

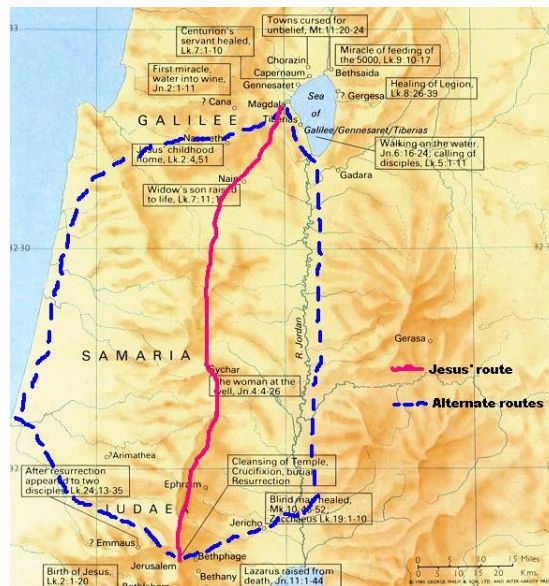
## Getting to the Heart of Worship

### John 4:19-24

- **Disclaimer:** This is not an exhaustive study on worship, and certainly not a sermon on musical worship.
- Three part class on the ministry of musical worship: [realityventura.com/sermons](http://realityventura.com/sermons) (search: "ministry of worship")

### Prayer...

- **John 4...** Jesus has taken his disciples into Samaria



- **"Jesus needed to go through Samaria" (v. 4)** on his way from Judea (south) to Galilee (north).
- Jesus was going to do something in Samaria, in the disciples, and in a Samaritan woman who had been shunned by her community and crippled by her shame, because of her own past.
- Jesus is bringing a **revival moment** to both groups (disciples and woman), but they are both missing it (we spoke at length about this in the last two sermons.)
- Eventually the woman's eyes are opened and she sees who Jesus is and the gift of salvation that God has for her, and many from her community, come to faith in Jesus.
- **It's a beautiful revival story.**
- Right in the middle of it, Jesus and this woman, have (what appears to be) a **side conversation** about **worship**.

- But I'd like to propose that it's not as much of a side conversation, as it may seem — in the same way that this woman is missing what Jesus is doing right in front of her, she is also missing the heart of worship.
- Jesus has just told her that he knows about her past broken relationships, and current living situation...
- **John 4:19-20**
- "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."
- Maybe she's trying to divert the conversation away from her brokenness and failed marriages. OR maybe she genuinely wants to know the answer to her question about worship, and if Jesus is a prophet then maybe He knows the answer.
- **Regardless, Jesus has just revealed the deepest need of this woman's heart (living water), and she responds with this very a shallow debate:**
  - "Can we worship right here, or do we need to go to Jerusalem where the temple (AKA: the church building) is?."
  - This woman (like many of us) was living up here (in her head, on the surface), but Jesus is ALWAYS after the heart.
  - "Does God care about where we worship?"
  - For that matter? Does God what worship looks like, at all?
- **Jesus responds to her question (v. 21)**
- "Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father, neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem." (v. 21)
- **Post Pentecost worship...**
  - God DID set up the Temple as a place of worship in the OT.
  - But after Jesus died on the cross, rose from the dead, and poured out His Spirit on the Church at Pentecost, WE (His people) BECAME His temple.
  - **1 Corinthians 3:16**
  - "Do you not know that **you yourselves are God's temple**, and that God's Spirit dwells in you?"
  - Jesus is talking about what will happen after Pentecost when there will be no worship "place" because God's presence will be IN HIS PEOPLE.
  - **Worship does not happen over there (in a physical place). It happens right here (inside our hearts).**
  - After Pentecost, Homes became Holy Places. Synagogues became Sanctuaries. Courtyards became Churches. And even Jail Cells became worship centers.
  - Apparently, God does NOT care about WHERE we worship, as long as our heart is postured in worship.
- **"a time is coming when YOU will worship":** foreshadow of the salvation that was about to come to both her and her community.

- “You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.” (v. 22)
- “Salvation is from the Jews”: the Savior (Messiah) would come through the Hebrew lineage.
- “You don’t know what you worship”: the Samaritans were Jews who had intermarried with Assyrians, and had mixed and matched different religions, so their understanding of God had become convoluted.
- They also rejected everything but the first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures, taking what they wanted and paying no attention to the rest.
- The ignorance that this resulted in, plus their hodgepodge religion, is most likely what Jesus is referring to when He says, “You worship what you do not know.” — there was a lack of understanding, when they worshipped, and as we see in the next verse, part of true worship is **understanding the truth** when we worship.
- “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. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.” (vv. 23-24)

**Disclaimer (again):** Worship is an attitude of the heart. It may take on different forms (singing, giving, obedience, etc.), but it is always about the posture of the heart.

## Four comparisons:

### 1. SPIRIT-FILLED-NESS VS. ROTE-NESS (John 4:24, Psalm 51:16-17)

- “God is spirit and those who worship Him, must worship Him **in the Spirit.**” v.24
- Some translations don’t add the word “the” before “Spirit”. Either way, when we look at the whole of scripture, the meaning is pretty clear: Two things:
- First, to worship “in (the) Spirit” means that our act of worship is spiritual in nature. It’s not about where we do it, or what form it takes on, but the heart with which we worship.
  - And this is ALWAYS what God has cared about.
  - **Psalm 51:16-17** “You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. My sacrifice, O God, is a **broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.**”
  - I.e. “you don’t want me to do something that **looks** worshipful, you want my heart to postured in worship.”
- Second, to worship “in (the) Spirit” mean that we are filled with, and led by, the Holy Spirit, as we worship. — God IS Spirit, so when we worship Him, there must be a sensitivity to His

- Spirit. We must be tuned in to His voice and leading and to His desires, allowing Him to move in us, as opposed to just doing the same old rote thing, in the same old rote way.
- To worship in the Spirit means that there is a living-ness to our worship of God. It's not trite. It's not routine. It's not dry. **It's alive and vibrant.**
  - If the worship of our lives was a sail boat, the Spirit would be the wind that propels us closer to the Father.

## 2. TRUTHFULNESS VS. PRETENSE (John 4:24)

- v. 24 "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth".
- Because the Samaritans rejected most of God's word, and because God's word **is truth**, there would have been no way for them to FULLY worship God "in truth".
- And such is true today.
- Two things:
- First, to worship God "in truth" means that we worship Him according to the whole counsel of His Word, especially in light of the New Testament revelation.
  - If God's Spirit is the wind in our sails, then God's truth is the rudder that keeps our worship on course. Whatever form our worship takes on, it must line up with the heart of God, and scripture reveals to us what His heart is like.
  - A sail boat without wind will never get anywhere (you can't be moved toward the heart of the Father without the Holy Spirit). But a ship with wind and no rudder, will never stay on course (you'll never UNDERSTAND what the heart of the Father even looks like, without the word of God)
- Second, to worship God "in truth" means that we come to God, not with a display of spiritually, but with honesty and integrity.
- We have created a culture, in the Church, that does not value venerability and honesty about what we're going through, unless the situation has already been resolved, but **God WANTS our honest grief and complaints (lament), IN THE MIDDLE** of the process, before it's resolved.
- This confession of truth can liberate us to receive from God (maybe this is part of what happened with this woman being vulnerable and honest about her past).
  - *Vision: a vessel.*
  - Water cannot pour into a carafe that has the top covered. God will not force Himself upon someone who is deliberately resisting Him.
- If you want to see supernatural change in your life and revival in your heart, you have to come to God open and bare.

- To worship God “in truth” means to worship Him in honesty, and to worship Him in honesty means to be vulnerable and open, which is, coincidentally, the same posture that is required to receive, from Him.
- A fully exposed and open heart, allows true worship to flow out, and God’s life to flow in.

### 3. INTIMACY VS. RELIGIOSITY (John 4:24, Jeremiah 31:34)

#### - O.T. worship: Reverence and Sacrifice

##### - **Reverence:**

- **OT Worship = “Shachah”** (To prostrate oneself in homage before a king or deity.)

##### - **Sacrifice.**

- When Israel came to worship God, they would bring burnt offerings to the Lord, and they were a sweet smelling aroma to God. The sacrifice was so often an act of worship.

#### - N.T. Worship: Intimacy and Sacrifice

##### - **Sacrifice of Jesus...**

- **Heb. 10:20** says that we enter into God’s presence now, “by the blood of Jesus”.

##### - **Sacrifice of the saints...**

- We don’t bring bulls and goats, but **our lives and our praise**.
- **Rom. 12:1** “...present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable to God which is your reasonable **act of worship**.”
- **Rom. 13:15** “Let us continually offer the **sacrifice of praise** to God, that is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.”

#### - **Intimacy:**

- **NT Worship = “Proskuneo”** (“Pros”: to turn toward; “Keneo”: to kiss).

#### - **To God, worship is intimacy.**

- **Jer. 31:34** “And they will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their relatives, saying, ‘You should know the LORD.’ For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will know me already.”
- (“Know” = “Yahdaw”)
  - Same word used for “Adam went in and **knew** his wife eve. In that context it speaks of the most intimate thing two humans can experience.
  - Elsewhere, we are called the “Bride” of Christ (intimacy)
  - In the OT, God wanted to dwell IN THE MIDST of His people. In the NT, we come INTO the Holy of Holies (intimacy)

- God's desire has always been for honest, vulnerable, living, intimate worship, not routine, stagnant, polished, disconnected religiosity.
- **He doesn't care what you do IF YOUR HEART IS NOT POSTURED, IN LOVE, TOWARD HIM.**
- **He's after a heart of adoration that is stirred with affection for him, who sees how good He is, and in responds to Him, from that place.**
- This woman couldn't recognize what God was doing because she was so distracted by things that SHE THOUGHT really mattered to God, but didn't actually.

#### 4. DEVOTION VS. DIVIDED HEART (John 4:20-24, Luke 9:62, Matthew 6:24)

- What's interesting to me about this word "Proskuneo" (to turn toward and kiss), is that when you are kissing someone, how limited your view of everything else is.
- But this woman was so distracted with so many things...
- Your heart goes where your eyes are looking.
- *Selah changing lanes*
- **We have a tendency to go where our eyes are looking.**
- And this is what happened with this woman and what happens with us.
- Our hearts go where our eyes are looking.
- **Luke 9:62** "Anyone who puts a hand to the plow, and then looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God."
- To have a divided heart is to have a heart that is given to multiple things. This woman's heart was divided.
- A divided heart tries to hold onto this life, and to Jesus, at the same time.
- **Matthew 16:24-25** 'Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it."
- v. 28, after this woman sees Jesus for who He is, she LEAVES her bucket.
- We must LET GO of buckets if we are going grab hold of Jesus.
- **Matthew 6:24** "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other."
- The kind of worship that Jesus speaks of here is the kind that comes from a heart of devotion.
- Distraction is a subtle ploy of the devil to get our eyes off of Jesus. (*fiery darts*).

- The enemy wants to get our eyes off of what matters.
- **Jesus is saying, “Don’t look at that. Don’t worry about that. “Proskuneo”, come back to me. Put your face right here...**
- **What can happen sometimes is that other things (like the INTERNET and the MEDIA) can start to shape our world view.**
- This woman’s mind was being formed by the world, but scripture tells us:
- **Romans 12:2 “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”**
- The knowing of God’s will, and the hearing of His voice, CANNOT happen when the worlds opinions are shaping our thinking.
- **Someone asked recently, “Where do the pastors get their news from?”**
- Our worldview SHOULD NOT BE shaped by the world, it should be shaped by the word.
- **His WORD is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.**
- What’s happening right now is not new. This has been happening for millennia, and God tells us how to view it and what to do about it.
- Jesus is saying to us right now, “Proskuneo, turn your eyes back to me.”
- “Whatever you do, keep your eyes on me. Stay close. Don’t look over there. Don’t go over there. Stay right here.”
- *Emily: “Surrender. Abide. I love you.”*
  - Surrender: Let go.
  - Abide: Grab Hold.
  - I love you: Rest in His love.