
THE GOSPEL
OF JOHN

Introduction to Ch 4

- As we move into chapter 4, John presents us with a striking contrast…
- We go from Nicodemus in Chapter 3 - the elite, highly respected, and well-educated Pharisee
- …to an unnamed, rejected, and despised Samaritan woman at Jacob's well.
- It is powerful and intentional shift showing that whether someone is at the top of the religious ladder or completely cast out by society, Jesus meets them at their point of deepest need.

Review

- Up to this point in the Gospel of John, the divine plot has been unfolding step by step:
- Jesus came to illuminate our spiritual condition
  - We were stumbling in total darkness; He stepped into history as the Light of the World.
- He came to reveal the Father to us:
  - No man has seen God at any time, yet the Son—who is eternally one with the Father—has declared Him to us.
- He came not to reform, but to redeem:
  - He didn't come as a moral teacher offering a spiritual patch-up job, nor to refine external religion.
  - He came as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world, filling cold, empty, dead stone vessels with new wine and vibrant life.

Review

- Following His visit to Jerusalem, Jesus' popularity was growing:
  - In part on account of John the Baptist's endorsement
  - John had openly declared Jesus to be the Christ
  - Capping it off with a five-fold testimony of His absolute superiority (John 3:31–35)
  - Declaring, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (v. 30).
- Word of Jesus' fame and expanding baptisms had caught the eyes and ears of the Pharisees.

Introduction to Ch 4

- But as Chapter 4 opens, we see Jesus doing something unexpected:
- He deliberately steps away from Jerusalem, away from the Pharisees, and away from the threshold of earthly "success."
- He heads back toward Galilee, knowing full well that His "hour" had not yet come.
- But it is *how* He goes back that is the real surprise!

1 When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had
heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples
than John,

2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)

3 He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.

4 And he must needs go through Samaria.

John 4:1-4

The Samaritans

- Standard practice for a Jew traveling from Judea in the south to Galilee in the north was to cross over the Jordan River, travel up through Perea on the east bank, and cross back over
- …taking a lengthy detour for one primary reason:
- To avoid setting foot in Samaria!
- The Jews viewed Samaritans as unclean outcasts and refused to have any dealings with them.
- Yet John records a striking detail: Jesus *"must needs go through Samaria"* (John 4:4).
- This was not a geographic necessity; it was a divine appointment.



Sychar

Jesus baptises people

Jerusalem

Sameria

- This ‘feud’ began shortly after 722 B.C. when the king of Assyria had taken the northern kingdom of Israel into captivity.
- The record of this is found in 2 Kings 17:18-33:

The Samaritans

18 Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left *but the tribe of Judah only*...

23 as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day.

2 Kings 17:18-33

The Samaritans

24 And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof.

25 And so it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the LORD: therefore the LORD sent lions among them, which slew some of them.

2 Kings 17:18-33

The Samaritans

26 Wherefore they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the God of the land: therefore he hath sent lions among them, and, behold, they slay them, because they know not the manner of the God of the land.
27 Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither one of the priests whom ye brought from thence; and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land.

2 Kings 17:18-33

The Samaritans

28 Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear the LORD.
29 *Howbeit every nation made gods of their own...*

33 They feared the LORD, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence.

2 Kings 17:18-33

British Museum - London









Room 17

Royal Lion Hunts

Lion-hunting, in Assyria, was the sport of kings. The sculptures in this room, carved about 645-635 BC, mostly show the sporting exploits of the last great Assyrian king, Ashurbanipal. The hunt scenes, full of tension and realism, rank among the finest achievements of Assyrian art.



In your photo of the Ashurbanipal reliefs, the king (identifiable by his distinctive, towering headgear and beard) and his spearmen are not "chasing down" a lion for sport; they are in a **defensive posture** within a moving chariot that is **moving away** from the attack.

A.I. analysis

This does not depict a hunt scene!
… rather extermination of a pest problem!

If this were purely a triumphant royal hunt for sport and pride, you would expect to see the classic "trophy shot": servants carrying the prized carcass back on their shoulders or loading it onto the royal chariot as a badge of honor.
Instead, as the photo clearly shows you see a density of dying and dead beasts littered across the ground, bristling with arrows.
This is culling, plain and simple—the mechanical, systematic extermination of an overwhelming infestation rather than a selective, prized hunt.

A.I. analysis

There are no reliefs of the Assyrians carrying the lions away on their chariots, celebrating their skill in hunting!

Assyrian monarchs—especially Ashurbanipal—were notorious for carving every conceivable brag into stone. On other walls in Nineveh, they meticulously documented every detail that elevated their pride: counting severed heads of enemies, displaying captured booty, and marching bound prisoners in triumphal processions.

That right to brag is completely absent in these images.

The focus remains on the sheer volume of beasts killed on the field to clear the land, not on collecting or parading a single royal prize.

A.I. analysis

5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

John 4:5

- This place was synonymous with grace
- …which provides a rich Old Testament backdrop that illuminates why Jesus met her at this exact location.

5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

John 4:5

- This parcel of land points directly back to Jacob's deathbed blessing in Genesis 48:22, where Jacob gave Joseph a portion (Shechem) above his brothers.
- Joseph—the hated, rejected brother who was sold into slavery—received this prized inheritance.
- It stands as a monument to how God exalts the outcast and pours out favor on the undeserving.

Mount Ebal & Mount Gerizim

- Sychar sat right in the valley between Mount Ebal (the mountain of the curse) and Mount Gerizim (the mountain of blessing) from Deuteronomy 27-28.
- The Law exposed man's inability to keep God's commands, leaving humanity under the threat of Ebal's curse.
- Yet here, nestled right at the foot of these mountains on Jacob's plot of grace, stands Jesus, the One who would bear the curse of the Law to give us the blessing of eternal life (Galatians 3:13)!

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. John 4:6

- It is a profound and moving reality that Jesus, the One who is God-Incarnate, was wearied from His journey.
- John wrote this Gospel primarily to prove that Jesus is God…
- …yet, here he shows the full reality of Jesus' humanity.
- In taking on human form, He did not merely appear human; He fully subjected Himself to our frailty

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Hebrews 4:15

- When we come to Him in prayer, we aren't appealing to a remote deity who cannot understand pain.
- We are speaking to the One who knows exactly what it means to have an aching body, tired legs and feel weary.
- He sat by that well genuinely sympathising with this woman’s weakness.

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water:
Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

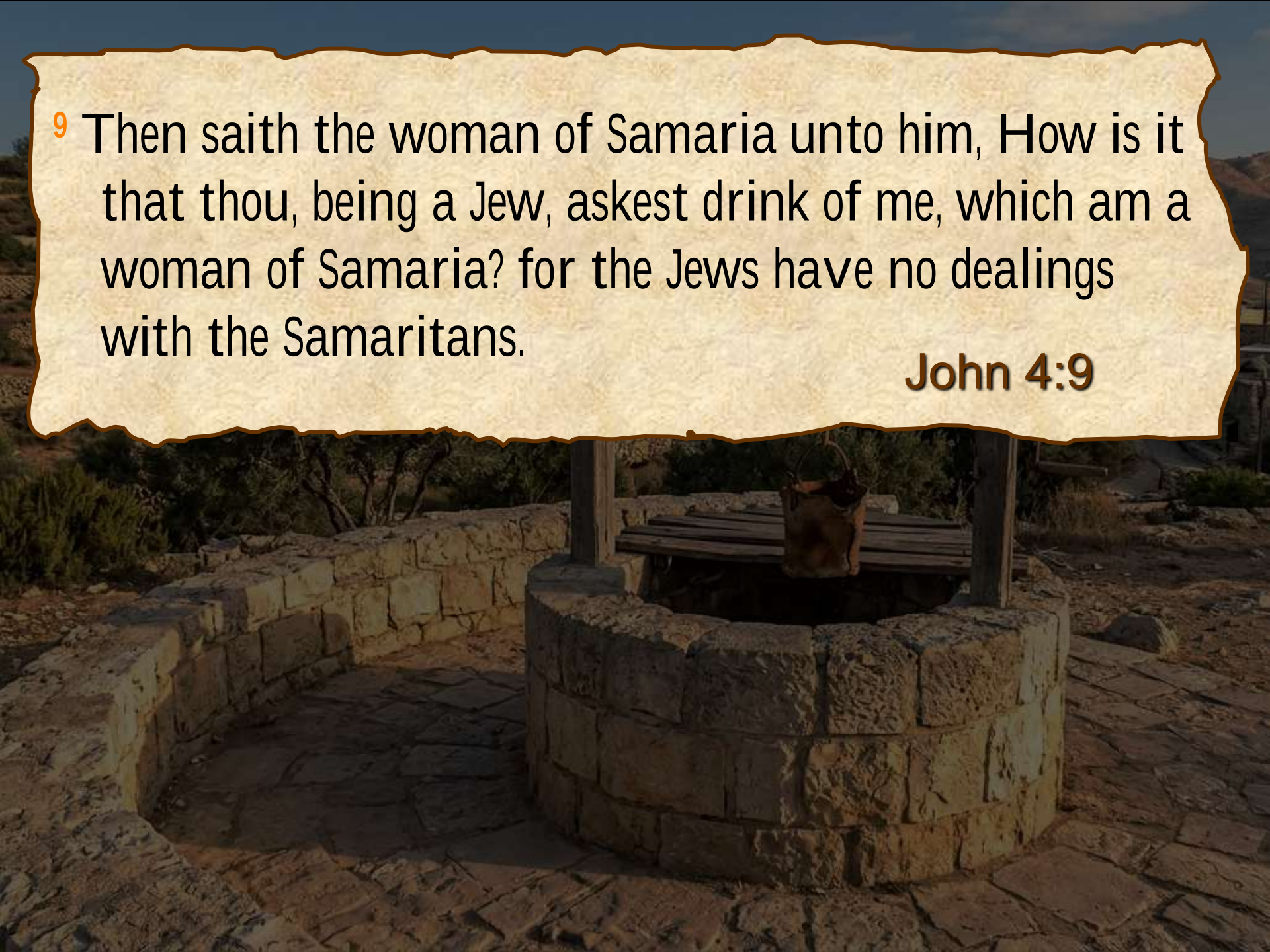
8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

John 4:7

- Commentators note that there was a convenient water source inside Sychar itself.
- She did not need to make this lengthy journey out of the city.
- She came to Jacob's Well because the other local women, who typically came in groups at the cool "tenth hour" (4:00 PM) would not tolerate her presence

The Women at the Well

- She makes this long walk alone and at noon (the sixth hour v6) during the heat of the day.
- She would have had to carry an empty stone water pot and (after lowering a bucket v. 11) heave it back up filled.
- Then walk home with that immense weight under the blazing sun.
- Her arrival at high noon is telling of a human condition: When faced with the pain of rejection by others, physical pain and exhaustion are preferable.



9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

John 4:9

The Women at the Well

- Notice that He speaks first.
- A rabbi wouldn't have spoken publicly to a woman, and a Jew would never have used a drinking vessel belonging to a Samaritan.
- Jesus obliterates both religious and cultural taboos in a single sentence
- He is not intimidated by her shame or her past; He meets her precisely where she is

The Women at the Well

- When Jesus asks something of us, it is not because He needs our help!
  - The Kingdom of God will not grind to a halt if we fail to do something!
- He requests our involvement so He can bless us.
- He give us the opportunity to be involved in what He's doing.
- *"Why don't people get more involved? Don't they realise that they're missing out?"*

- Sharayah

Oswald Chambers

- *“If you are in love with your Lord, obedience does not cost us anything—it is a delight...“*
- *"We become so taken up with our own concerns, asking 'What if God wants me to do this or go there?'... All that is an indication that we have reservations about serving God... We miss the sheer, unutterable delight of being spent for His interests.”*

The Destitution of Service

Oswald Chambers

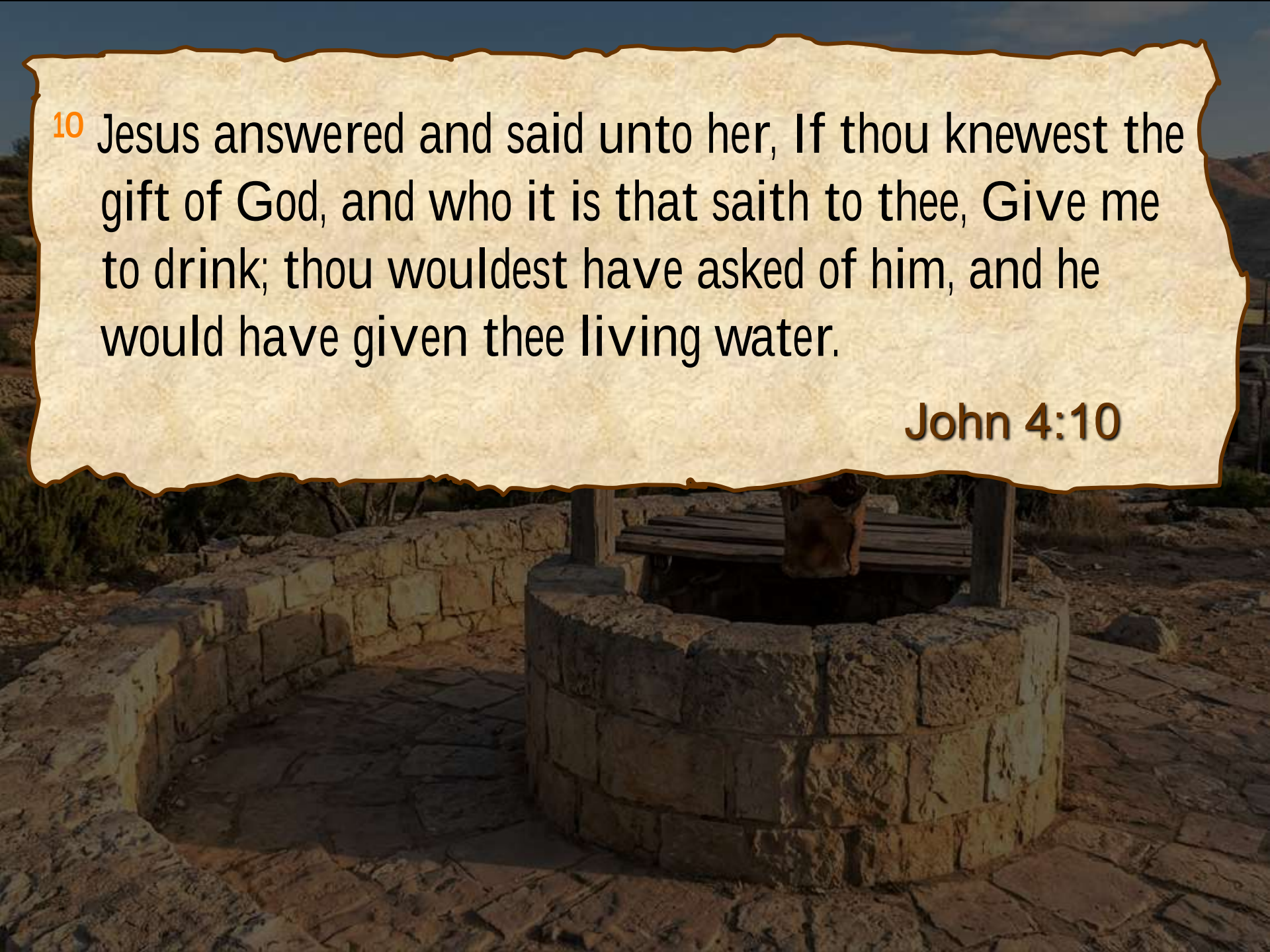
- *“"The great enemy of the life of faith in God is not sin, but the good which is not good enough. The good is always the enemy of the best.“*

  My Utmost for His Highest

- When people withhold their commitment, they aren't necessarily living in outright rebellion; they are simply settling for a quiet, comfortable life—unaware that by doing so, they miss God’s absolute best for them.
  - When Christ invites us to participate in what He is doing, many people view it as a duty or a chore—never realising that by turning down the invitation, they are the ones missing out on the Living Water.

The Women at the Well

- Image this account if the woman had said no!
- *No! I'm too busy,*
- *I'm too tired,*
- *I've got other commitments,*
- *'You've no idea what other things I'm dealing with right now!'*


10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.
John 4:10

The Women at the Well

- We are given quite an interesting profile of this woman; clearly an outcast, but as we will see, with some degree of religious conviction.
- One thing that does become clear is that she is a person who is seeking to be satisfied, her life clearly unfulfilled, despite her lifestyle.
- Jesus now talks to her, no doubt recognising her inward longing, and offers her something she doesn't have, nor has been able to attain by her efforts.

The Women at the Well

- *'If thou knewest the gift of God'*
- - we have already seen the gift of God, detailed for us in chapter 3:16
  - *'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life'*
- *'and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink'*
- Jesus is the gift of God, and He offers something that is not temporary, but permanent.
- Jesus uses the example of Living Water to contrast that which this woman can have by her efforts, and that which He alone can give her.

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

John 4:11-12

- Like Nicodemus, she only sees the natural

"Just who does this Jew think he is? Coming here and talking about 'living water'. I know our tradition and it says nothing of 'living water'. What can you give me that my tradition can't?"

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

John 4:13-14

- That which is natural can never quench our thirst
- We are spiritual beings temporarily residing in a physical frame

Spiritual Thirst

- *"Water is so often used by Christ to illustrate the spiritual truths we are considering.*
- *Thirst is an important ingredient of hell.*
- *Is it a physical thirst for physical water, or something even more painful and specifically related to the spiritual thirst to which Christ so often referred and which He claimed to quench for those who would believe on Him?*

Spiritual Thirst

- *The rich man in hell was "tormented in this flame." He begged Abraham to send Lazarus to "dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue..." Luke 16:23-25.*
- *Were the flames in hell and the thirst that tormented the rich man real? Certainly.*
- *Were they physical? How could that be the case?*
- *Only the rich man's soul was in hell; his dead body was in the grave. He had no tongue in hell.*
- *Could physical flames affect soul and spirit, and could soul and spirit have physical thirst?*

Spiritual Thirst

- *Did the rich man in hell need physical water?*
- *It would not have done his soul any good.*
- *The unbearable thirst that tormented him was because at the heart of all of his sin was his rejection of the water of life that Christ offered.*
- *He would suffer eternally from the painful guilt of that rejection and the weight of his sins”*

- Dave Hunt

15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

John 4:15

- Just as Nicodemus stumbled over the physical impossibility of a second birth (John 3:4), this woman completely misinterprets the "living water."
- She envisions a miraculous physical supply that will spare her daily backbreaking labor under the noon sun.

14 "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

1 Corinthians 2:14

The Women at the Well

- Fallen humanity naturally fixates on physical relief—financial security, ease, physical comfort, or relief from social shame—while remaining blind to the spiritual disease underneath.
- She thinks her primary problem is a 100-foot well, a heavy stone pot, and an inconvenient walk.
- Jesus knows her true problem is a broken heart and a soul bankrupt from sin.
- Our spiritual condition invariably dictates and impacts our physical state.

The Women at the Well

- Jesus does not cut her off for being slow to understand.
- He uses her curiosity as a bridge.
- He meets her at the level of her felt physical need to awaken her to her actual spiritual need.
- This sets up one of the most dramatic pivots in the entire Gospel in verse 16…

16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

John 4:16

- Jesus abruptly shifts from the metaphor of "living water" to her private life. He doesn't do this to embarrass her, but because you cannot receive the living water until you acknowledge the thirst caused by your sin.
- Because He knows all things, Jesus asks the exact question we would rather avoid.
- He bypasses her intellectual curiosity and goes straight for her conscience.
- Grace does not ignore sin; it exposes it in order to forgive and restore it.

17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

John 4:17

- She gives a technically accurate answer—"I have no husband"—hoping to shut down the line of questioning. She wants to appear honest without being transparent.
- Scripture is full of examples of people who have tried to hide things from God
  - see Genesis 3 (Adam & Eve) / Genesis 4 (Cain) / Joshua 7 (Achan) / 2 Sam 11 (David) / Acts 5 (Ananias & Sapphira) etc.

Free Advice!

Don’t bother trying to hide from God!

If He knows the end from the beginning, He already knows every detail of your past and present.

The safest place to be is completely transparent before the One who already knows everything and still offers grace.

18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

John 4:18

- Jesus exposes her exact history without a single bit of gossip or rumors—He brings to light the hidden reality of her life.
- Christ's statement acts as the ultimate spiritual scalpel.
- He does not use His knowledge to crush her, but to reveal that nothing in her life is hidden from His sight.

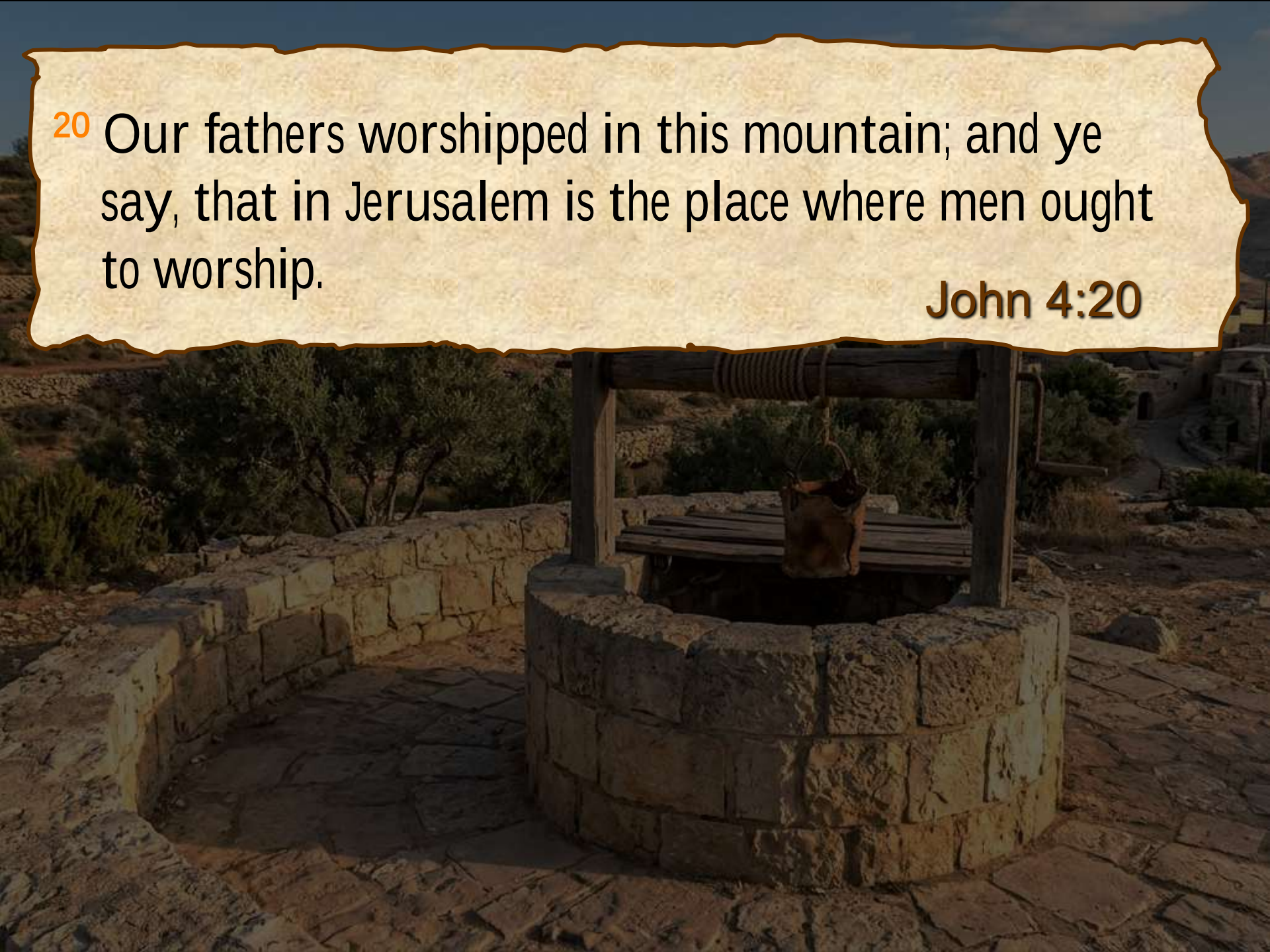
5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts..

1 Corinthians 4:5

19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

John 4:19

- Is her response just an attempt to change the question?
- Regardless, if she is suddenly standing before a true prophet of God, why not ask the ultimate burning question?
- For centuries, Samaritans and Jews had been deeply divided over where God was truly to be worshipped.



20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

John 4:20

Mt Gerizim or Mt Zion?

- The Samaritan Tradition:
  - The Samaritans built their own temple on Mount Gerizim (visible right next to Jacob's Well), claiming it was the original holy place of Abraham and Jacob.
- The Jewish Truth:
  - The Jews maintained that God chose Zion—Jerusalem—as the place for His Temple and sacrificial system.
- It is far easier to argue about church traditions, worship styles, and denominational disputes than it is to deal with personal righteousness before a holy God!

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour
cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor
yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we
worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

John 4:21-22

- She asked *where* to worship (Gerizim vs. Jerusalem);
- Jesus shifts the entire focus to *how* and *whom* to worship.

The Nature of True Worship

- Up to this point, ancient religion was tied to physical location—mountains, temples, and altars.
- Jesus announces an epochal shift: physical geography is no longer the prerequisite for divine access.
- Notice the divine pivot in terminology:
- She spoke of "our fathers" (ancestral tradition);
- Jesus speaks of "the Father" (paternal intimacy).
- Worship is no longer about geographical loyalty to a mountain, but personal relationship with a Person.

The Nature of True Worship

- The Samaritans were sincere, but their worship was misdirected and incomplete because they rejected everything in Scripture past the Pentateuch (the Law of Moses).
  - They lacked the Psalms and the Prophets.
- The Jews held the complete revelation.
- God specifically entrusted His covenants, law, and promises to Israel as a holy people (Ex19:5).

Salvation is of the Jews!

- Jesus explicitly affirms God's redemptive 'red' line through Israel.
- The Scriptures are Jewish, the apostles were Jewish, and the Messiah Himself is a Jew who will return to reign on the throne of David in Jerusalem.
- Sadly, many in today's culture (and even within the church) resist the distinct calling and role of Israel (the lie of replacement theology).
- Yet this absolute statement comes directly from the lips of Jesus Christ.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

John 4:23-24

The Nature of True Worship

- *‘and now is…’*
- The Age of Grace is not just a future promise; it broke into history the moment Christ arrived as the Light of the World.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

John 4:23-24

True Worshippers

- He does not need our performance, but He desires genuine communion born of grace.
  - The phrase "true worshippers" contrasts external Old Covenant rituals with internal New Covenant reality.
  - Old Covenant sacrifices were merely shadows anticipating the ultimate substance in Christ. Col 2:17

"For the law having a shadow of good things to come... can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect... But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.

Hebrews 10:1–14

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

John 4:23-24

The Father Seeketh…

- This is one of the most astonishing revelations in Scripture: God is actively seeking worshippers.
  - Jesus' famous statement in John 4:23 that the Father seeks worshipers is unparalleled, for nowhere in the entire corpus of Holy Scripture do we read of God's seeking anything else from a child of God. – K Hughes

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

John 4:23-24

God is a Spirit

- Because God's essential nature is non-material (Spirit), physical location, physical architecture, and fleshly effort are fundamentally incapable of connecting with Him.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

John 4:23-24

Worship in Spirit

- As Jesus explained to Nicodemus (John 3), that which is born of the flesh is flesh. Fallen human nature cannot produce acceptable worship.
- Our best self-generated efforts are as "filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6).
- Acceptable worship can only originate from a spirit regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

Worship In Truth

- Objective Truth: Rooted in the reality of who Jesus is and what He accomplished, rather than human superstition or emotional manipulation.
- Subjective Integrity: Approaching God with absolute honesty—no religious masks, no technical half-truths (like verse 17), and no hypocrisy.
- The old nature is crucified, and all pretence is laid down.

Calvary Chapel

- We Believe worship of God should be Spiritual.
  - Therefore: We remain flexible and yielded to the leading of the Holy Spirit to direct our worship.
- We Believe worship of God should be Inspirational.
  - Therefore: We give a great place to music in our worship.
- We Believe worship of God should be Intelligent.
  - Therefore: Our services are designed with great emphasis upon teaching the Word of God that He might instruct us how He should be worshiped.
- We Believe worship of God is Fruitful.
  - Therefore: We look for His love in our lives as the supreme evidence that we have truly been worshiping Him.

What is Worship?

- It is not mere music or singing:
  - Singing songs can be a vessel for worship, but music alone is not worship. One can sing accurate words with a cold or deceitful heart.
- It is not an emotional experience:
  - True worship does not depend on warm feelings, goosebumps, or manufactured atmosphere. Emotion may accompany worship, but it is not the definition of it.
- It is not self-serving:
  - True worship is never about "getting something out of it" or seeking a spiritual "high" to feel better. When worship becomes about my satisfaction rather than His glory, we miss the mark!

What is Worship?

- God has given us worship as a means of communion and focus on Himself, not on ourselves.
- True worship is ruined when the focus shifts to personal comfort, performance, or self-gratification.

What is Worship?

- *"Worship is giving God the best that He has given you. Be careful what you do with the best you have. Whenever you get a blessing from God, give it back to Him as a love gift. Take time to meditate before God and offer the blessing back to Him in a deliberate act of worship".* – Oswald Chambers

What is Worship?

- *"There will have to be the relinquishing of my claim to my right to myself in every phase. Am I willing to relinquish my hold on all I possess, my hold on my affections, and on everything, and to be identified with the death of Jesus Christ?"* – Oswald Chambers

What is Worship?

- Worship is a total sacrifice of self (Romans 12:1)
  - It is presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice—all that I am surrendered over to all of Him.
  - Like David in 2 Samuel 24:24: *"Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing."*
  - True worship costs us our pride, our self-will, and our self-reliance.
- Worship is a daily choice and lifestyle:
  - True worship is not an event on Sunday morning; it is a minute-by-minute posture of the heart.
  - It is lived out in everyday obedience, integrity in private, and yielding our rights to Him.

What is Worship?

- Worship is surrender of the old nature
  …hence: *"In Spirit and in Truth"*

- In Spirit:
  - It demands a regenerated heart—the new life birthed by the Holy Spirit.
- In Truth:
  - It requires absolute honesty before God. Laying down religious masks, pretense, and hidden sins (like the Samaritan woman dropping her half-truths), allowing Christ to rule every area of life.


THE GOSPEL
OF JOHN
To be continued…

Calvary Chapel Portsmouth

Copyright © 2026 Calvary Chapel Portsmouth. All Rights Reserved.