

WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH

John 4:1-25

Thought for the Day: A genuine encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ will transform our lives: 1) it will change the way we think; 2) it will change what we feel, what we desire and what we love; and 3) it will change how we live. It will cause us to worship and serve the Lord in spirit and truth.

Religion is no substitute for relationship; genuine worship is the overflow of a heart that is in love with the Lord.

John 4:1-6 – Most of us struggle with some sense of guilt, shame and self-loathing. We sometimes feel that we are being used and abused by others, rejected and abandoned. We long to be loved, secure in the unconditional commitment of one who loves us just the way we are. We feel a deep loneliness that we cover over with things, relationships, activities, but it does not go away. We wish we could live our lives over, but realize we would probably make the same mistakes. We wonder why we do the things we do. We long for a sense of meaning, purpose, and significance in our lives.

John 4:7-8 – Jesus used a personal need which the woman could meet to build a bridge to her across which He could share the good news of salvation and redemption.

John 4:9-10 – The One who had just asked for water was now offering water. Why was it important that she know *who* He was? She knew she wasn't much, but at least she could take some pride in her ancestry.

John 4:11-14 – We long for "water" that will meet the deepest needs of our heart, truth that transforms, the presence of God in our lives that will produce eternal life.

John 4:15-16 – When we are truly honest with ourselves, our sense of guilt and shame can be unbearable. You have to get a person lost before you can get them saved. (Mk. 2:17)

John 4:17-18 – Jesus knows the truth about us, all the details of our lives, but chooses to love us and offer us the gift of eternal life and a personal relationship with Him.

John 4:19-24 – When God puts His finger on sin in our life, isn't it amazing how interested we suddenly get in theology? Let's focus on anything except the true condition of our heart before God! How can I, as a sinner, approach a holy God? It's not about the place, it's about the attitude of the heart and mind—worshipping in spirit and truth.

- Genuine worship is not just going through the outward motions, performing the right rituals—genuine worship is wholehearted worship.

- It involves our entire inner being: mind, heart and will; our intellect; our emotions, affections, and desires; and our wills manifested in making choices and living a lifestyle that is pleasing to God.
- For many people, worship is associated with our emotions only—if we go away excited, then we’ve worshipped; doesn’t matter whether we learned anything or not, or whether we’ve determined to live in a different way.
- If it’s exciting, it’s worship, and if it’s not exciting, it’s not worship.
- Because genuine worship involves our whole being, it *transforms* our lives—mind, heart and will!
- Genuine worship brings our lives into conformity with the truth of God’s Word.

John 4:25-26 – Jesus is the ultimate Source of true hope! In spite of His intimate knowledge of our sinfulness, He offers the “living water” of salvation, the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit who gives us eternal life in our inmost being.

Dr. John MacArthur says that Jesus’ conversation with the woman at the well illustrates three nonnegotiable truths about salvation:

- First, salvation comes only to those who recognize their desperate need for spiritual life that they do not have. Living water will be received only by those who realize that they are spiritually thirsty.
- Second, salvation comes only to those who confess and repent of their sin and desire forgiveness. Before this promiscuous woman could embrace the Savior, she had to acknowledge the full weight of her iniquity.
- And, third, salvation comes only to those who embrace Jesus Christ as their Messiah and sin bearer. After all, salvation is found in no one else (cf. John 14:6; Acts 4:12).

(The MacArthur New Testament Commentary)