

# John 4vs16-26

True worship

What is it... how does it happen?

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# True worship

## John 4 vs 16-26

### *Jesus' identity revealed... but not to whom you'd expect...*

We start by re-capturing the last two verses of our previous study...

JOHN 4 vs 16-26: *Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." <sup>17</sup> The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; <sup>18</sup> for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true." <sup>19</sup> The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. <sup>20</sup> Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship." <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. <sup>22</sup> You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. <sup>23</sup> But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. <sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." <sup>25</sup> The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things." <sup>26</sup> Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."*

There are 2 key verses in Chapter 4:

4 v 26: *Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."*

- So – Jesus makes clear that he is... THE MESSIAH

Later in the chapter, when Jesus has stayed in a Samaritan village:

4 v 42: *They said to the women, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world."*

- Jesus is heralded as:
  - ***"The Saviour of the world"...***
  - And the surprise is that it's the Samaritans and not the Jews who realise it!

Let's start by remembering the contrast between Nicodemus and this Samaritan woman:

- Socially...
- Morally...
- Sexually...
- Racially...

And what's more ...this isn't just a contrast between any Samaritan and a Jew....

This is a comparison with the very "**teacher of the Jews**"!

A comparison then - in the eyes of the Jews - between the lowest of the low - versus the highest socially respectable person you could possibly find!

Yet we have seen that Jesus can save both the most highly respected and the lowest of the low. He reaches out to ALL!

One of the BIG questions here in chapter 4 = What does Jesus give to people?

➤ We have had the answer earlier in the chapter:

4 v 14: "...but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

➤ Nothing short of **eternal life**!

### ***But what is God seeking?***

In this section of Jesus' interview with the Samaritan woman, we move from what Jesus offers people... to what God is seeking from people...and there's therefore lots in this passage about '**worship**'...

But what is '**worship**'?!

In Greek the word means "*to kiss towards*". This is from the days when subjects were to get on their knees and kiss the ground towards the ruler or god.

In other words ... total surrender.

So far in Chapter 4 we have seen what God gives... Now we move to what God wants...

### ***Revolution...***

Not only were the Samaritans radically different from the Jews, they had also set up their own centre of worship in Samaria:

4 v 20: "*Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.*"

But Jesus cuts across both the Jewish and Samaritan historic practices of worship, by telling this woman that he has come to bring true worshippers:

4 v 21: *“Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.”*”

True worship is no longer confined to holy places such as –

- **this mountain** - Samaritans would go to worship on Mount Gerazim instead of the temple in Jerusalem, where they were viewed as impure.
- **Jerusalem** - Three times a year Jews had to go on a pilgrimage to the Temple... but Jesus is saying there is no longer any need for pilgrimages to find God – He will soon be fully available everywhere!

So Jesus is saying there will be –

- no need to visit the Vatican
- no need for the Hajj to Mecca
- no need to visit the Holy Land
- no need for the seven stages of the Cross in Jerusalem

In vs 22-23 Jesus show how this revolution is now possible:

4 vs 22-23: *“You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. <sup>23</sup> But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.”*

Jesus makes this possible because HE is the **truth** from God, and HE will enable us to **worship** God anywhere and everywhere.

So... it's not about places to worship but WHO we worship... knowledgeably:

- A God we know personally...
- A relationship with God living within us... through his **spirit**.

It's a relationship like that of a child to their loving parent... or between a loving husband and a wife.

- In other words... not confined to just within the home ... or to some special place!

v 23 holds a key phrase : **“But the hour is coming...”** Remember John 2 v 4:

JOHN 2 v 4: *And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.”*

***My hour has not yet come*** could be replaced with: “*the death of Jesus is coming*”

- So... “***the hour***” = the death and resurrection of Christ

JOHN 4 v 24: “*God is spirit and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.*”

- God can't be confined to a building... or worshipped on our terms
- In and through Jesus ... he is available to everyone everywhere

THIS is a MASSIVE point to the Jews...

Just as relevant as the overturning of the Old Testament Law and all its restrictive practices...

It's nothing short of a release from Temple worship!

- Especially the fact that God is the ***spirit***... means that he is the life-giving one... for ETERNITY!
- He can come into anyone's life anywhere and at any time!

All this is another 'nail in the coffin' of religion!

- ...Wonderful buildings – are now no more sacred than, say, a football stadium!

v 24      “***Worship in spirit and truth***”

This is NOT about being “happy-clappy” but rather... in Jesus we have both...

- ✓ HIS ***spirit*** and
  - ✓ HIS ***truth*** (his WORD)
- ...not either/or!

***When “THE MAIN MAN” comes...***

4 v 25: *The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things.”*

With their Jewish background, the Samaritans did still believe in the coming of the Messiah.

Therefore it is understandable that this woman says – “***I know that Messiah is coming***”

...and that he would - “***tell us all things.***”

v 26 Jesus reveals: “***I who speak to you... am he***”

This is all the more glorious when you realise that Jesus is saying this NOT to the high and mighty “***Teacher of the Jews***” Nicodemus... but to the lowest of the low!

So the key to ***worship*** is THE PERSON of Jesus Christ, not:

- ceremonies
- buildings
- what we do
- what we try and bring to him

If we can ***worship*** God ANYWHERE...

What stops us from seeing our offices and our homes as places to worship God?

And- if it's NOT about ‘getting right with God on Sunday’

...especially not in a particular ceremony

...and/or place

...and/or time

Then it must be that God is always with us everywhere...

Which means that there is even more importance in

- Understanding his WORD
- Starting to read, listen to, and think about his WORD

Because THIS is how someone ***worships*** v 24: ***in spirit and truth***

As we allow Jesus' WORD in the Bible to sink in...

- So God will be shaping our whole life of **worship**
- by his Spirit

### ***What comes next?***

- Why has Jesus come?
- ...and what is he up to?!

## *John 4 vs 16-26*

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