv.15-19)

As we address this second area of worship, I want to refer you back to verses 15-19.

Worship begins...

A. When You Understand Who You Are (vv.16-18)

1. She acknowledged her sin when she was confronted with it — “I have no husband”

Warren Wiersbe says, “The only way to prepare the soil of the heart for the seed is to plow it up with conviction. That was why Jesus told her to go get her husband: He forced her to admit her sin. There can be no conversion without conviction. There must first be conviction and repentance, and then there can be saving faith. Jesus had aroused her mind and stirred her emotions, but He also had to touch her conscience, and that meant dealing with her sin.

‘I have no husband’ was the shortest statement she made during the entire conversation! Why? Because now she was under conviction and her ‘mouth was stopped’ (Rom. 3:19). But this was the best thing that could have happened to her!” (The Bible Knowledge Commentary).

2. If we are to understand what it means to worship God, we must understand what sin is
 - a) 1 John 3:4 says, “Everyone who practices sin

also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.”

b) Romans 3:23 says, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

3. This is what expelled man from the Garden and from God’s presence

Gen.3:22-24 says, “Then the LORD God said, ‘Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, lest he stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever’— 23 therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. 24 ***So He drove the man out;*** and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim, and the flaming sword which turned every direction, to guard the way to the tree of life.”

4. This is what expelled Lucifer from heaven

Isa.14:12-15 says, “How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations! 13 ‘But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. 14 ‘I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ 15 ***Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, To the recesses of the pit.***”

God said in Ezek.28:16, “I have cast you as profane

from the mountain of God.”

5. We must see our sin as God sees it. We must have the attitude that David had when he was broken over his sin

He said in Ps.51:1-4, “Be gracious to me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Thy compassion blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me. 4 Against Thee, Thee only, I have sinned, And done what is evil in Thy sight, So that Thou art justified when Thou dost speak, And blameless when Thou dost judge.”

6. We must have the attitude that Isaiah had when he was confronted by God in His holiness

He said, “Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts” (Isa.6:5).

B. When You Understand Who Jesus Is (vv.19, 25, 28-30, 39-41)

1. She acknowledged Him to be a prophet (v.19)

“His knowledge of her life indicated He had supernatural inspiration” (John MacArthur, The MacArthur Study Bible).

2. She acknowledged Him to be the Messiah (vv.25-26, 28-30, 39-42)

- a) His statement in v.26 was not only a claim of being the Messiah but Jehovah God

“The ‘He’ in this translation is not in the original Greek for Jesus literally said ‘I who speak to you *am*’” (MacArthur, MSB).

- b) He uses the same statement in John 8:58

“Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.’”

- c) Jesus is the I AM of Exodus 3:14

3. Others have made declarations to Jesus’ identity

- a) John the Baptist called Him “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (Jn.1:29).

- b) After Jesus died on the cross, the Centurion and those with him said, “Truly this was the Son of God!” (Mat.27:54).

- c) After His resurrection, Jesus made several appearances. One of them was when Thomas was present. He said to Thomas in John 20:27-28:

“‘Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing.’ 28 Thomas answered and said to Him, ‘My Lord and my God!’

4. Jesus is God! When you understand His true identity then you are able to worship Him in truth

You cannot worship God apart from this truth.

III. How We Are to Worship (vv.20-24)

A. Worship is Not Limited to One Particular Location (v.20)

1. Jesus revealed that their whole system of worship was going to change (v.21)

“An hour is coming”

“It is irrelevant where you worship God. It is not *where* but *how* you worship Him that is important” (J. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible).

D. A. Carson says “there is little to be gained by a prolonged debate over the relative claims of Jerusalem and Gerizim, since both sites are about to be bypassed by those who truly worship the Father” (223).

Worship is not “limited to Mount Gerizim or Jerusalem” (KJV Bible Commentary), nor is it limited to the church.

We are not to forsake the assembly (Heb.10:25) nor are we to forsake the worship of God in all places and at all times.

2. Jesus revealed the ignorance of their worship (v.22)

- a) They did not know what they were worshipping

“You worship what you do not know.”

“The Samaritans worshiped what they did not

know; they had created their own religion” (KJV Bible Commentary).

Paul observed this at Athens when he said in Acts 17:22-23, “And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, ‘Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. 23 ‘For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' What therefore you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.”

A.W. Tozer says, “While God wants us to worship Him we cannot worship Him just any way we will. The One who made us to worship Him has decreed how we shall worship Him. He accepts only the worship which He Himself has decreed” (The Quotable Tozer, 200).

- b) Jesus revealed what makes one a true worshiper (v.23)

They are not limited to a particular location. They are focused on the Father. Their worship of the Father is in spirit and truth.

Philippians 3:3 says, “For we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh.”

B. Worship is Limited to the Truth (v.24)

- 1. Worshiping God in “spirit and truth” is mentioned in both vv.23-24

2. Worshiping in spirit is not a reference to the Holy Spirit but a reference to an inward attitude of the heart
3. God is more interested in your *attitude* of worship rather than your *place* of worship

A.W. Tozer again says, “If there is no fear of God in our hearts, there can be no worship of God.”

4. This is why we are commanded to be “filled with the Spirit” (Eph.5:18) because the result is true worship
5. The reference to “truth” refers to the worship of God consistent with the revealed Scripture

- a) God does not accept worship of anyone who has a distorted view of who He is

“God is spirit” — this means that God is invisible (Col.1:15; 1 Tim.1:17; Heb.11:27).

“Man could never comprehend the invisible God unless He revealed Himself, as He did in Scripture and the Incarnation” (MacArthur, MSB).

- b) God does not accept worship of anyone who has a correct view of God but a sinful life

- (1) Psalm 15

- (2) Jesus said in Matthew 5:23-24, “ If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your offering there before the altar,

and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.”

CONCLUSION

1. What is the basis of your worship?
2. Do you understand who Jesus is?

1 John 2:22-23 says, “Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. 23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.”

3. Do you have a correct view of God and a heart that demonstrates that?
4. Are you sensitive to your sin?
5. Do you confess and repent of it?
6. Don't be guilty of the kinds of things the Pharisees were guilty of.
7. Jesus said of them in Matthew 15:7-9, “You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, 8 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. 9 'BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.’”
8. Let's worship Him as He intended for us today.
9. Let's pray.