

The Mind of Christ - Lesson 38

December 18, 2019

John 4:16-26

¹⁶ He told her, “Go, call your husband and come back.”

¹⁷ “I have no husband,” she replied.

¹⁸ The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.”

¹⁹ “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”

²¹ “Woman,” Jesus replied, “believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”

²⁵ The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

²⁶ Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you—I am he.

I realized that when I read over this I stopped last week at a bad place, so I’ll try to recover a little bit from that. Of course, we were talking about the woman at the well. Jesus was talking with her about the fact that she had had five husbands and the man who she was living with at the time was not her husband. We introduced the idea of ‘why would anyone live that lifestyle?’ It was a “one after the other kind” of lifestyle and we’re only speculating. Generally people only do things like that because they are searching for something. We usually do things because we *want* something. Now, wanting something isn’t bad. In fact, wanting what God wants is a great thing.

Sometimes wanting the right things and going out to get them the wrong way is not good, but God built certain human desires into us – relational desires for companionship, friendships and all those kinds of things, but we sometimes miss the boat when we try to fulfill that empty hole inside us. Of course, she was needed the living water to *really* fill up the hole. And so I compared it to an ‘idolatry’ of relationships. We worship things that are false; things that don’t have any possibility of doing anything for us. But we keep going back and bowing down toward these things instead of drinking water that is *living* water. In this fulfilling, we end up drinking salty water. It’s wet, and some people like salt. It’s in most of our foods. But there’s just something about drinking too much salty water; it’s not good for your system. That’s the way it is sometimes with *relationships*; people keep drinking from the same wells and they’re filled with things that will not satisfy.

I want to point this out: The question is not totally a legal one, because you might say, okay, but after a while, ‘she has had *five* husbands and the one she is living with isn’t even her husband at this point in time. You get into the divorce and remarriage issue, but it doesn’t seem here that Jesus is making a purely ‘legal’ statement about this matter. Even if she had done this *legally*; married to *each one* legally and the one she’s living with had she married *him* legally and morally, it would not mean that the marriages would have fulfilled her.

People get into legal marriages all the time hoping that it's going to be the thing that is going to make their life happy, and it doesn't always turn out that way. The problem was *internal* and *spiritual*; not a **legal** issue. It's kind of like the statement Paul made in **1 Corinthians 10:23-4** when he said, "**All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify.**" You can do a lot of things, even *legally* do a lot of things, but it doesn't necessarily mean that you should do those things because they are not necessarily beneficial for you.

This distinguished Jesus from other teachers. He is not just an interpreter of the Law as the "teachers of the Law" were interpreters of the Law. Jesus is an interpreter of the heart! He was reading her well. Jesus demonstrated that He knew things supernaturally, that she had five husbands, unless He hired a P. I. to go in and investigate this woman. He knew it supernaturally. He wasn't just a nosey person. But she **perceived Him** to be a prophet!

The idea that is used here for the word "prophet" is prophete (προφητης). In this particular place it is the idea of beholding, or gazing, or spectating. It means "to view with interest, to contemplate mentally, to consider, to perceive, to see, to come to a knowledge of, or to experience something. So when she said, "I perceive that You are a prophet..." she is saying that she is seeing and experiencing now Your prophetic power. This is a special moment for the woman because it is a moment of perception. It's a moment when the light bulbs are beginning to go off and she is beginning to wonder, 'who is this person?'

Her eyes are opening; she's coming to faith. What you are seeing in that one statement, "I perceive that you are a prophet", is just the first flicker of faith in this woman. It's when it begins to spark, like when a spark bridges the gap. It's beginning to flicker. She is beginning to open her mind up to the possibility that she is standing in the presence of a real prophet ... and that's a big deal! For a Jewish or Samaritan person, that would be a big deal ... for *any* of us if we thought that we were standing genuinely in the presence of a prophet of God.

So, she's coming to faith. She's beginning to recognize Jesus. So far, to her He is merely a prophet and He **was** a prophet ... but more, as she will learn. This is a first taste of water ... just a few drops. It comes from recognizing Jesus. This is the place we must lead others to again and again. We have to move people off of some apathetic position of Jesus, of where they perceive Jesus as maybe a good person, or a moral teacher, or somebody who is merely human, maybe exceptionally so, but merely human; to that place where they begin to see, at least, the work of God in Jesus' life ... something authoritative, and **that's** where she is beginning to go. If He's a prophet then He has some authority, or He has some special knowledge, or that He has *something* that **I** need to tap into here.

When people reach that point, then **that's** when they begin to inquire of Jesus; **that's** when they want to know more about Him, or at least they want to ask Him some questions, and that's what happens to her. She's thinking that maybe He can answer some of my questions.

The idea of a prophet for Jews *and* Samaritans was not new. They had a history of prophets and their writings. In fact, they concluded the same thing about John the Baptist in **Matthew 21:23-26**. They were asking Jesus by what authority He was doing these things.

²⁴ Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ The baptism of John was from what source, from heaven or from men?” And they began reasoning among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will say to us, ‘Then why did you not believe him?’ ²⁶ But if we say, ‘From men,’ we fear the people; for **they all regard John as a prophet.**” It carried the idea of being a spokesman for God. Being God’s representative is tied to knowing things God would know, and communicating, proclaiming and teaching or preaching these things to others. There is the idea of **authority** in this. Is this person authorized to speak for God ... otherwise, they are a false prophet if they are not authorized to speak for God. **How** were they authorized and commissioned?

Jesus received a direct word of authorization from Heaven at His baptism. Signs and miracles accompanied His ministry. Even in this present circumstance, He demonstrates supernatural knowledge of things untold Him by the woman leaving her with the thought of, “how did he know this?” How did He know it?

We see performers do this to our amazement; and it’s all a very elaborate trick; and because we have seen it before and we **know** it’s a trick, it’s a performance, so we’re skeptical. Acts 8 shows there were folks in the first century who had the ability to deceive many people. Simon the sorcerer was one. “**Acts 8:17**, “Then they [the apostles] began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money, ¹⁹ saying, “Give this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.”

Jesus was not finished demonstrating His authority or identity. He **was** going to do at least two more things in adding to His presence. In other words, there are certain things that are indicators that He was different, or that she should pay attention to Him.

1. His action toward her (He was a Jewish man speaking to a Samaritan woman). That set Him apart from a **lot** of Jewish men. 2. He had a supernatural demonstration in knowing something that He should not have known. And then, there will be two more indicators for her that she needs to listen to Him. 3. The third indicator was that He was going to give her some wise teaching. He is going to teach her about some things which she asked questions about. 4. He is going to directly identify Himself as the Messiah.

So there are four lines of evidence that He gives her in order to lead her to faith, and they are in progressing order. These four things, again, are His was acting towards her in a way that was different; He showed her love. Secondly, He showed her respect as a Jewish man speaking to a Samaritan woman and telling her something that He should not have known. Thirdly by teaching her with wise words, and number four, by directly identifying himself to her and telling her who was. So this is a little insight into how Jesus did it. All of these things, combined, were to lead her to faith, or to lead her to drink this water. He is trying to get her to drink the living water.

Since the woman perceives Jesus to be a prophet, she sought to see **His** position on the place of worship issue.

Everybody has an issue in every day and age ... a hotbed issue that all religious people are discussing. They want to know something. They have a question. So, I know, that most of the time, when somebody says, "I have a Bible question for you", I know probably the top 100 Bible questions that will come at me. Every now and then somebody will ask me a Bible question and I think, "Where did **that** come from? I never heard **that** one before." But there's the top 10 or top 20 and it goes down from there. You just kind of know over and over again what kinds of questions people are going to ask. They feel like if you have any authority or they think you are smarter than they are or you know the Bible, you should know how to answer their question. They may have been to ten other 'spiritual doctors' to get the diagnosis, but they're going to ask at least one more, just in case the other ten miss something.

The woman at the well sees this as an opportunity. Just the little bit she has gotten so far from Him brings her to ask a really pressing issue between the Jews and the Samaritans. Like most of us, she was likely seeking to see if He will agree with her. That's what we mostly want when we ask questions of people, unless we genuinely just don't know the answer. But, a lot of times we ask people a question to see if they will agree with us. And she was probably hoping that He would agree with her, too, so that she could say that she talked to a really cool guy at the well and he agreed with me about this.

Surprisingly, Jesus posed a third option. The question was, "Where should we worship?" "Where is the right place to worship...Jerusalem or Mt. Gerizim? But Jesus didn't take the either / or. "[Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.](#)" It wasn't in this mountain or Jerusalem. He offered her a third alternative.

In the last couple of days, I have had opportunity to talk with a few couples who were in a dilemma. A dilemma is when you have two alternatives and neither one seems to be good. And I told them the story that I've told many times about the man being chased by the bull in the field. He sees a tree in the middle of the field but at the tree as he looks up to grab the limb he sees a nest in the tree. That's a dilemma. Do you stay on the ground and get gored by the bull or do you climb up the tree and get stung by the hornets? It's likely that if I jump up into the tree I'll end up back on the ground anyway, and the bull will get me too.

So the third alternative is one that she, nor her Jewish counterparts, had imagined. And like us, the woman stacked the deck in the way that she asked the question. She appeals to history as she did with Jacob's well. One of the things that Jews, and Samaritans, and many of us do is that we try to bolster our arguments based on history.

The fact is that her fathers, the Samaritans, worshipped in Gerizim. So she's saying that we have a rich history of worshipping here. We have worshipped here for a long time. Now, she's obviously not simply going back to the beginning of the Samaritans in 722 B. C. since the Temple in Jerusalem was built about 250 years earlier than that by Solomon. She claims that the Jews who predated the Samaritans as her fathers. She's going back to the days of the blessings and the cursings. In her mind, "We've been meeting at this mountain since the days of Moses" before the Jerusalem temple was ever built. We were meeting at this mountain first, and the Temple wasn't built for a long time; about 500 years after Moses.

Now, she's not "saying" all this but she knows her arguments. In other words, "I can trace our meeting at Gerizim further back than you can trace the Temple in Jerusalem. So, it sounds like a pretty good argument. She has history on her side ... to some extent.

She's claiming the Jews who predated the Samaritans as her fathers. In other words, she's claiming Abraham as her father, and Moses as one of her spiritual ancestors. She doesn't seem to see a problem with that thinking.

At 2,900 feet, Mount Gerizim was the site of a Temple built about the same time the Jews rebuilt the Temple in Jerusalem *after* the exile. So there were actually two temples that were built after the exile; one in Jerusalem and one in Samaria.

During the inter-testamental period, the Temple in Samaria was destroyed, but even though the building itself had been destroyed, (you can still see some of the rubble there in pictures today) they continued to go there as *their* temple for the Pascal Ceremony including the sacrifice of the lamb. It's still performed yearly there. If you go even further up the Mountain of Gerizim, there is a Muslim ceremony held at the summit of the mountain. So, there's still a lot of worship going on at Mount Gerizim with Samaritans and Muslims.

In the Samaritan Bible, here's what they did when they took the Torah, the first five books of the Law; and they "edited" it with their own Bible. So in the Samaritan Bible, all the references to Jerusalem being the place of worship have been changed. They took out the word "Jerusalem" and put in the word "Gerizim" in there. So, if you cannot prove it by Scripture, you change the words. Just change the scripture and make it say what you want it to say. It's similar to what the Jehovah's Witnesses did with **John 1:1**. If you don't like the interpretation, change it. The Christian Bible reads, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The Bible interpreters changed "...the Word was God" to "the word was a God". They just added the letter "a".

Carole: They did that with the word "baptize" too. When they translated the King James Bible into English, they took the word baptizo, meaning "to plunge under" or "submerge" they transliterated it into English letters and wrote "baptize" since they weren't immersing at the time. So the people never knew the original meaning of the word.

Rod: I'd say it's a way of taking "*creative license*" that is sometimes taken with some translations in order to make it come out the way you want it to.

So at this time, when Herod was building the elaborate Temple in Jerusalem, the Samaritans were small, and without a formal temple of their own. They had the rubble, and you can see some stones still left from the temple that was destroyed, but they didn't really have a formal Temple.

The focus of the woman's question was "where ought we to worship?" That was the burning question in her mind. Sometimes I think, in hindsight, when we look at questions that people ask in the past, that were burning questions in their mind, we look back at them and ask, "Why did they want to know that?" Like, "How many angels can you dance on the head of a needle ... on the head of a pin?" I don't know. How much time have **you** spent wondering how many angels can fit on the head of a pin?

But for somebody, some days they lost sleep over that question and I wonder why it was such a burning question. I fear that some day when they excavate the history of many... of *any* church, they are going to look at the questions that we spent so much pouring over and trying to answer, saying, “Why did you all spend so much time trying to answer *that* One?”

Anyway, the word for worship is proskuneo (προσκυνεω). It basically means “to kiss” or “to kiss towards”. Usually if you want to kiss, you need to lean into it. It can also be used for a dog licking his master’s hand. Have you ever thought of worship when you saw a dog licking his master’s hand? That’s how the word was used. It means to fawn, to crouch, to prostrate oneself, to bow, to reverence, to adore or pay homage.” So, the question is, if I may rephrase her question, is “where do we kiss God?” Where do we kiss God?

She wanted to know, “where is the **right** place to kiss God?” She doesn’t mean, “Which part of this face...on His lips or cheek...” She wants to know *location*. **Where** is it *proper* to kiss God or worship God? So, **place** was important in Jewish thinking, especially during and after the exile; the diaspora {the dispersion of the Jews beyond Israel}.

Daniel prayed when he was in exile in Babylon; he prayed three times a day and faced west – toward Jerusalem. Daniel would open his window and face the West and prayed toward Jerusalem because that was the **place** where God’s “name” is. To fixate on a place; whether the Garden of Eden, Bethel (the house of God), Gerizim, Jerusalem, Sinai, Golgotha or Masada etc. is to miss the point. It is not **PLACE**; it is the **One** being worshipped that is important. It’s the One *who* you kiss.

Now I **do** remember the first place I kissed Brenda. I don’t remember the exact name of the street but it was one of those little side streets going off the campus of Harding University. We sat down in front of this house and that was the first time I ever kissed her. I held my breath, because I was afraid I was going to get slapped. I wasn’t sure exactly what her reaction would be, but I knew her reputation when others had tried to kiss her. So, I wasn’t sure exactly what was going to happen but I figured at **some point** I had to “risk” it. And she was receptive so it worked out okay.

Did God have something to say about **place**? Yes, He did. God *did* have something to say about place...but in an *accommodative* way. What was to God, pragmatic and utilitarian, [designed to be useful or practical rather than attractive] had become to the Jews and the Samaritans something sacred. When you think about where the *original* place of Jerusalem’s Temple come from, it goes back to the story of David. Remember, he had numbered the children of Israel and God was displeased with him. In **1 Chronicles 21:7-17** we can read the story. God gave David a choice of three punishments that could happen to Israel and he chose one. David wanted to appease God for his sin. It was a place of appeasement. He was on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite and he was appealing to God to please stop this. He asked God to take **his** life because it was **his sin**. Don’t punish all these people. Take **my** life. It started out as a place of atonement where he offered **himself** as atonement for sin; for the destruction that was coming upon the people. Now *that’s* prophetic...that the Temple area became that place!

Ruth: That’s the same place where Abraham offered Isaac.

Rod: Exactly. That's the same place where Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice. And God substituted the ram in the bushes.

So it had these two places of offers of sacrifice. One was Abraham willing to offer *his son* Isaac as a sacrifice and God stopped him. Then David was willing to offer *himself* as a sacrifice for the people in this very spot, and God said, "No." Then, David bought this place, bought this threshing floor, and *that's* where the Temple was erected ... on that place.

It had some historical significance. Two major things had happened in that place. So if I was going to make a case for the place where we ought to worship, that would be a good one. That would be a really good one. I think Sinai would be a good one too. That's where God came down and shook the mountain and all that ... it would be a pretty good place too; or maybe Eden where He walked in the Garden; or maybe Golgotha where He met Jesus in the Garden.

So, Gerizim and Ebal were chosen for their geography; **not** because they were inherently sacred. It was an easy place for the people to stand below two peaks and have the cursings read from one and the blessings read from the other, and it didn't have anything to do with them being inherently sacred. It was just a good place to do it.

As I recall, this is the second time that worship had been talked about in the ministry of Jesus; the first being when Satan suggested that Jesus fall down and worship him. That is unless we include the time when He drove out the money-changers and he said "My house shall be a house of prayer" **John 2:13-16**.

Jesus' reply begins with, "believe me". So when He says to her after she asks the question, the first thing He says to her is "believe me". It's like, "I'm going to answer your question, but you need to be prepared to "believe me". When He said this, He wasn't just saying, "believe **in** Me", but believe what I am about to say to you.

Sue: In the Greek it says trust.

Rod: Yes. Trust Me. Believe Me. But it's not just trust **in** Me. Trust what I'm about to say ... the words that I am going to give you regarding this question. The indication is that that when we have questions, particularly when it's a debate between two sides; "is it this or is it that", when Jesus speaks he is basically saying to us, "**Believe Me. I am the end of this.**"

It's the same thing He did on the Sermon on the Mount in **Matthew 5:31-45** when he said, You have heard that it was said in the old times; ... but **I** say unto you ..." In other words, when **I** say it; that ends the matter. There is no more debate.

Matthew 5:31-32 "You have heard that it was said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' ³² But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery..."

³³ “Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.’ ³⁴ But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God’s throne...”

³⁸ “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth’. ³⁹ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.

⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be children of your Father in heaven...”

There is no more debate about it; no more question about it, because when **I** speak, I'm authoritative; I'm the last word on the matter. I don't know if she “got” that; or understood that, but in our common language, if you ask somebody a question today, and they look at you and say, “Believe me when I tell you this”, it would be like forcing you to say, “Maybe I will or maybe I won't. Maybe I will if you say what I want you to say.” But Jesus wasn't giving her that option. He's saying, ‘Okay woman, I'm going to answer your question, but **believe me**’ when I tell you the answer.

We will always have a choice. But in the thinking of Jesus, He recognized that choice and respected it even though He knew what was at stake. We choose to believe what a lot of people say. We have to, even when we know we cannot trust *everything everyone* says all the time. Occasionally, we just have to make a choice to believe somebody. You know, even if you get a second or third opinion, at some point you have to choose what somebody said and you will *act* on it. We could not live any other way.

Why would she want to believe Jesus? Well, *she has already acknowledged Him to be a prophet*. He has already told her the truth about her relationships. He is suggesting for her another way to live by drawing the living water. *He has treated her with respect and kindness*, so the environment He created is ripe, and right, for faith. He does call her “woman”... “Woman, believe Me.” Later it says that He speaks as One having authority.

In verse 21 we read:

“Woman,” Jesus replied, “believe me, **a time** is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.” NIV

“Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe Me, **an hour** is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.” NASB

What is this “hour” thing? “The word for “time” or “hour” in verse 21 Hora (ωρα) and is determined by the context. You can only know what the “hour” refers to by the context it is used in. Simply, Here, he says, “A time is coming.” He is saying that a time is coming when you, woman, will not be focused in worship on either place as the primary seat of worship.

He says, “Woman, believe Me, **an hour** is coming” (and He’s speaking directly to ‘her’) when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.”

Notice the personal pronoun “**you**” worship the Father. She is keeping about “her”. Now it may apply to everybody else, as well, but He’s speaking to HER because **she’s** trying to figure out the right place to worship. So He uses the word “**you**”.

Could He be talking about the destruction of Jerusalem? In other words, is He projecting forward and saying, ‘you know, in a few years, about 35 years, the Temple in Jerusalem is going to be destroyed and it’s not going to be an issue any more? But that still doesn’t change the place. The Jews today are still trying to get that Mosque off of that site so that they can rebuild the Temple. I guarantee that if that Mosque just disappeared tomorrow, they would begin to rebuild the Temple the next day. It’s guaranteed. In fact, they have already built much of the ‘articles of the Temple’ that go *in* the Temple and all the things ... they’re already built and are waiting for construction. But they don’t have a good way to get rid of the Mosque ... the dome of the Rock.

So I don’t think He’s talking about the destruction of Jerusalem here. It’s not likely to me. That would only vindicate to the Samaritans that they had the right place. They would think, “If that was the right place, why did God allow the Romans to destroy the Temple in Jerusalem? The Samaritans would be jumping up and down that they were vindicated with that. But that’s not what Jesus is trying to lead her to conclude. (But their temple had been destroyed 200 years earlier, so they should take that as an indicator that maybe they weren’t supposed to be worshipping there since God had already destroyed it earlier.)

I believe that Jesus meant that there would be coming, a *shift* in her thinking. In other words, ‘you’re going to start thinking about this thing differently. Instead of facing Jerusalem or Gerizim, *she would be facing Jesus*. When anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away (**2 Cor. 3:14**). Notice the focus is on worshipping the Father. This is what Jesus told Satan ... worship the Father. “It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only’ (**Luke 4:8**) and “Fear the Lord your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name” (**Deut. 6:13**). And even though Jesus deserves worship and should be, He directs worship to the Father. One looking into the face of Jesus will see the Father according to **John 14:8-11**.

Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”

⁹ Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. ¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves.

Jesus was always thinking of the spiritual purpose and not the technical aspects that will be rapidly changing due to His arrival. Jesus was not focused on preserving the status quo; that the Temple was always going to be here. If He had wanted that system to persist, He could have preserved that Temple in Jerusalem and He could have made that the focus. But He was the One in there saying, ‘look. You have abused this Temple. **You** are the ones making it into a den of robbers instead of what God intended it to be.’

So, when Jesus speaks of an ‘hour’ coming He is being prophetic, but prophetic is not just about *foretelling*; it’s also about *forth-telling*. The foretelling aspect of His ministry reveals that Jesus is forward-thinking. He sees what “is” and He also sees what is “coming.” He has done that in the foretelling of the destruction of the Temple (of his body) in **John 2:19**, and later in the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in **Luke 21:7-24**.

When Jesus says ‘an hour is coming’ when people would neither worship in Gerizim nor Jerusalem, He is **not** saying that all such worship and focus on those places would change for everyone. Some are *still* focused on this today! The shift is first, in the mind and the plan of God, but as this new age is ushered in and some ‘get on board’ with it, *we do* see a shift in focus regarding worship until today when worship is offered wherever the worshipper is.

It’s not so much **where** do I worship; it’s “where **is** the worshipper,” because wherever the worshipper **is**, worship can be offered up to God. Now this isn’t to be confused with what Jimmy said on Sunday addressing the question of “coming to church”. That’s a whole different question. It **is** the question that you can worship 24/7 wherever you are, because if you are a worshipper, then you can kiss God at any time and anywhere. But when Jesus uses the pronoun **you** in verse 21, is He really speaking about how *this* woman is changing and how *her* worship ideas will soon change as she comes to know, believe in, and follow Jesus? Surely, Jesus is teaching her so that this will happen to her, and later, the entire city of Sychar.

In verse ²² “You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews”, Jesus does point out that, of the two (if you are looking at the question between the Jews and the Samaritans), He says that the Samaritans are the ones most misguided in this whole discussion. Now, He doesn’t actually confirm that the Jews have it right either, but He is saying in the present discussion that the Samaritans have some really poor thinking on “**where** do we worship?”

The Samaritans have taken themselves outside the main stream of God’s plan and will. One indicator of that is when they start messing around with and changing the Word of God, inserting words that weren’t really in it. But how is Jesus speaking here of the Jews? Paul later makes plain that there is a difference between a physical Jew and a Jew who has the **faith of Abraham**. That is a *true* Israelite, but I doubt that Jesus is getting this “theological” with the Samaritan woman here. I don’t think that he’s really getting that nuance in this discussion. So let’s keep it simple.

Regarding the place of worship, the Jews had it right and history backs that up. The Samaritans are the ones that changed Scripture from Jerusalem to Gerizim. So Jesus was basically telling her that she didn’t know what she was talking about. Now, He said it in a kind way, but He’s basically telling her that ‘you don’t know what you’re talking about.’ He said in **John 4:22** “You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.”

The idea of salvation, or “soteria” (σωτηρια) means rescue or safety and it does seem to steer the conversation into some deeper theological waters. What are you thinking, Jesus?

When Jesus says ‘salvation is of the Jews, he means that God used the Jewish tradition and the Jewish history in order to introduce the types, the antitypes, the prophecies and so forth that concern salvation, and so *they* were in the mainstream of that history ... the Jews, and not the Samaritans. The Samaritans were the side-stream to it all. The Jews were the ones.

“Soteria” is the common word for salvation, and I think what Jesus was saying in ‘salvation is of the Jews in the sense that God used the Jewish people, particularly after the exile, and after he destroyed the Northern Kingdom, to send the descendents of *Abraham, David and Judah and the Southern Kingdom* to bring salvation to the world. Jesus was a descendent through Judah, the Southern Kingdom, while the Samaritans traced *their* lineage back to the Northern Kingdom, Israel. There is probably a lot deeper theological meaning than simply that the Southern Kingdom being the conduit through which Jesus came into the world. It was their lineage that produced Jesus, not the Samaritan’s lineage. The Samaritans were not in Jesus’ lineage at all. So, “salvation is from, or of, the Jews.” It pertains to the Jews. He’s showing here that the Samaritans were on the fringe; not in the center of this so, even for the argument that she is trying to make about “place,” she doesn’t have a leg to stand on.

But Jesus is going to turn the attention completely away from that in saying, “it’s irrelevant.” It is completely irrelevant. But even if “I” granted your question to be a good question on the face of it; if I had to choose between Jerusalem and Gerizim, you have no argument for Gerizim. I mean, what did Samaritans have to do with salvation, anyway?

We have to realize that **both** the Samaritans and the Jews are *looking* for the Messiah. Had the Messiah come, both would want to claim Him as their own just like they were trying to claim a temple. They would want to claim **Him** as somehow having a corner on the market of the Messiah. But Jesus is saying, ‘Look. When the Messiah comes, the Samaritans won’t have anything to do with that.’

John 4:23 says, “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.” This statement corresponds to verse 21. **But this time**, it’s not just an hour coming, but an hour that now “is”. The hour has come and will keep coming. It doesn’t matter where the true worshippers are **geographically**. What matters to Jesus is:

1. They worship the Father
2. They do so in Spirit
3. They worship Him in Truth

Those are the only things that matter to Jesus.

This will be **one of Jesus’ most profound teachings**, and He *first revealed* it to a **Samaritan** woman, personally, by a well. I noted in my journal **that ‘this particular teaching about worshipping God who is Spirit, in Spirit and in Truth, is one of the most profound teachings Jesus ever gave.** If you want to know the mind of God and the mind of Christ, you must get a hold of this teaching and understand it. We’ll stop here, but as you’ll see later on, my conclusion is that we have taken something that is extremely profound, and we have, somewhat, trivialized it in our interpretation of this statement, and made it something Jesus never intended it to be. So hang on - until the year 2020.