

## THE GOSPEL OF JOHN | John 4:16-26

**16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." 17 The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; 18 for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true." 19 The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. 20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship." 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. 22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." 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." 26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he." John 4:16-26 ESV**

### INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Jesus is often willing to offend our minds in order to reveal our hearts. So when Jesus decides that he wants to teach the whole world about what it truly means to worship, he chooses to use a whore. (Verses 16-18)

The Samaritans were the remnant of the northern Jewish kingdom who had intermarried with foreigners after their leaders and nobles were carried off into exile around 730 BC. They were known for building a place of worship, separate from the Jewish temple, on Mt. Gerizim. And they willfully rejected all of the Old Testament except their own version of the first five books of Moses. The hostility between the Samaritans and Jews was centuries old.

In order to reach through to this woman, Jesus applies pressure to the most sensitive and vulnerable place in her life. Sometimes, the quickest way to the heart is through a wound. Jesus knows this, and so he lovingly lays bare the most shameful piece of this woman's heart so that she might truly come to him and find life. Concealed sin always keeps us from coming to the light of Christ.

*20 For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.* John 3:20 ESV

### I. A SINNER'S DEFENSE (Verses 16-20)

Now we get the privilege of witnessing the universal reflex of a person who is desperately trying to avoid conviction. Obviously, she has to admit that Jesus has some sort of supernatural discernment, so she acknowledges him to be a prophet. However, instead of actually dealing with her guilt, she quickly changes the subject by bringing up a theological controversy. (Verses 19-20)

Surprisingly, Jesus never revisits the issue of this woman's adultery from this point on. He chose to use this vulnerable part of her life in order to get beneath the surface, but now that he is there he is willing to use the very issue she has raised in order to finish his saving work. This woman asks Jesus where people should worship, but Jesus responds by telling her that "where" a person worships is not nearly as important as "how" they worship and "whom" they worship.

### II. THE MARKS OF TRUE WORSHIP (Verses 21-24)

It's important to recognize that Jesus is not shy about informing this woman that the entire Samaritan race is attempting to worship a "god" that they do not know. (Verses 21-22)

*"When all our efforts to be gentle and respectful of another person's religion are done, the time eventually comes when you have to say, 'Biblical worship is true worship and yours is false.' This will often be thrown back in your face as a statement of arrogance. But it isn't. If there is truth, and you have bowed humbly before it, then to try to persuade another person to bow with you is not arrogance. It is love." -John Piper*

Jesus directs the woman's attention away from the external question "where" to worship to the internal questions of "how" and "whom" to worship. In order for worship to be true it must come from the heart and be based on a true perception of who God is. Verse 23 sums up these two vital characteristics of worship with the phrase "spirit and truth". The word "spirit" answers the question of "how" to worship. And the word "truth" answers the question of "whom" to worship. To worship in spirit is to worship in a genuine way that comes from the heart. And to worship in truth is to worship in a correct way that is based on a right knowledge of God that comes from the mind. (Verses 23-24)

### III. DOCTRINAL DISCLAIMER

When Jesus says in verse 23, "True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth," some people believe that the word "spirit" in this context refers to the Holy Spirit. I agree that no one can truly worship God unless they have been empowered by the Holy Spirit. However, I've taken the word "spirit" in this context to mean that true worship must be genuine and internal. It must come from "your spirit" within, rather than coming from mere external conformity. It's important to remember that in John 3:6 Jesus connects the Holy Spirit and our spirit by saying, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." In other words, until we are made alive by the Holy Spirit, our spirit is so dead it does not even qualify as spirit. Only that which is born of the Holy Spirit is truly spirit. So when Jesus says that true worshipers must worship in spirit, I believe he means that true worship must be genuine worship that comes from our spirits within which have been made alive by the Holy Spirit.

### FIRST RESPONSE - COFFEE WITH THE PASTORS

DAY/TIME	LEADERS	LOCATION	CONTACT INFO
The First Sunday of Every Month at 7PM	Joel Webbon Rony Renfrow Stacy Craft	3240 Lowell St San Diego, CA 92106	469-487-6298 joel@theresponsechurch.com

### MISSIONAL COMMUNITIES

DAY/TIME	LEADERS	LOCATION	CONTACT INFO
Tuesday at 7PM	Joel & Megan Webbon	3240 Lowell St San Diego, CA 92106	469-487-6298 joel@theresponsechurch.com
Wednesday at 7PM	Jacob & Ally Merkey	3717 Lotus Dr San Diego, CA 92106	713-385-6940 jacob@theresponsechurch.com
Thursday at 7PM	Rony & Danielle Renfrow	1676 Chatsworth Blvd San Diego, CA 92107	925-348-0128 rony@theresponsechurch.com
Thursday at 7PM	Stacy Craft	3328 Stern St. San Diego, CA 92106	704-778-2609 stacy@theresponsechurch.com