

John 4:1-30 (Part 2)

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[0 : 00] Please take your copy of God's Word and join me in John chapter 4. Reading this passage and getting into our study of it, allow me a few moments to recap, to either serve your memory or, if you were unable to be with us this past Sunday, to catch you up.

Now, in rather unique form, I gave you two outlines last week. Normally how we tend to do this, but we're going to continue those two outlines into this week.

The first of those was looking at the way that Jesus is presented in the text. He's presented in four ways. Firstly, as the living water, verses 4 through 15.

Secondly, as the prophet, verses 16 through 19. Thirdly, and we'll pick up today, as savior of the world, verses 20 through 24.

And fourthly, as the Messiah. Verses 25 through 30. Now, I said to you last week, this was the very evident outline for the text.

[1 : 33] You can kind of walk through it and see these declarations, whether Jesus is making them or the Samaritan woman is making them, of him as the living water, the prophet, the savior of the world, and the Messiah.

But then we talked a bit about its literary structure. And I presented to you a second outline. Sort of a lens through which to view the rest of the text.

Or perhaps you could just say the other outline being viewed through another. And it was as follows. Firstly, the greatness of our sin. And secondly, the surpassing greatness of Jesus' mercy. Now, we got there by talking a bit about chiasmic structure. And I really hope that this isn't boring to you. It's such good, good stuff.

It comes from the Greek letter chi, which was their X. And so you want to think about these texts that have this literary structure and it being able to be folded over on top of each other.

[2 : 42] So the thing that begins first and the thing that is last correspond to each other. And then the second thing and the second to last thing correspond to one another.

We don't want to be looking for these structures where they do not exist. But they are found everywhere in Hebrew and Greek literature, including in the Bible.

The authors of the Bible seemed to think in this literary structure. It's not everywhere, but it is in a lot of places.

Why? Because it's a very useful device for the memorization and transmission of thought. In an age that written word existed but was pretty rare.

Where storying was a common thing. This is a mnemonic device that helped its original hearers to memorize it and therefore pass it along.

[3 : 48] Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, the literary structure where it meets in the middle. The central point of the text is being made.

Or a significant turning point happens. Or a phrase that helps the reading of the rest of the passage is presented. It's used powerfully to communicate in this way.

And so we should look for these when they exist. And we should take up that central bit of passage as a lens. Something to look through to help us interpret the rest of the passage.

Now I'm going to leave off talking about chiasmic structure after reminding you of the central point of the text that is before us.

But settle your minds into this idea. Prepare yourselves to hear me use this word, chiasmic or chiasm, quite a bit in our study of the book of John.

[4 : 54] Because not only are verses 4-30 chiasmic, but they sit within chapters 2-4, which has a very clear chiasmic structure.

Our current total text corresponds with the story of Nicodemus. And you may see some of that as we work through it together. And the entirety of John's gospel is chiasmic.

I look forward to showing you that and showing you the central, the pivotal point in John's gospel. John means I will argue.

For us to see the literary structure. Not just amuse at it. That's not the point. Not just to go, look at how amazing. And it is amazing. But to draw our attention as we ascertain the meaning of each passage.

It's a literary structure helping us to arrive at the conclusions that he wants us to arrive at. The entirety of the book of John is aiming at helping us believe that Jesus is the Christ.

[6 : 05] That we might have eternal life by faith in him. And he's going to use this brilliant writing under the inspiration of the Spirit to this very end.

So if you'll look with me just briefly. Let me bring you to the central point in our text today. If you first look at it, I'm going to walk us to that central point.

Just with some examples. I skipped over a bunch of this last week for the sake of time. But look first at verse 15. And then also at verse 19.

And notice a repeated phrase. So here's what I'm talking about as we're looking at things that correspond to one another. At the beginning of verse 15, you see the phrase. The woman said to him, Sir.

And then she makes a request. Right? In the case of verse 15. Give me this water so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water. She grossly misunderstands what Jesus is trying to teach her about himself.

[7 : 09] Him being the living water. She has no idea what he's talking about. He's talking about spiritual life and spiritual satisfaction.

And she still thinks he's talking about physical water. Verse 19. The woman said to him, Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet.

Our fathers worshipped on this mountain. But you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship. And we'll talk about this in a moment. But again here, a huge misunderstanding about what worship is.

So you see how they correspond. Then if you look at verse 16 and the last part of verse 17 and into 18.

First in verse 16. Jesus changes the subject, it would seem. He departs from this living water teaching and he says, Go call your husband and come here.

[8 : 18] She answers. Verse 17. The beginning of verse 17. And his response, again here's the thing that corresponds. You are right in saying, I have no husband.

Why? Why? Verse 18. For you have had five husbands. And the one you now have is not your husband. So five failed marriages.

Now an adulterous marriage. To be, or excuse me, a living situation. To be sure. And so the central phrase is the woman saying, I have no husband.

Her sinfulness exposed. He's been saying to her, You are dry. You're spiritually dry. And you have need of deep, spiritual, forever satisfaction.

And I'm here to give it to you. And she entirely misses the point. And so what does Jesus do? He exposes her. And her spiritual need. I have no husband.

[9 : 23] Which is why we started that second outline. The greatness of our sin. We're looking at this woman, but we also want to see ourselves in this text. You may not have been married five times and have a live-in boyfriend.

I don't think anybody in the room checks those particular boxes. But we also have great sin. And it's good for us to be laid bare that we might look for spiritual water.

And so that we might understand what true worship really is. So see how we pick it up and we use it as a lens to help us see the rest of the text.

So let me pray for us. And then I'll begin reading in verse one. Father, we are grateful for your word this morning. We're so very glad that you have spoken to people before us by it to us today.

And that you will continue to build your church through your word by the power of your spirit. Help us, we pray, as we take it up this morning.

[10 : 35] To rightly understand it. We want to understand it. We want to know what you mean to communicate to us by it. We humbly recognize that it was written for your glory.

Firstly, for your glory. That you might be known as a necessary consequence for our good. That we would know you by it.

And we pray that you would help us to believe its promises and obey its commands. And to have affection for you, its author. We ask that you would help us to do this.

In Christ's name. Amen. Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John.

Although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples. He left Judea and departed again for Galilee. And he had to pass through Samaria.

[11 : 34] So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar. Near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well.

It was about the sixth hour. A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, Give me a drink. For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

The Samaritan woman said to him, How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria? For Jews had no dealings with Samaritans. You would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.

The woman said to him, Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock.

Jesus said to her, Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again. But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

[12 : 45] The woman said to him, Sir, give me this water so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water. Jesus said to her, Go, call your husband, and come here.

The woman answered him, I have no husband. Jesus said to her, You are right in saying I have no husband, for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband.

What you have said is true. The woman said to him, Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.

Jesus said to her, Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know. We worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. For the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

[13 : 53] The woman said to him, I know that Messiah is coming, he who is called Christ. When he comes, he will tell us all things. Jesus said to her, I who speak to you, am he.

Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, What do you seek? Or, why are you talking with her? So the woman left her water jar, and went away into town, and said to the people, Come see a man who told me all that I ever did.

Can this be the Christ? They went out of the town, and were coming to him. So, again, where we left off last week, the Samaritan woman, astounded that Jesus has knowledge of her five failed marriages, and her current live-in boyfriend says, Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet.

That's where we left off. But then she poses an implied question, maybe in the form of a statement. Perhaps it could have been punctuated with a question mark.

I think that was kind of how I read it in verse 20. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.

[15 : 14] She knows that Jesus is someone of significance, someone worth listening to, someone worth asking an important question of.

She has said, I perceive that you are a prophet. But then, once again, just like before, when we leave behind the conversation about living water, it seems like she just abandons what's going on altogether.

Like, she thinks, if I do a little juke here, I might get around the conversation that we're having right now. I don't think that's what's going on.

I think she's asking a question that's important on her mind, following the exposure of her sin. But note the nature of it.

She's concerned with the physical location of worship. Worship. Geography is what matters to her in this moment.

[16:16] Having her sin exposed, having been laid bare, her attention turns toward worship. But as we'll see, it doesn't rightly turn toward worship.

Where should I worship? Is the question that she asks. You're aware of my sins. I must make sacrifice.

Where? Where do I go to make the sacrifice? I think that's the question that she's pressing at and putting before Jesus. Do I do it on Mount Gerizim?

This is where the Samaritans, their fathers before, had worshiped. Or on Mount Moriah, Jerusalem, where the temple was built.

Which place? Where do I go for the forgiveness of my sin? I think she's moving in the right direction in this moment.

[17:15] The greatness of our sin ought to press us in that way. Even if we don't get the question right, what do we do when we realize we have such great sin?

When we have offended a holy God. All mankind has God's law written on their hearts and know that there is a creator.

They can deny it all they want to, but down in the middle they know that there's a creator and that something must be done to reconcile them with a creator. All of the world's religions seek to do this, but fail.

Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, like you go on and on and on. Concerned with the earning of salvation, the outward expression of worship, rather in the mosque or the synagogue or in the temple.

people. But beloved, this is not far from us where we are, deep south, Bible belt kind of people.

[18:30] Because the very same thing happens in various forms of Christianity, even evangelical Christianity. Looking for the right set of things to do, the proper liturgies, the showing up and the checking of the boxes.

True worship of God is not about geography. I'm not saying we ought not gather together as a local church. Don't hear me saying that at all. But if us or a synagogue or a temple or in a church building, we're sadly mistaken.

we invite people here to repent of their sin and put their faith in Jesus Christ all the time. But you will never hear us give an altar call here.

Or if we have a guest speaker and they do, that will be the last time that they do it. You know why? There is no altar in this building. You don't have to come here to receive God's grace for salvation. Should you come here? Yes, of course you should. You should come and meet with the church. But this is not somehow a set aside place for which that happens. Jesus Christ died once for all.

[19:55] The sacrifice has been made. Jesus is the one who mediates between you and God. Certainly not me.

I am not worthy for such a task. So repent and believe. Turn from your sin. Turn to the surpassing greatness of Jesus' mercy.

No matter how great our sin, Jesus' mercy is greater. It overcomes it by faith in Christ. Notice in the text, Jesus turns her attention.

What a kindness to her. She seems to be not getting it again. Maybe a step in the right direction, but she still is missing the point.

And yet he mercifully turns her attention away from the question of where geography to the questions of whom and how.

[21:06] Or who and how if you prefer. Somebody better in English than me, tell me later. I think whom. Whom and how. Notice what he says, verse 21.

Jesus said to her, woman, believe me, the hour is coming. Something's passing, something else is coming, and he's going to say in a few verses, and is now, because the hour is coming, when neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, not a question of geography, will you worship the Father?

Now I think when we read verse 21, New Testament people, we see the Father at the end of verse 21, and we think very little of it.

Now we certainly read the Bible on multiple levels. We read the Bible so often as those who have read the entirety of the Bible. We have the whole salvific narrative laid before us.

We see God being used interchangeably with the Father all the time. But we need to also do the work to think about the original hearers, not only those who received it written, but also those who heard it in this moment, who was at this well, at this time, it was Jesus, and it was the Samaritan woman.

[22 : 35] So why did he say, Father, and not God? I think it's a bit curious that he chose to say, location's not the thing, right?

That's passing away. You have to worship the Father. Father. I think a couple things are going on here. Firstly, she seems previously in our text to be concerned with the Father's tradition at play there.

And Jesus, I think, is seeking to turn her attention away from the tradition of the Father. She says in verse 20, our fathers worshipped on this mountain.

And prior to that, in verse 12, are you greater than our father Jacob? I think he's trying to get her head and turn it away from this attention to a greater attention to the Father.

The definitive article is there. You will worship the Father. Secondly, calling God Father assumes that he has children.

[23 : 48] I'm a father. I would not be a father if I didn't have children. And I hope that her mind started to swim with this idea. He's talking about worship.

He must be talking about God, but he's called him father. And if he called him father, then he must have children. And the question at hand for her should be, am I a child of God?

If the mountains don't matter anymore, then how am I to worship the father? Well, I must start by being a child. So again, for us, this may be very obvious, but I don't know that it would have been so to her.

Previously in John's Gospel, chapter 1, beginning in verse 11, says, Jesus came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Lastly, I think Jesus uses this term because, again, here we are, we're reading it on two levels, referring to God as the father assumes the son.

[25 : 08] It assumes the son, right? Previously, that the father has children, sons, but it assumes the son. John connects the father and the son over and over and over again in this book.

So when we see the father, we should also see the son. She has him standing right before her. John chapter three, verse thirty-five, the father loves the son and has given all things into his hand. John chapter five and verse twenty, for the father loves the son and shows him works in these will he show him so that you may marvel. And then chapter five and verse twenty-six, for as the father has life in himself, so he has granted the son also to have life in himself.

So again and again and again, father, son, father, son, father, son. If the son is not worshipped, Then the father is not worshipped.

This truth is so readily compromised in our pluralistic, relativistic day. People want to abandon the thing that Jesus said of himself.

[26 : 27] John 14 and verse six, I am the way and the truth. Definitive article in the original, the way and the truth and the life.

life. No one comes to the father except through me. We cannot rightly worship God apart from the son.

It's the way we gain access to him. Faith in Jesus, person and work, believing who he is and all that he's accomplished and everything that he said.

we must have Jesus on his terms. You cannot make up a Jesus that you particularly like.

Some of you may be old enough to remember the Jesus is my homeboy trend. No, he's not. We must have Jesus on his terms.

[27 : 36] And just a few short chapters. John chapter 6 and verse 60. Jesus is talking about eating his flesh and drinking his blood. And there we see many of his disciples when they heard it they said this is a hard saying who can listen to it?

And he goes on to say some things that we're going to unpack in some coming months. He says in verse 66 after this John records many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him.

Jesus said things they didn't like and they abandoned Jesus as a result. Beloved in our day so many people don't like something Jesus says they don't abandon him altogether but they make him they shape him a way that they want him to look something that they're more comfortable with. You cannot rightly worship the father without rightly worshipping the son. You must have him on his terms.

Jesus goes on verse 22 bit of a perplexing verse you worship what you do not know what a stark statement we worship what we know for salvation is from the Jews.

[29 : 05] I think he's saying to her to a Samaritan woman you're worshipping wrongly and therefore you do not know who you worship. I think it's that matter of fact the first part of that verse you worship what you do not know.

But what could be meant by the rest of verse 20 new? He turns right from that and he says we worship what we know. He's talking about Israel.

He's talking about Jewish people for salvation. Though we can't understand that this means that the Jewish people will save the Samaritan people. It can't be what it means. That's not what he's talking about at all.

Or any other peoples for that matter. They themselves are going to be the salvation of other peoples. But does it mean that all Jewish people were saved and therefore that they rightly worshipped?

We can also answer that with a definitive! No! If we look at John chapter 8 and verse 19, this is a questioning of the Pharisees, the religious of the day.

[30 : 16] They asked him, where is your father? And Jesus answered, you know neither me nor my father. If you knew me, you would know my father also.

So the Pharisees, the religious elite of the day, those who had the Old Testament scriptures memorized, if anybody's getting it right, it should have been them.

And Jesus says, you don't know me or my father. Another text, John 5 in verse 39 and 40, makes that point further.

There he says to the Pharisees, you search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life. And it is they that bear witness about me. Yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.

Search the scriptures by all means, but search the scriptures to arrive at the son, at the Christ. Christ. So it can't mean that all Jewish people were saved and that they therefore rightly worshipped.

[31 : 22] So what does it mean? I think it's right to think that Jesus means that the Jewish people had the Pentateuch, which is the first five books of the Old Testament, and what were called the writings, the book of history and wisdom and poetry, and the prophets.

They had what we call the Old Testament in its totality, which all points to Jesus. John 5, verse 39, they bear witness about me.

The Samaritans only used the Pentateuch. It was the only five books that they studied. So, the Jews had all the prophecies, right?

They had all of the foreshadowing, all of the knowledge, all of this witness of the Old Testament. And additionally, and I think very importantly, Jesus was the Christ.

He's from the family of David. He was the promised Jewish Messiah. And I think that's what he means there, the last part of verse 22.

[32 : 30] But the point of it is, is that her worship was not proper worship. Perhaps aimed at the right God, but he says to her, you don't know him.

And then he begins to be instructive, didactic, but the hour is coming and is now here. When the true worshipers worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.

The hour is coming and it has arrived. he's right here before you. Right? The physical temple will be torn down. Jesus will raise it up on the third day.

The spiritual place of worship will be found in Christ. True worshipers worship the Father in spirit and truth.

Now when we see this phrase in spirit and truth let's break it into the two constituent parts spirit there's no definitive article in Greek so it's correct to say in spirit not in the spirit however he's talking about spiritual worship but do you remember what Jesus said to Nicodemus in chapter three

we studied it not too long ago and it corresponds chiastically I told you I wasn't going to talk about it anymore and here I am talking about it it corresponds there but what did say in chapter three in verse six that which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the spirit is spirit and now he's saying true worshipers worship the Father in spirit and truth and so we must be born of the spirit if we're to worship in spirit true worshipers will have their spirits quickened by the spirit they will be regenerate made alive in

[34 : 49] Christ and then offer themselves to God in worship worship now you have to know I hope you know that what Jesus is talking about here is is not music that's not what he's talking about although it certainly can and I would argue should include music but what he is talking about is whole self Godward oriented living does it include the gathering of Christian people on a Sunday morning of course it does we often call this corporate worship but it also includes private worship not just time set aside which are important but everything you do in every single day all of your spiritual self being offered to God in worship soul satisfied people people who have the living water soul satisfied people spending and being spent for the glory of

God this this is the worship that we are called to now a related side note and and briefly our congregation from time to time and recently has been criticized for neglecting the spirit and I will tell you that it makes me furious when this happens I think it's a righteous anger the reason it bothers me is because people are drawing into question they're litigating the posture of your heart when we come together as a church recently this accusation was made and the corresponding question afterwards was well what would it look like to you if we weren't neglecting the spirit and the response was more hands raised trading geography for posture right where does true worship how is true worship happened with hands in the air or hands at the side or hands in the pocket right as the debate at hand so very very frustrating the

Puritans referred to the spirit quite regularly as the shy spirit you know why because the primary job of the spirit of christ is the exaltation of Jesus Christ this is what he exists for and we refer to the spirit in many ways to this end not by any design but two thirds of the songs we sang so far this morning mention the spirit directly or indirectly in them Dan Phillips a contemporary pastor once said this quote show me a person obsessed with the holy spirit and his gifts real or imagined and I will show you a person not filled with the holy spirit end quote for a moment right pentecostalism grieves me because at very least it divides

Christians who have been baptized and have some and whatever you think of the gifts I'm not being critical of spiritual gifts it's not the water I'm trying to wade in right now there has to be some outward expression hands raised apparently that you have the spirit or that you love the spirit or that you want to magnify the spirit whatever it may be at best it divides Christians into two categories at worst many Pentecostals will say that if you don't have these expressive outward emotive evidences that you're not saved at all again back to Dan Phillips quote show me a person obsessed with the Holy Spirit and his gifts real or imagined and I will show you a person not filled with the Holy Spirit he goes on show me a person focused on the person and work of Jesus Christ never tiring of learning about him thinking about him boasting of him speaking about and for and to him thrilled and entranced with his perfections and beauty finding ways to serve and exalt him tirelessly exploring ways to spend and be spent for him growing in character to be more and more like him and

I will show you a person who is filled with the Holy Spirit end quote now can you all be more expressive sometimes sure some hands in the air and some amens from time to time would be okay!

[39 : 54] with me but this in no way is the measure of how holy you are and how much you care about the Spirit and the life of the church I'd suggest to you that you not let anybody professing to be a Christ follower in this case I believe so get away with these kinds of accusations we're to worship in spirit whole self offering ourselves to the praise of Christ and we're to worship in truth now you might be going where are you getting all of this from well I think it follows we're to worship in spirit and truth you remember John 14 in verse 6 what did Jesus call himself there the truth if we're to rightly worship the father the focus of our worship is going to be on

Christ word of worship in spirit and truth Jesus calls himself the truth does it include other truth of course it includes other truth everything that the scripture teaches us of course it includes that but we certainly can't dismiss the one who calls himself the truth we have to go to the father through the son and we have to do it on his terms we have to take up his word and read it and be honest with it

and wrestle with it and apply it in our lives and do our very best by the power of the spirit to honor him in everything that we do whether corporately or privately in and out of every moment of every day true worshipers worship in spirit and truth for the father seeking such people to worship him not just an ethnic group of people but people from all ethnos not just men but also women here at the Samaritan well not just people who have it all together don't have this grand exposure five husbands and now a live in boyfriend the whole town knew what was going on with her people all dressed up on the outside he's seeking people to worship him in spirit and truth which is the third point of our first outline Jesus savior of the world right not not just of jewish people but peoples and I pulled this phrase from later in our chapter john 4 and verse 42 she goes back to the village there's a there's a missionary impulse in her I think she's moving in the right direction she goes back to the village and eventually we see the people from the village say we know that this is indeed the savior of the world many

Samaritan people came to faith in christ god is spirit and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth the woman responds to him again oh she's I think she's there back Nicodemus we don't really know what happens with him I think I think we know she's moving in the right direction here I know that messiah is coming which is the Hebrew word anointed one he who is called christ which is the greek word john seems to keep inserting these parentheticals for us to help both his jewish readers and his gentile readers understand what he's talking about I know that messiah is coming he who is called christ when he comes he will tell us all things

I think this woman had heard something of the jewish messiah from the jews when he comes he will tell us all things it's a beautiful response like let it like hit and settle jesus said to her verse 26 i who speak to you am he the one comes to redeem his people to reign over them forever to make his footstool an enemy his enemy a footstool excuse me jesus the messiah and his disciples come back and they marvel we talked about this some last week that he was talking to a woman was societally out of norm for him to do so but no one asked why no one sought to figure out why he was doing this so the woman leaves her water jar the very purpose she came out

[45 : 24] I think maybe I'm just hoping for her that she's now understood what this offer of living water means they don't pick the conversation back up we never loop back to it at all she doesn't go by the way the whole living water thing maybe I'm starting to get it but I think there's a little picture of that as she leaves the water jar and she's driven into town to say to the people come see a man who told me all can this be the Christ and so many come out of the town to him beloved we have a beautiful savior a merciful savior praise god because we needed perhaps need saving because our sin is great Jesus mercy is greater let's pray together