

## Sermon #2: True Worshippers

05/30/21

### BREAKING THE ICE

- What impacted you most about this week's message?

### UNDERSTANDING THE TRUTH

*Read the Passage* (John 4:20 - 24)

It is helpful to have some historical context to understand the conversation Jesus is having with the Samaritan woman in this passage. The Samaritans only accepted the first 5 books of the Old Testament, but not the rest. As a result, they worshiped at their holy place on Mt Gerizim, near where Abraham built his first altar to worship and where the blessings were pronounced over Israel in Deuteronomy 11:29-30. The Jews worshipped in Jerusalem, where King David eventually brought the tabernacle and Solomon built the temple.

1. After perceiving that Jesus was a prophet (vs 18-19), why was the woman's question in verse 20 intriguing when you think of all the things she might have asked Jesus?
2. How often do we, as Christians, focus more on the controversies of worship rather than on Jesus' presence?
3. How does Jesus' answer (vs 21-23) reflect what is most important to Him?
4. To understand Jesus' statement of worshiping in "spirit and truth" we must understand what this phrase is contrasted with. Jesus is addressing the question of location of worship the woman asked about (on this mountain or in Jerusalem) as well as the source of truth ("what you do not know" vs "what we know") in verse 22. If "spirit and truth" is in contrast to the location of worship and the source of truth, how should we best understand its meaning?
5. How can verse 24 also contribute to the meaning of "spirit" in this passage?
6. Now consider this. In OT times, God's presence was uniquely manifest in the temple (a specific location). Now, with Jesus' life, death and resurrection the presence of God is manifest in His people (the Body of Christ or His living Temple). We don't worship in a location, we worship "in spirit" as the Body of Christ gathers. Jesus was saying that the controversy of "location" would no longer be an issue as we worship in spirit. What are some modern issues of worship that we make too controversial instead of worshiping "in spirit"?
7. Jesus is the way, the Truth and the light. He is the Word of God. When we worship we must worship in the Truth of Jesus, a Person. We don't worship a book, nor the principles or truths in the Bible. We worship the Person Who embodies them all. How can you now better understand what it means to worship "in spirit and truth"?
8. In verse 23, what strikes you about the fact that the Father is seeking such people to worship Him?

## **SEEING JESUS CHRIST**

*Jesus embodies the principle of worshiping in spirit and truth. He was both the fulness of God's presence (Col 1:19) wherever He was (not just in the temple) and He embodied truth by only doing the Father's will (Jn 14:6). He didn't require certain religious structures, practices or locations in order to worship. He could worship God anywhere and anytime. He worshiped in spirit. Likewise, He always worshiped according to the truth He knew and was. Yet, after being the first and only perfect worshiper He then laid down His life in an act of worship. This sacrifice was OUTSIDE the temple of God's presence to show that true worshipers worship God in spirit, not location. Yet, His death fulfilled every truth predicted about Him and ordained by the Father.*

- How does Jesus' model of worship move you to worship in spirit and truth?

## **MAKING IT MATTER**

1. What often contributes to our divisive spirit over how we worship?
2. Certainly worship that is true to God's Truth is important. What are some truths about worship that are important to grasp?
3. It's common that we can slide to one side or the other in the "spirit" or "truth" continuum when both are necessary. Which side do you tend to slide toward? Why?
4. What might worship look like in your life & our church if we better expressed the tension of both spirit AND truth in our worship:

## **PRAYING FOR GOD'S POWER**

"This is the confidence we have before him: If we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have what we have asked of him." 1 John 5:14-15

When we pray according to God's will it engages the power and guidance of God to bring about our transformation. If we apply these things in our own strength, then it is just legalistic obedience. But, when we humbly ask God to change us and empower us according to His will and by His Spirit, it becomes transformational AND it glorifies God.

1. Ask people to share one key, specific application from today's lesson that they want God to bring about in their life. Then take time to pray for each other in these areas.