

John 4A

- Pick up again with Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well
 - Jesus is traveling north back to the Galilee
 - He has the beginnings of his crew of disciples in tow
 - They must travel through Samaria, a region hostile to Jews
 - As we learned last time, the Samaritans were a group who went to great lengths to counterfeit the Jewish faith
 - They had descended from the northern tribes of Israel
 - But they had polluted their bloodlines by intermarrying with Gentiles
 - And thereby forfeited their Jewishness
 - As a result, they were spurned centuries earlier by the Jewish remnant returning to the land after the Babylonian captivity
 - As a result, they became enemies of Israel
 - And they contended for the title of true Jew
 - They counterfeited Judaism with an elaborate system religious law, temple service and priesthood
 - But none of it was true
 - It merely mimicked the true faith
 - As a result, it was largely based on worship revolving around holy places and relics and ritual
 - This is not a pattern unique to Samaritans
 - As we said last time, it's the definitive pattern of religion absent the Spirit
 - Manmade religion is a manmade attempt to reach up to Heaven
 - But true religion is delivered from Heaven as a revelation of God

- In this story, a Samaritan woman meets Jesus at a well
 - This woman is trapped in a system of false religious worship
 - She doesn't know it's false
 - But something inside her knows there must be more to worshipping God than what she's been taught
 - More importantly, her life doesn't reflect God's presence, as we'll soon see
 - Son on this day, a woman trapped in false religion meets the Truth
 - That is the Way, the Life and the Truth

John 4:5 So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph;

John 4:6 and Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

John 4:7 There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."

John 4:8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

John 4:9 Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

- Sychar is a city located just outside the city of Shechem
 - On this land, Jacob gave his son Joseph a well in Gen 48
 - This particular spot was within sight of Mt Gerizim, the Samaritan temple
 - And Jesus stops to rest and get water
 - He sends the disciples into the city to find food, while he waits here alone
 - As we said last time, the Samaritans called this well "Jacob's well," but it was folklore and unlikely to be the true well
 - They made this location another relic
 - And they used their claim to possess Jacob's well as another proof that they were the true Jews

- In this way, they were guilty of worshipping the creation rather than the Creator
- In v7 Jesus asks a Samaritan woman who comes to draw water to give Him a drink
 - And she is clearly surprised by His request
 - She says how is it that you, a Jew, asking a Samaritan woman for a drink?
 - She asks “how” and not “why” because Jews were forbidden to become indebted to a Samaritan
 - Asking a Samaritan for any service or favor without offering payment in some way was indebtedness to Jew
 - Furthermore, men rarely showed regard for strange women in a public place
 - So she asks how can Jesus get around this rule and speak to her, being both a Samaritan and a woman
 - The answer of course is that these limits are rules set by God
 - God is not a respecter of persons, according to Acts 10:34
 - These restrictions were the result of human prejudice, instituted by the rulers of Israel as a means of shunning Samaritans
 - But Jesus came to seek and save the lost
 - So Jesus engages this woman with a request for water
- We can all learn something from Jesus’ technique
 - First, He engages the lost
 - He doesn’t wait for her to speak first
 - He doesn’t avoid conversation altogether
 - We are here on earth *to engage*
 - We are Jesus’ ambassadors
 - Secondly, Jesus doesn’t start with a conversation about religious matters

- He begins with a simple request for water
- We need to be real and natural
- Typically, we don't start our conversations with the lost by saying "So, do you have Jesus in your heart?"
 - Not because it's wrong
 - But because it's abrupt and unnatural
- Don't convert someone so that you can establish a relationship
 - Develop a relationship, so you can work them toward conversion
- Third, be purposeful in your engagement
 - Of course, Jesus knew how His request would take the woman by surprise
 - He will use her surprise to begin a conversation that leads somewhere purposeful
 - He knows that as she works with him in this conversation, He can direct it into more meaningful things
 - If she takes the bait, so to speak, then there is an opportunity
 - These are the methods we should use as we seek the lost in keeping with our mission
- As this scene plays out, we will see that there are two conversations taking place
 - Like with the Pharisee, this woman is having one conversation, while Jesus is having another conversation
 - There's a story of an older couple who suffered under similar circumstances

A mature-looking lady had an appointment with a marriage counselor, and told him flat out: "I would like to divorce my husband." To this, the counselor replied, "Well, do you have any grounds?" She answered, "Why yes. We have almost an acre." The puzzled counselor asked her, "You don't understand. What I want to know is do you and your husband have a grudge?" The lady answered, "Actually, we don't, but we do have a nice carport." At this, the counselor shook his head and said, "Ma'am, I'm sorry, but I just don't see any reason why you should divorce your husband." The lady looked at the counselor and said to him, "It's just that the man can't carry on an intelligent conversation."

- Now that the woman has taken the bait, Jesus moves into the conversation proper

[John 4:10](#) Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

- After the woman's disrespectful comment, Jesus responds by raising an entirely different topic, but one that uses the topic of water as a metaphor
 - He says if this woman knew the gift of God and if she knew who was speaking to her, then she would have asked for living water
 - Living water is a Jewish euphemism for flowing water, like a spring of river of water
 - Flowing water is "living" in the sense that it's clean and safe to drink
 - Therefore, living water is the Bible's metaphor for the life-giving power of the Spirit of God

[Jer. 2:13](#) | "For My people have committed two evils:

They have forsaken Me,
The fountain of living waters,
To hew for themselves cisterns,
Broken cisterns
That can hold no water.

- Just as fresh water is essential to sustaining our physical life, so is Spirit essential to eternal life

- So the Bible uses the idea of a never-ending supply of fresh water as a picture of the never ending spiritual life that comes from the Spirit of God dwelling in us
 - Just as with Nicodemus and birth, Jesus is speaking about salvation using earthly metaphors
 - And like Nicodemus, Jesus is addressing a woman who's captive of a false system of worship, a false religion
 - He's calling her to know the true God, to seek the truth and put aside the myths and false creeds
 - Jesus says she's missing an important opportunity because she lacks two things
 - Things that are closely related
 - First, she doesn't know the gift of God
 - What is this gift of God?
 - We know Jesus is on the topic of eternal life
 - Therefore, we must assume He's talking about the gift that leads to eternal life
 - As Paul explains in Eph 2

Eph. 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;

Eph. 2:9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

- If she had known the grace of God manifested through the gift of faith, she could have recognized Jesus
 - Ironically, she had just mocked Jesus because He had asked her for a gift of water from the well
 - But Jesus says she should have been the one asking Him for a gift, the gift of eternal life through faith
 - Secondly, Jesus says if she had known who was speaking with her
 - If she knew Jesus, her Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God
 - Jesus is telling her she doesn't know His true identity

- And if she knew, she would speaking about entirely different things
 - If you know you're talking to the One Who can grant you salvation, then no matter how the conversation starts, you would direct it toward a request for eternal life
- And knowing Jesus' identity as Messiah is only possible with the gift of faith
 - Men cannot find the Truth in their own power
 - It's as if you were placed in an infinity large room filled with boxes but with no light whatsoever
 - And in one box is a treasure you wish to find
 - Unless and until the light is turned on, you have no hope to find the right box
 - Even if you happened across the treasure box in the dark, you would just stumble over it

[2Cor. 4:3](#) And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, [2Cor. 4:4](#) in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

[2Cor. 4:5](#) For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake.

[2Cor. 4:6](#) For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

[2Cor. 4:7](#) But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves;

- We need the Light from God to find the true treasure of eternal life
 - And because that light is delivered in the form of earthen vessels – beginning with Jesus in the form of Man – it defeats the pride of men
 - It leads to moments like this, when this woman is stumbling over Jesus

- She is arguing over rules and cultural prejudices rather opening the treasure standing before her
 - Which is why He begins by saying if she knew the gift of God, things would be different
- But the woman isn't on Jesus' wavelength as yet...she's still having an earthly conversation that misses Jesus' point

John 4:11 She said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water?"

John 4:12 "You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?"

- She hears Jesus' words about living water, and she assumes He's just talking about moving water
 - To her unopened ears, it sounded like Jesus was offering to draw water for her from a well that was superior to the one she was drawing from
 - And then she notices that Jesus has brought nothing to draw water from this well
 - And this well in Samaria is one of the deepest in Palestine
 - Over 75 feet
 - So naturally she says she is perplexed about where Jesus expects to obtain better water
- And she isn't done with her insults yet...she mocks Him again by asking if Jesus is greater than "our" father, Jacob
 - Jacob was one of the most important figures in Samaritan theology
 - He was even greater than Abraham or Moses for a Samaritan
 - He was their link to true Judaism
 - In the Bible, Abraham is associated with the land of Judea, which reminded the Samaritans of their enemies in Jerusalem
 - And Moses was the link to the Jewish law, which the Samaritans rejected in place of their own version

- So Jacob was king in Samaria
 - And so the woman reminds Jesus that Jacob was the father of the Samaritans as much as the Jews
- The Samaritan woman, like all Samaritans, assumed that if God gave Jacob and later Joseph this well, then there was no better source
 - Take note that there is always a degree of pride that accompanies manmade religion
 - Like all Samaritans, this woman lived with a religious chip on her shoulder
 - She was always primed to defend herself against the accusations of a Jew
 - Every relic, every acre of sacred land, every symbol was important and worthy of defense
 - This is the heart of every religious man who lacks the gift of God
 - They defend their manmade religious system, even when truth is against them
 - Because the alternative is to concede that their religion is based on lies
 - Their pride and ego are at stake
 - I can remember my years growing up in a Catholic family
 - I thought I had been given the truth, though I didn't know the first thing about God or the true Gospel
 - So if someone suggested I wasn't truly Christian or that I didn't have the right viewpoint, I was always quick to defend the Catholic faith
 - I wasn't defending the word of God or the Lord Himself
 - I was defending my tradition and family identity and my pride
 - Even a cursory study of church history would have shown me that the tradition I sought to defend was demonstrably false
 - But I wasn't really interested in the question of how to truly find God

- I was only interested in defending my pride
- Just as this woman is blindly defending her culture and history
- God's word reveals the truth, of course, and because that truth comes by way of the gift of God, it excludes prideful boasting by those who know the truth

[Rom. 3:27](#) Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith.

[Rom. 3:28](#) For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.

[1Cor. 1:27](#) but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong,

[1Cor. 1:28](#) and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are,

[1Cor. 1:29](#) so that no man may boast before God.

[1Cor. 1:30](#) But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,

[1Cor. 1:31](#) so that, just as it is written, "LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD."

[1Cor. 4:7](#) For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

- We certainly work diligently to defend the truth every bit as much as those trapped in false religious systems defend what they believe
 - But our defense doesn't (or shouldn't) be focused on saving face or protecting our pride
 - As Paul says, what do we have that wasn't given to us by God?
 - We didn't figure this out on our own, and neither should we expect to argue someone else into accepting the truth
 - We are messenger, and the power of our message is self-evident to those being saved
- The message of salvation isn't designed to sound sensible to human intellect or pride
 - It's designed to sound foolish to shame the pride of men who think they can find God through their own devices

- God crafted His message of salvation as a foolish-sounding story about a criminal crucified long ago so that when someone finds it appealing, it's a sign of the power of God at work
 - The person who receives the Gospel is showing evidence they have received the wisdom of God by means of the Spirit
 - The question in our current scenario is whether this woman is going to receive that wisdom
 - To this point, she's simply defending the Samaritan perspective as a matter of pride
 - And she's arrogantly insulting Jesus in the process
 - She asks Jesus if He was greater than Jacob?
 - It's an ironic insult, because it's true
 - Jesus is so much greater than Jacob
 - He is the God of Jacob
 - Jesus' response ignores her insult and continues to teach on the meaning of living water

John 4:13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again;

John 4:14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

- Jesus points to the water in her well and says everyone who comes here must return again
 - Physical water only provides temporary satisfaction
 - No matter how often she drinks of this water, sooner or later she will be thirsty again
 - And of course, Jesus' point goes far beyond the physical dimension
 - He's speaking of how manmade religion cannot satisfy the soul's longing to be reconciled with God
 - No matter how often this woman sacrificed at her temple on Gerizim, she still walked away with the guilt of her sin

- No matter how often she prayed to idols or a nonexistent god, she remained unsatisfied
- She could return over and over again, but still her guilt remained
- No matter how much she tithed, she couldn't buy God's favor
- No human ritual or work can achieve what only comes by a gift of God
 - Eventually her doubts and fears of death return
 - Nothing of this world will ever satisfy
 - Because rituals can't cancel out our spiritual debt nor fill the spiritual emptiness of fallen man
- But Jesus gives her a better way
 - He says, first, the one who seeks must come to Jesus
 - They don't come to physical water in a well or to some relic or through a ritual
 - They come to the person of Jesus, because our faith must be in Him
 - Secondly, what Jesus offers is everlasting
 - Jesus doesn't bring a partial or temporary solution
 - We will never need to seek again
 - His solution satisfies us because it addresses the very cause for our seeking: it removes the penalty for sin
 - He reconciles us to God once and forever, so we will never want for something else
 - Thirdly, once the Spirit takes up residence inside us, He becomes a wellspring bringing forth eternal life
 - The indwelling of Christ's Spirit leads to a changing within
 - We begin to move in a direction of holiness and contentment
 - Righteousness begins to spring up in us
 - And that sanctification process continues until it brings us into eternal life

- But these ships are still passing each other, as we see by her response

[John 4:15](#) The woman said to Him, “Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw.”

- Once more, the woman refuses to enter into a spiritual conversation
 - She acts as if Jesus is still talking about literal water
 - And she sarcastically asks Jesus to give her this “water” that never leaves her thirsty so she can avoid returning to do the work of drawing water
- She doesn’t realize that her comment is a perfect response to the spiritual meaning of Jesus’ words,
 - She says if she had Jesus’ water, she wouldn’t have to continue working to obtain her own water
 - That is essentially the Gospel message
 - Jesus’ offer of eternal life eliminates the need for us to labor at obtaining our own solution through dead works
 - This woman is asking for Jesus to solve an earthly problem, not realizing Jesus is the solution to an eternal problem
- At this point, we give this woman the benefit of the doubt and assume she is just missing Jesus’ point
 - But given what John has taught earlier, we must conclude that this is an example of darkness avoiding the Light
 - This woman is in the darkness, and she won’t enter into Jesus’ spiritual conversation because it would require stepping into the Light
 - And coming into that Light will expose her evil deeds
 - This isn’t a conscious process
 - Rather, it’s instinctive, a result of a sinful nature
- So what must happen before a person leaves the Light and steps into darkness?
 - The Bible tells us that God must act first

- We must be brought to repentance with an expectation of forgiveness
 - She is still looking for an earthly solution
 - Why? Why hasn't she understood Jesus words properly? What's missing?
- In a word, repentance
 - The woman hasn't yet come to repent of her present circumstances
 - Repentance is a turning away, but not from some specific mistake
 - It means a turning away from man-made religion and to obedience to the Gospel
 - Repentance means seeing ourselves the way God sees us and being just as troubled by what He sees
- The Bible says repentance is the necessary preparatory step to faith taking hold in the heart

[Mark 1:14](#) Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God,

[Mark 1:15](#) and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

- Repentance must precede true faith because we can't pile God's truth on top an existing heap of false religious beliefs and dead works
 - We must turn away from the darkness before we can receive the Light
- But even the repentance that leads to salvation is itself a product of God's work in our hearts

[Rom. 2:4](#) Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to **repentance**?

[2Cor. 7:9](#) I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of **repentance**; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us.

- Godly repentance produces godly sorrow
- And this type of sorrow comes as a consequence of the kindness and will of God
- And so in kindness, Jesus takes the first step to provoke repentance

John 4:16 He said to her, "Go, call your husband and come here."

John 4:17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have correctly said, 'I have no husband';

John 4:18 for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly."

John 4:19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.

- Jesus tells the woman to go and get her husband
 - Jesus is asking to address to the authority in her home
 - This was culturally expected
 - He just offered to give her a gift, and she accepted
 - But in this day, a man could not give a gift to a strange woman
 - So Jesus calls for the husband, so he can transact the business
 - But of course, in this case Jesus has an entirely different purpose in raising the question of her husband
 - Supernaturally, Jesus knew this woman's situation
 - Remember, John told us in chapter 2 that Jesus knew all men and didn't need anyone to testify to the nature of their hearts
 - He knew this woman was living in sin
 - She had married five times
 - And each time, her husband had put her away, probably for some indiscretion or indecency
 - And now she is in a sexual relationship with a man who has not married her
 - She was just one step above prostitute

- So by raising the question of a husband, Jesus opened the door on her evil deeds
- The woman's answer is circumspect
 - She says she has no husband but never mentions her past relationships or her current relationship
 - This is no confession
 - At best, we can say it was truthful
 - And Jesus Himself acknowledges the truth of it
 - But there is no sense of repentance at this point
 - She is still hiding her evil deeds from the Light
 - But the Jesus seizes on her answer to expose her deeds and convict her
 - He explains her marital history
 - And He calls her out for living in sin in her current relationship
 - In the way He answers her, Jesus highlights how she is hiding the truth
 - Notice He says "you have correctly said you have no husband..."
 - In other words, He's saying you have spoken more truth about yourself than you are willing to acknowledge
 - Again, at the end Jesus says "this you have said truly," meaning the only honest thing you've said is that you are without a husband
- The power of God's Light is in His ability to reveal the things hidden in the darkness of our hearts
 - This woman must have been pariah in her town and culture
 - She was a disgrace
 - And she carried that guilt everywhere
 - When she encountered people who knew of her circumstances, she would have been shunned or condemned or
 - The only ones who treated her with respect were strangers who knew nothing of her situation

- But here's a stranger who knows her sin, yet He hasn't condemned her
 - Instead, Jesus was willing to treat her with respect
 - He even offered to give her a special gift
 - She must have been surprised, both by Jesus' insight and His willingness to accept her
- She responds saying, "I sense you're a prophet" referring to Jesus' insight
 - But she's saying more here than meets our Western eyes
 - Samaritans rejected all Jewish prophets after Moses
 - The only prophet they were prepared to acknowledge was the prophet Moses himself said would come one day
 - The prophet described in Deut 18

[Deut. 18:17](#) "The LORD said to me, 'They have spoken well.

[Deut. 18:18](#) 'I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

[Deut. 18:19](#) 'It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him.

- Like the Jews, the Samaritans understood this coming prophet would be the Messiah
 - The Messiah was the only prophet the Samaritans were willing to acknowledge because He was the only prophet mentioned by Moses
 - And so when this woman says she perceives that Jesus is a prophet, she is raising the prospect that Jesus is the Messiah
- Now if you're the woman, there are a number of places you could take the conversation from this point
 - You could ask Jesus how He knew these things about her
 - You could become defensive and seek to explain your circumstances
 - You could get embarrassed or angry and run away
 - But she does none of those things

- Instead, she takes the conversation in a religious direction, asking Jesus to settle an ages-old religious dispute

John 4:20 “ Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”

- The woman asks Jesus to rule on whether the Samaritans or Jews had the correct view on where to worship
 - Samaritans had made Gerizim the center of worship, owing back to Abraham and Jacob’s wandering in this land
 - They said this mountain was the place of Isaac’s sacrifice
 - And this was the place Abraham met Melchizedek
 - Since this mountain was near Shechem and many significant events in the patriarch’s lives were connected to Shechem, it was logical to conclude that this was an important place
 - Nevertheless, Jewish scriptures had revealed that the place God chose to place His temple was in Jerusalem, not at Shechem
 - Because the Samaritans rejected the word of God delivered by His prophets, they were in the wrong
 - But the very question of where someone should worship was growing obsolete
 - Both Samaritans and Jews were worshipping places and faces rather than the Living God Who sanctified those things

John 4:21 Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

John 4:22 “ You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

John 4:23 “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.

John 4:24 “God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

- Jesus confirms the superiority of the Jewish perspective but then quickly moves past the question of where one worships to *how* one worships
 - Jesus says a time is coming when true worshippers won’t go to any particular mountain to find God

- In that day, the true mountain was in Jerusalem, Jesus says
 - The Samaritans were worshipping a counterfeit, Jesus says
 - True salvation is found only through the Jewish people
- The Jewish people are the ones God selected to deliver the truth to the world
 - They received the covenants of God
 - They produced the prophets who revealed the word of God
 - They produced the Messiah, through Whom we must approach the Father
 - So if you desire true salvation, then you must accept the preeminence of the Jewish people in God's plan
- But nevertheless, the way into eternal life isn't found through the customs, law or sacred places of Judaism
 - Jesus says an "hour" is coming and is already here when true worship is set free from a prescribed form or location
 - The word hour refers to a time or age, and that time is called the last days or the church age
 - The time following the Messiah's appearing until His return
- During this time, Jesus says the Father will seek true worshippers who approach Him through spirit and truth
 - Worshippers must approach the Father on His terms, and in past days those terms were dictated by the Law given to Israel
 - By His word, the Lord determined that worship would be limited to certain people and certain places
 - He required a temple and sacrifices
 - This was the truth that the Samaritans lacked
 - But these constraints were a temporary measure in preparation for the arrival of the Messiah

- The writer of Hebrews says that the existence of the tabernacle signified that the way for personal access to the Father had not yet been revealed

[Heb. 9:8](#) The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer tabernacle is still standing, [Heb. 9:9](#) which is a symbol for the present time...

- Once the Messiah was revealed, the hour came for men to approach the throne personally
- But that approach is made possible by the revelation of the Messiah and our faith in that Messiah
 - The revelation of God is the Truth that makes possible a way to the Father
 - And our faith in that Messiah is a gift of the Spirit, which makes our worship acceptable to the Father
 - We must worship in the truth of Christ and by His Spirit or else our worship is null and void
- Jesus emphasizes that worshiping in Spirit is necessary because God Himself is Spirit
 - In other words, the Father is not localized to a single place
 - He exists in Spirit form, which means ironically that though He is everywhere, He cannot be found in a certain place
 - We approach Him only through His Spirit residing in us
- The Samaritans lacked the truth of God's word, so they were far from the Spirit of God and could not worship Him truly
 - But an hour was coming for the world to know God in Truth and Spirit, and that hour had already come to this woman
 - Jesus is announcing the arrival of salvation for this Samaritan woman
 - He has brought her evil deeds into the Light
 - Yet He didn't condemn her for them

- The Lord's kindness softened her heart, and she entered into a conversation about finding God
- And Jesus has told her that worship must be a matter of Spirit and Truth
- Now all that remains is for this woman to embrace that truth

John 4:25 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."

John 4:26 Jesus said to her, " I who speak to you am He."

- The woman confesses her faith in God's promise of a Messiah from Deut 18:18
- And when that One arrives, she says, He will explain all things, settle all arguments and set straight every dispute
- And by this confession, she is showing faith as a child of God
- But once the identity of the Messiah is revealed to world, true faith will embrace the Person of Messiah
 - So then came the test for this woman
 - Jesus announces He is the One that Moses said would come
 - Critics of Jesus and the Bible will suggest that Jesus never declared He was the Messiah or God in the flesh
 - This verse (among other in John's Gospel) counter that lie easily
- Like the earlier encounter with Nicodemus, this scene teaches us something about salvation
 - Ritual and tradition are not a substitute for true worship of God
 - The time of relics and special buildings and rituals is passed
 - That age has gone and in it's place has come a new age
 - An hour when worship shows no regard for form or place
 - With Nicodemus, we learned that salvation comes by a new spiritual birth, and with this Samaritan woman we learn our worship must be guided by that new spirit

- There are some intriguing contrasts between these two characters
- In John 3, we found a man of high regard and reputation
 - A Jew who supposedly possessed the truth of Heaven
 - He had nothing to hide, yet he came to Jesus in the night and in ignorance
- In John 4, we have a woman of low regard and ill repute
 - She is a Samaritan trapped by religious lies
 - She had everything to hide, but she met Jesus in the open under a midday sun
- The Lord is not a respecter of persons, saving both Jew and Gentile, but to the Jew first, for salvation is of the Jews
 - But unlike Jesus, the apostles are still very much respecter of persons
 - And a Samaritan woman deserves no respect as we see in v.27

John 4:27 At this point His disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why do You speak with her?"

- As the disciples approached the well on foot, they must have observed Jesus speaking to this Samaritan woman from a distance
 - And they are completely perplexed
 - They are completely amazed, because Jesus is breaking one of the more important restrictions of Jewish society
 - He is speaking to a Samaritan – and a woman no less
 - But despite their curiosity, they say nothing to this woman
- Their silence could have been driven out of respect for Jesus' authority
 - But if that were all there was to this, why would John think to mention it?

- I think he raises this point to illustrate the disciples' ongoing prejudice
 - Jesus has spoken kindly to an enemy and she has received His word
 - But the disciples of the Lord are still living in their flesh, unable to move past human prejudice
- This verse sets up a contrast that takes us into the second half of the chapter, a contrast between the disciples and the Samaritan woman