

John 4.15-26

The Reality Of Sin, The True Nature Of Worship,
And The Need For A Savior

Aim: confess our sin to God, worship the Father in spirit and truth and glory in Jesus Christ as the Messiah!

Scripture Reading: John 4.15-26

INTRODUCTION:

I have learned over the years in my conversations with many of you that you have wrestled and struggled with the modern day attempts of evangelism in America. We have heard of many people being “evangelized” without really being evangelized. Today from what I hear publicly of people witnessing is there is little to no mention of sin, judgment, hell for those who do not receive and believe in Jesus Christ. There is little to no mention of the gospel, because when you ask most people in churches today what the gospel is they will at best tell you what the person is to do with the gospel rather than the actual elements of the gospel.

So what is the gospel? The gospel is not confession of sin and repentance from sin. That is what you do with the gospel. The gospel is Jesus Christ and Him crucified, buried and resurrected from the dead. This is the gospel. The actual gospel elements must be communicated to people if we are to say that they have been evangelized. The Evangel is the good news and there’s only good news if Christ died, was buried, and rose again in an effort to propitiate the holy wrath of God against sin. So if evangelism is missing the gospel elements then is it really evangelism?

Over the last few sermons we have been in the gospel story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman. Jesus has providentially come to this place in Samaria, in this time, at this well to meet this woman. Jesus has confronted her with her inability to give anything to God. He has shown her of her need for the gift of God and who it is that can give her living water. He has taught her that the water from this well will make her thirst again, but the water that He gives will quench her thirst for all eternity.

Through this meaningful discussion Jesus has aroused her curiosity to talk more and listen to Him. So far she has not understood Him at all, but is willing to keep the conversation going. This shows me Jesus' infinite patience with this Samaritan woman. And this should show us our need to be patient with those who may not understand salvation and their need for salvation when they first hear of it.

Many of you have people right now that you have been witnessing to and sharing the gospel with and their need for salvation. It's been long and difficult at times. But let us always trust that God will continue to work in the words that we share with those who may not get it at first. It takes Holy Spirit regeneration and illumination for them to understand the gospel message and faith comes from hearing the words of Christ, so keep speaking the words of Christ to them.

Today, Jesus continues in His conversation with this Samaritan woman at the well. As Jesus continues talking with her, in what direction does Jesus take this conversation?

Let's read the first part of the passage together....**John 4.15-16.**

Title: The Reality Of Sin, The True Nature Of Worship, And The Need For A Savior

Aim: confess our sin to God, worship the Father in spirit and truth and glory in Jesus Christ as the Messiah!

Laziness Is Not True Thirst (v.15)

“The woman said to Him, ‘Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here, to draw.’”

As Jesus, in this discussion with this woman, told her of the results of the living **water** in which He could give her, this peaked her interest at this point, apparently because she was tired of having to walk **all the way** to this well to **draw** water. Once again she missed the true meaning of Jesus' words to her. She didn't have a clue what Jesus was talking about in regards to salvation and eternal life in His analogy using **water**. So she asks Him for this eternal **water** so that she would **not be thirsty**, so she wouldn't have to walk **all the way** to the well.

Laziness is never true thirst for God. The gifts of God are not the ends in themselves. You see we don't get God, so that we can finally get to His gifts. It is always the other way around. We receive the gifts of God, so that we can get to God. We receive the gift of salvation and the gift of eternal life and the gift of living water, so that we can have God Himself. The gifts of God are the means to God...not the other way around.

This Samaritan woman wanted this eternal **water** so she **wouldn't be thirsty** and have to walk **all the way** to the well every day to **draw** water. Listen, the gift of God in eternal life and salvation is never meant to simply make your life easier. As a matter of fact it's just the opposite and Jesus constantly warns us against that kind of thinking. Having Christ as your Savior will most likely mean a more difficult life than an easier life. Whether it's difficult from the persecution of the world or difficult because you are constantly disciplining yourself to put to death the deeds of the flesh, being a follower of Christ does not automatically make it an easier life. But this Samaritan woman wanted the **water** so she didn't have to walk every day to the well. She wanted the **water** so she wouldn't have to be out in public among the people every day. She wanted the **water** so her life would be easier. The gifts of God are the means to God...not the other way around.

But often times this is what is promised to people in modern day evangelism. We tell them to receive Christ, so that their life can then be filled with peace. So peace becomes the greatest treasure for people, not God. Listen, no doubt your life will be filled with peace if you have Christ, but Christ provides and gives us peace so that we can have eternal access to God. We have peace with God, so that we can enjoy God's presence and communion with Him.

It is never the other way around. The true reward and the true gift of God is always God Himself. So enjoy and embrace the gifts of God absolutely, but not as an end to themselves for an easier life, but as a means to a greater end...that being God Himself.

Her laziness of not wanting to go **all the way** to the well in the heat of the day out in public is not the reason to receive the living **water**, the eternal **water**. Her laziness of not wanting to go **all the way** to the well was a display to Jesus that He needed to go deeper with her.

And anyone who wants Christ simply for an easier life may not really understand what it means to have Christ. Jesus told his disciples...

John 15.20 “Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A slave is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you;”

2 Timothy 3.12 “Indeed all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”

The truth is there is a persecution that comes to those who follow after Christ; to those who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus. This is not what Jesus nor Paul would call an easier life. But it is a godly life. It is a life that is lived in a manner worthy of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Laziness is never true thirst for God no matter how bad people may want to drink of the living **water**. If they desire to drink of the living **water**, so that their life would be made easier then they simply do not understand what it means to have Christ as their Master.

She tells Jesus to **give to her this water**, so she will **not be thirsty nor come all the way to the well to draw** water. How would you respond or reply to her statement in **verse 15**?

Jesus responds and tells her to do something that seems totally from left field.

Go Get Your Husband (v.16-19)

“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 no husband”; for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly.’ The woman said to Him, Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.”

Why is Jesus bringing up her husband? Why is Jesus telling her to **go and call her husband**?

If the elements of the living **water** make up eternal life and salvation then she must have something to be saved from. So she must be shown and she must see what she needs to be saved and delivered from. She must be shown the true nature of her soul. She must be shown that she is indeed a sinner separated from God.

When Jesus surprisingly tells her to **go call her husband**, Jesus in this command is getting to the heart of her problem. You see this is what this woman's problem is...it is a sin problem. She is a sinner. She has a heart problem, which means she has a thirst problem and when you have a thirst problem that means you have a drinking problem.

She is thirsting after husbands/men/love because her heart is not right with God. So she doesn't even know what to drink or even when to stop drinking. She has a drinking problem. Between the dirty **water** that she's drinking in and her addiction to the dirty **water** she can't put the bottle of dirty **water** down. So she just keeps drinking in husbands.

She keeps drinking in manly, worldly love thinking this will satisfy her thirst. And every sip of worldly **water** she drinks in is another sip of sin. She is engulfed in this sin of worldly love and affection. She is seeking to satisfy her eternal soul with the temporal love from men. And it's just not working.

So she moves on to the next man/husband; and that's not satisfying. She moves on to the next man/husband; and that's not satisfying. She moves on to the next man/husband; and that's not satisfying. She moves on to the next man/husband; and that's not satisfying. And now she has moved on to the next man, number six, maybe thinking this will be the one to quench her soul's thirst. When does this ever stop?

The truth is we have all been like her at one point in time or another. Until Jesus gives us the gift of God, His living water this is every person's life. They just keep drinking in the dirty filthy **water** of the world and no doubt they are getting a buzz, but they are not getting quenched; they are not being satisfied; they are not being refreshed. Their soul remains parched, dry and dead.

So **go get your husband** actually is exposing her life to her. It exposes her heart to her. It exposes her sin to her.

This is the kind of evangelism that we should be doing. Not some canned rehearsed program, but real life doctoring and examining of people's lives that we so dearly love. We take long prayerful time to show them the truth from God's Word which then exposes their sinful lives before Him. It is Holy Spirit wrought exposure of sin before God and not man-centered trickery that is going to save them. Evangelism is not a bunch of tricks and schemes and plots.

Evangelism is God through us exposing the sinner for who he or she is before His holiness and then God the Holy Spirit convicting and showing them their desperate position of standing condemned before God, so that the gospel will then make sense to them, biblical sense to them.

Jesus exposes her sin to her! **Go call your husband!**

But notice in **verse 16** that Jesus not only tells her to **Go**, but he also tells her to **come here**.

A.W. Pink says that the command to **Go call her husband** was truth for her conscience. Then to **come back here** to Him was grace for her heart. "If you really want this living **water** of which I have been telling you, you can obtain it only as a poor, convicted, and contrite sinner."

She was to **go call her husband**, to **go** and think about her sin-filled thirsts. Then she was to **come back** to Jesus "in her true character. It was a marvelous mingling of grace and truth."

(Pink)

(Read verses 17-19)

Well there is no doubting that there is something special about this Man. He knows things about me that He shouldn't know. Jesus not only exposes her sin to her, but Jesus exposes His deity to her. He exposes His omniscience to her. Jesus knows the **Samaritan woman** just like Jesus knew Nathanael.

John 1.47 "Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, 'Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!' Nathanael said to Him, 'How do you know me.?'"

Jesus knew Nathanael and He knows this Samaritan woman. He knew her life. He knew her heart. He knew her ways. He knew her sin. This Man that she had never met before knew her. So she is compelled to say in **verse 19**...

You Are A Prophet (v.19)

“Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.”

The word **perceives** indicates to us that she is beginning to see Jesus for who He is. It not only means to see with the eyes, but also to see with the mind. To **perceive** that Jesus is a **prophet** is to consider and to discern what she is seeing and experiencing from this Man.

She cannot hide from the realization that Jesus knows her. Her life is now exposed to Him. She is spiritually exposed to this Man who seems to know her. So she calls Jesus a **prophet** because she **perceives** Him to be so.

This is true of every soul of every person. You cannot hide your sin from God. All sin is exposed and will be exposed before God. This woman was caught up in the sin of adultery, one forsaken husband after another. She was never satisfied with these men. Jesus exposes this to her. **Go and call your husband and come here.**

Listen, what this encounter between Jesus and this woman teaches us is that sin must be exposed by truth. Truth must confront the conscience of every person. Every person, if they are to drink from the fountain of living water, must be confronted with their sin and their sin must be exposed with the truth of God's Word. It was the same for Nicodemus and it is the same for this woman at this well.

So now that she is exposed before Jesus and she perceives Jesus to be a **prophet**, do you suppose that she will now confess her sin and receive this living water and thirst no more?

Well not so fast...She responds further by saying in **verse 20**...

A Sidetrack To The Real Thing (v.20-24)

“Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”

She tried to sidetrack Jesus away from her sin and she sought to cover and hide her spiritual nakedness before Jesus by talking about places of **worship**. But listen, even in her attempt to sidetrack Jesus she actually walked right into the perfect subject. **Worship! Worship** is at the heart of every person’s life. There is not a single person who lacks **worship**. The question is who or what are you **worshipping**.

Worship is not something that necessarily needs to be taught to people on how to start doing it. You’ve been **worshipping** your whole life. The problem is it has been idol **worship**. Until Christ changes our nature and makes us new creatures in Himself, our **worship** is dirty and it is filled with sin. It takes Christ changing our nature in order to change our loves; to change our desires; to change our cravings; to change our hunger and our thirsts and to change our **worship**.

It’s like what brother Jason said on Wednesday night...as we drink from the living **water**, from the Fountain of living **water**, we are being sanctified in our desires, loves, our cravings and our wants.

So she tried one last time to be crafty and to avoid the exposure of her sin. This is how powerful the flesh and our sin-nature can be. It doesn’t want to give up its reign on the throne of our lives. It doesn’t like to be exposed with the truth and exposed by the Light. It hates the light and loves the deeds of darkness.

So this is also a moment here...in her life where we see yet again her depravity. In her last ditch effort to avoid the exposure of her sin, she doesn’t even have a clue that she’s walking right into the real heart of the matter. She’s walking right into the conversation on **worship**.

And this is exactly where Jesus wants her to go. She wants to talk about places of **worship**. So she compares and contrasts the place where the Samaritans **worship** and the place where the **Jews worship**.

This is what the depravity of man will do, when the sin nature of a man is about to be crucified by the Holy Spirit it will latch on to anything in order to escape being put to death. So her sin nature/her flesh tries to latch on to the topic of places of **worship** to try and sidetrack Jesus and Him exposing her sin.

I've seen this time and time again. People will scatter to all other subjects of religion and practices and beliefs when you confront them with sin and the gospel. They will want to talk about everything else but sin and the gospel. It's truly amazing how this unfolds time and again.

So the Samaritan woman latches on to places of **worship**. The place of worship was a major contention between **Jews and Samaritans**. I mentioned this already before that when the Samaria was infiltrated with the Assyrians and married their people and believed in their gods then when it was time to rebuild the temple the Jews would not let the Samaritans participate in the construction nor would they let them **worship** in the temple. For they worshiped false gods.

So the Samaritans built their own temple and **worshiped in the mountains** of Samaria. **The Jews** built their temple to the One true God **and worshiped in Jerusalem**. And this is what this **Samaritan woman** wants to talk about now when her sin is being exposed to her and her need for living water and eternal life.

The Place Of Worship Will No Longer Be Relevant (v.21)

“Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.”

Jesus takes her topic of **worship** and now tells her that there is going to be a new way to **worship God the Father** and **you must worship Him** in this way. He tells her that, **an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father**.

She focused on the place of **worship** while Jesus focuses on what was acceptable **worship**. Soon when the new covenant is established the place where you **worship** will not determine if your **worship** is true or false. Jesus is doing a new thing. The temple of God will reside in the hearts of God's people and not a stone building in Jerusalem. So you will be able to **worship** God the Father in a country mountain or in the city of Jerusalem. The place of **worship** will be trumped by acceptable **worship**.

Jesus continues to educate her in **verse 22**.

Ignorance Verses Knowledge (v.22)

“You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.”

Jesus absolutely destroys the place and system of **worship** of the **Samaritans** in **verse 22**. Knowledge of true **worship** comes from the revelation of God and God alone. The place and system of **worship** that the **Samaritans** created were not of God and were never from God. Jesus basically tells the **Samaritan woman** that their **worship** is ignorant **worship**. They have no **knowledge** of what true **worship** of God really is. So they **worship** ignorantly without true **knowledge**.

Jesus says **we**, the **Jews**, have the true **knowledge** of true **worship** of God. It is the true **knowledge** of rightful **worship**. Both in the right place and in the right way. And not only do the Jews **worship** in the right place and in the right way, **salvation is from the Jews**.

Salvation in **verse 22** literally means the **salvation** or the Savior **is from the Jews**. The Savior, the Messiah His salvation **is from the Jews**. Jesus has no problem letting this woman know that the **worship** of the **Samaritans** is false worship and the **worship** of the **Jews** is the true **worship** of God and it is so true that even **the salvation**, the Savior, the Messiah Himself will come **from the Jews**.

Everything about her **worship** up to this point was false and untrue and ignorant. Do you see the love and compassion of God in Jesus speaking the truth to her? Folks, people need to be told the truth if their **worship** is a lie. People need to be lovingly told the truth about their false **worship** from the revelation of God in His Word.

This **Samaritan woman** and all her people were wrong and they were without knowledge; they were ignorant of true **worship**.

So after Jesus' correction He quickly gets back to the heart of the issue in **verses 23-24**. He gets back to the heart of **worship**.

The True And Acceptable Worship (v.23-24)

“But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

Jesus tells her that **the Father is seeking worshipers to worship Him in spirit and truth**. **The Father** has sent the Son, the Salvation, the Savior, to gather for Him His elect, His people, **who will worship Him in spirit and truth**.

Today we often hear church leaders teach about how people are seekers of God. But Scripture is clear, it is God is the seeker of people and more specifically God is a seeker of worshipers. God is seeking worshipers of Himself. And Jesus says when this hour comes and now is, the coming of the new covenant, worshipers will worship God in spirit and truth not in a specific place, but in spirit.

It has always been true that “the LORD is our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.” (Deuteronomy 6.4-5) And now Jesus is proclaiming this truth yet again, but you won't have to do this in a tabernacle nor a temple, but all throughout the earth. This is **spiritual** worship of God **the Father**. It is no longer simply about an outward performance, but inward purity of **worship**.

We are now throughout the whole earth commanded to worship God **the Father in spirit**. You are to worship Him with your mind, your heart, your soul, and your strength. You are to worship the Father whether you're sitting under a tree at a lake or sitting at your desk in your closet or gathered with the people of God at Deer Creek. You are to **worship the Father in spirit for such people the Father seeks to worship** Him. This is the seeking that God is doing. He is seeking throughout the earth, outside of Israel, outside of the Jews, outside of the Samaritans from all nations, tribes, tongues, and peoples those who will worship Him in spirit and truth.

To **worship the Father in truth** is to **worship Him** in two ways. First, in how He has revealed Himself in Scripture, which is **truth**. Second, to **worship in truth** is to **worship** truly. To **worship** genuinely. It's no longer simply about conforming to an outward performance of ceremonies and sacrifices, but it's about **true** and genuine **worship** from your heart. You **worship the Father in truth** from a **true** heart.

Jesus says that the **truth** of God is that **God is spirit**. J.C. Ryle says "The declaration before us (that God is spirit) is one of the most lofty and definite sayings about God's nature which is to be found in the whole Bible. That such a declaration should have been made to such a person as the Samaritan woman is a wonderful instance of Christ's condescension! To define precisely the full meaning of the expression is past man's understanding. The leading idea most probably is, that God is an immaterial being, that He dwelleth not in temples made with hands, and that He is not, like ourselves, therefore, absent from one place when He is present at another." These things are all true, but how little we can realize them!"

You must be born again. You must be born again of water and the Spirit. And that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Only those who are born again and born again of the Spirit can **worship God in spirit and truth**. It is from the overflow of the spiritual-life giving power of God where men, women, and children can **worship God in spirit and truth**.

God is spirit and He can only be **worshiped** from those who are born again by the Spirit of God. It is an altogether other-worldly kind of **worship** that you give to Him. It takes God to make you a **spiritual worshiper** of God. Thus He is **seeking** to create and make **worshippers for Himself**...spiritual worshipers.

This is the **truth** of **God** that Jesus is teaching the **Samaritan woman**. The place of **worship** will soon no longer be relevant, but **true** and acceptable **worship** will be made in **spirit** from the **worshippers** of the One **true God** who is **spirit**.

The Messiah Is Jesus (v.25-26)

“The woman said to Him, ‘I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.’ Jesus said to her, ‘I who speak to you am He.’”

From showing her the reality of her sin all the way to her need for the salvation, the Messiah, the Christ Jesus has patiently and beautifully walked this **woman** through true gospel evangelism.

Jesus has shown her that she is incapable of giving God anything. He has shown her that she is in need of knowing the gift of God and drinking living water. He has shown her that she will thirst again if she keeps drinking from the **water** of the world. He has shown her that she is caught in a vicious cycle of sin with men. Jesus also corrected her and taught her of the true nature of **worshipping the Father**. And now here in **verse 25** she has just declared to Him that she is waiting for the salvation, **the Messiah, the Christ to come**. And so Jesus full of love and full of mercy reveals to this **Samaritan woman** what He has hidden from so many others thus far, that He is indeed **the Messiah, the Christ**.

Jesus sais to her, I who speak to you am He. The word **He** is not in the original language. Jesus says, **“I who speak to you am.”** How awesome is it with this seemingly insignificant **woman** in the middle of nowhere in **Samaria** at a **water** well, Jesus declares Himself to her to be the **I am!** The Salvation, the Messiah, the Christ has indeed come...**I am!**

I love what I see here in **John 4**. Jesus has taken her all the way from her sin to the Savior. He knew her. He knew her sin and He knew her need for a Savior. He teaches her about true worship. He teaches her of the true nature of God. And He graciously and lovingly discloses the true nature of Himself to her. He is the **I am!**

CONCLUSION:

The truth is we are all insignificant men and women. And Jesus has gone out of His way sort a speak, in order to show you your inability to give God anything, to show you your need to drink of the living water, to show you the vicious cycle of sin that you are trapped in, to show you the true nature of worshiping the Father, and to show you the true nature of Himself that He is the Messiah, the Christ, the I am! He has come to save you from your sins.

“It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners among whom I am foremost of all.”

God is on mission. He is seeking worshipers to worship Him in spirit and truth for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. He has sent His Son Jesus Christ, the Messiah, to set you free from sin, from false worship and idol worship and to make you a true worshiper of God.

It is the working ministry of the Spirit that makes a man new in Christ. And it is in that same working of the Spirit where you are now free to do the very thing you were created to do and that is worship God in spirit and truth. God through His Son is doing a new thing. He is making people new. These people are His people and His people are scattered throughout the earth and are filled with His glory and God is receiving praise, and worship from all the ends of the earth.

This is what this woman’s soul ultimately longed for. This is what her soul was thirsting after. She needed to drink of the living water; of salvation; of eternal life. Once she drank she was then free to worship God.

Today we pray for you and we pray for all of us to confess our sin to God. Then to drink of His living water. To worship God the Father in spirit and truth. And to glory in the Christ, the Messiah, Jesus...who is...the I am!

Worship the Father and glory in Jesus Christ this morning!