

Bible Study – John 4: 20 - 42

1. How does the true worship defined in the context of the conversation (4: 22 – 24)? It seems like the definition of the true worship is reserved for the end of the conversation. Does this has anything to do with the level difference?
 - a. By introducing the combination of **spirit and truth**, Jesus was taking the concept of worship from the level of material to spiritual (cf. c & d)
 - b. Intention and relationship with God is more important than place and rituals. One must worship, not simply outwardly by being in the right place and taking up the right attitude, but in one's spirit. The combination **spirit and truth** points to the need for complete sincerity and complete reality in our approach to God. Father not only seeks the worship but the worshippers too.
 - c. God is not bound in any way to places or things (24). Since God's essential nature is spirit the worship brought to him must be essentially of a spiritual kind and not material.
 - d. Genuine worship is spiritual. It is not dependant on place and things
 - e. The word **time** in the gospel refers to the suffering, death, and the resurrection of Jesus which brings a new beginning to spirituality. Thus Jesus connects the worship to the new system
 - f. **A time is coming** is prophetic language (the woman has just acknowledged Jesus as a prophet). Jesus was prophetically referring to his death and also the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple happened in around AD 66 – 70. The incident even destroyed Mount Gerizim also. The enemy can destroy a place or a building with its power but not a concept. The worship in spirit and truth cannot be destroyed even if the whole world may be destroyed. Therefore Jesus was introducing an **indestructible concept of worship** (cf. Paul & Silas in prison).
 - g. The woman was speaking about the worship of **the fathers** (v 20); Jesus responded by speaking of worship of **the Father**. The word Father not only talks about authority and sovereignty but also relationship too. Therefore Jesus was talking about a worship based on relationship too.
 - h. Worship should come out of knowing who God is. (Samaritans have only limited knowledge of God as they reject the writings of Prophets, the Psalms, and historical books of the OT and accepts only Pentateuch (v 22 cf. 10).
 - i. God is Spirit does not refers to Holy Spirit but identifies God as spiritual rather than material being. (In Scripture spirituality is a higher realm than material)
 - j. If we take the Spirit as Holy Spirit, then the three relationship of worship emerges in these verses. Worship is paternal in focus (The Father), personal in origin (the Son), and pneumatic in character (the Spirit). The Holy Spirit is also called as the Spirit of Truth (14: 16, 15: 26; 16: 13)
 - k. If we take the truth as the Word of God, the spiritual worship is always guided by the Word of God. The Word of God put boundaries and it examines the Worship. The Holy Spirit never supports a worship that breaks the boundaries of the Word of God as the Spirit is called as the Spirit of truth.
 - l. Jesus uses the neuter, **that which** and not the masculine, **him whom**, as might have been expected. This point out to the whole system of worship.
 - m. Jesus answered to the Woman in verse 26 by saying **I that speak to you, I am** (Is. 52: 6). He did not say that He is the Messiah but it is implied. Jesus is more than either Jew or Samaritan had comprehended in the word Messiah¹. He doesn't come to bring victory to Jew over Samaritan or Samaritan over Jew or Jew and Samaritan over Romans. He came to lead the whole world into true worship.

¹ Jews expected a royal Messiah to come out of the house of David. Samaritan expected a prophet Messiah who would be a teaching Messiah as well (v 25)

2. Jesus addresses the personal life of the Samaritan Woman before talking about true worship. How does it connected to the true worship? (4: 16 – 18)

3. How does the fruits of the true worship is identified in this passage? (4: 28, 29, 34, 35, 36, 39 – 42)?
 - a. True worship is acknowledging Jesus and making him known. The true worship will produce the fruit of taking Jesus to others.
 - b. The woman abandoned her original purpose, like disciples left their natural occupation for the sake of witnessing to Jesus, in order to tell town people about Jesus. (Stands in contrast to Nicodemus).
 - c. It is also implied that she has been freed of her burden as she left her
 - d. It will also bear the fruit of doing God's Will

Jesus' statement could be taken to imply that four months remained until the harvest when the statement was made. Sowing and reaping were separated by a minimum of four months. Therefore, literally it was sowing time but metaphorically/spiritually it was reaping time. The coming of Jesus has led into a time of harvest. Sowing preceded reaping. Reaping is a time of joy and happiness. Sowing, on the other hand, was often laborious. Usually sower is the same person who reaped. Therefore the sower has to wait until the time of harvest to be rejoiced. But Jesus state that others have done the sowing for them. The others can mean Jesus and his predecessors, most immediately John the Baptist (and all the preceding prophets). The field is ready or will completely ready as Jesus complete his mission and he will send his disciples into the joy harvest

- a. The groundwork/foundation to do God's will is already paved/done by Jesus
- b. Doing God's will brings joy and results/fruits
- c. God's will can be completed by his people