

## **The Gospel of John - #16 - 01/24/2021 - "Forgiven- I Repeat It!" John 4: 16-26**

**Introduction: IL-** Some churches will do nearly anything to get a crowd for worship. A church in Boston had a rock and roll festival for 1,100 teenagers. A procession of teens placed on the communion table a Bible, a slice of bread, a can of Coca Cola, a pool cue and billiard ball to symbolize religion, eating and having fun! We're going to look at a passage that emphasizes real worship and also focuses on recognizing the true Messiah and the realization of God's amazing grace toward sinners like us! He is certainly worthy of praise! My prayer is that we will all leave here resting confidently in a personal relationship with Jesus who loves us far more than we can imagine!

**Indication: verses 16-19-** The Samaritan woman has already had extended conversation with the Savior. She struggled to understand the "living water" that Jesus spoke of. We have the benefit of John 7: 37 to 39 where Jesus says- "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" Verse 39 in that text makes it clear that Jesus was speaking of the Holy Spirit who would indwell those who believe in Christ as Savior. This woman was about to get it- understanding of who Jesus truly is and understanding of the value of that living water!

**-of the Samaritan woman's condition-** Immediately after this woman says, "Give me this water so I won't thirst again and so I won't have to come here to draw water again" Jesus tells her- "Go, call your husband and come here." That statement began a brief encounter with her about sin and her deepest need for forgiveness and a right relationship with the only One who can forgive sin. She admits to Jesus that she is not married, and Jesus responds with her correct status- "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband' for you have had five husbands and the one you now have is not your husband." Jesus said this, not to shame her but to save her from bondage to sin! And though this text is nearly two thousand years old, the truth remains that merely living together does not constitute marriage. Our modern society needs to be reminded of that through the clear teaching on marriage and faithfulness in marriage in the Bible! As we read further in this chapter, that statement by Jesus shocked her! Verse 29 of this chapter makes that point- "Come see a Man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" I believe that she comes to faith in Jesus along with many from her hometown! She didn't say to Jesus, "That's my private life- what is that to you?- mind your own business." She moves from referring to Him racially as a Jew, to this term of respect, "Sir". And now she believes He must be a prophet to know what He knows about her. The text is quite straightforward about what Jesus knows regarding her life and she begins to comprehend that He is no ordinary Jewish man!

**-of His comprehension-** And we too can determine from this passage that Jesus knows all about her, and about you and me! And if that truly sinks in for us, as for her, we will have a Biblical view of His all-knowing wisdom and power to discern truth, since He IS truth! And we will have to be honest with Him about our spiritual condition and our need of His grace and forgiveness. Proverbs 20: 9 says- "Who can say, 'I have made my heart pure; I am clean from my

sin?" No one can make that claim because forgiveness and right standing with the Lord only comes from Christ who paid the penalty for our sin at Calvary's cross! **IL-** Tim Keller writes- "We're far worse than we ever imagined and far more loved than we could ever dream!" I'm so glad those two statements go together, aren't you?! Adam and Eve tried to hide their sin from God but couldn't. And this woman couldn't cover her sin before this One whom she comes to know as Messiah and personal Savior from sin! Everything that has taken place between her and Jesus has been a preparation for this delicate moment in dealing with her lifestyle. Jesus even commends her for telling the truth! **IL-** Madeleine L'Engle writes- "We do not draw people to Christ by loudly discrediting what they believe, by telling them how wrong they are and how right we are, but by showing them the Light that is so lovely that they will want, with all their hearts, to know the source of it." And if we comprehend anything this morning from this two-person encounter, I pray that it will be how lovely Jesus is in His divine character as the Light of the World who stepped down into darkness!

**Investigation: verses 20-24-** This woman now wants to know what the truth is about worship. I am among those who reject the view that she is merely changing the subject to take the pressure off of her regarding sin.

**-setting things right-** I am convinced that she really wants to know about worship on her people's famous Mount Gerizim or if she should go to the Temple in Jerusalem. Why? I believe it is because she senses that she needs to talk with a priest- about her sin problem. Jesus has lovingly touched a raw nerve. The whole time she has spent with this current man in her life may have been days, weeks, months or years of living with shame and a feeling of bondage, but now she is wanting to be set free from sin's chains! She is thinking that this man, Jesus, is a prophet with the gift of discernment who boldly speaks truth from God and can possibly tell her where to go geographically and emotionally to get help for her burdened soul. The issue isn't where to go, it is who to turn to. The important thing isn't a place but a Person, a divine Person who can forgive and transform her life. Her Samaritan people worship on Mount Gerizim whose peaks are within clear sight of where their conversation takes place. There used to be, in the 100's BC, a temple on that mountain but it was destroyed in 112 BC by a Jewish army led by the Jewish High Priest, John Hyrcanus. That was a HUGE part of the contention between Jews and Samaritans even 100 years after the temple came down. But Jesus wants to make it clear that He knows that a day is coming, "an hour is coming" when even the Jews won't be able to worship in the Temple in their capital city. And in 70 AD the Jewish Temple was destroyed by the Roman army. So, the place will no longer be an issue. What is always the important matter is the nature of worship that honors God the Father! Rites and rituals, forms and ceremonies, Sabbaths or Sundays- none of that is the bottom-line issue. What IS the central truth is that worship that glorifies God is to be a top priority for all those who have been forgiven of sin and changed from sinners to saints by God's grace. The contrast between true and false worship is plain to see if we line it up with Scripture. Do we practice worship or pretend to worship? Are we seeking to be seen or seeking the Seeker?

**-seeking 'The Seeker'**- What is amazing is that God the Father accepts our worship through His Son and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit! To think that God seeks true worshipers should motivate us to be those true worshipers. To qualify we must worship "in spirit and in truth." The little word "must" is important- this kind of worship is not optional for a true follower of Jesus. And if this Samaritan woman wants to know the essence of real worship that honors God she MUST give her heart to Jesus. And that same thing is true for **you** today if you really want to worship God as He deserves and as will fill your heart and life with joy and blessing! This woman has "perceived" or progressively come to understand more, and this teaching on true worship is directly in line with what you and I need to know too! Jesus makes it clear to her that the Jews as a people need the same "salvation" that she needs, and that salvation message is made clear in the Bible- the very oracles of God that He gave to the world through the Jewish people. The Samaritans missed out on the truths that the Jewish people knew through the Old Testament. They only accepted the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, the Books of Moses. The Jews had the entire Old Testament which included the prophetic books that told, hundreds of years in advance, about the Messiah, Jesus- whose name would be called "Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace". (Isaiah 9: 6) There is a reminder in this for you and me- leaving out parts of our Bibles, not studying them, not submitting to them, is a path to wrong conclusions and mistaken obedience! Bottom line for us in 2021- true worship, in the spirit and based on truth, is not in a location, time of the week, format of a Sunday service- it is a heart loaded with praise to God and a mind committed to serving Him because He deserves it!

#### **Identification: verses 25-26**

**-the Messiah-** This woman already knew something about the Messiah, that He was "on His way", and it tells us that she was not totally ignorant of Old Testament concepts. I believe she is revealing her heart's thirst for truth that Jesus revived in her as they spoke to each other. She needed to know, as we do, that God wants to reside in the heart of anyone who is open and yielded to Him. Yielding to the "sent One", the Christ, is saying "yes" to a life of joy and blessing that only true worshipers, true believers experience. That "hour" Jesus spoke of took place over a weekend of what we call Easter when Jesus willingly gave His life, shed His blood, for sinners like you and me and her!

**-the marvel-** Those are wonderful words in verse 26- "I who speak to you am HE!" "I am the Messiah!" "I am the One who gives you every reason to worship the Father in Heaven!" I am the One who forgives sin and gives new life, the Holy Spirit, and the living water that means you will never thirst!" She heard that, left her water pot there and headed into town to tell others about this Man, this Prophet, this Messiah. But don't worry- she'll be back, with others!

**Conclusion: IL-** Most all presidents, when they leave office, give pardons to friends and acquaintances who have been convicted of some crime. President Trump gave out 143 pardons over the past months. Franklin Roosevelt gave the most- 2,819! But the best pardon, full and immediate, is to anyone who comes by faith and receives that gift from God through Jesus!