

15. TRUE WORSHIP (JOHN 4:16-26) 05/06/12  
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, ATCHISON, PASTOR LEE HENDON

THIS ONE HAS BEEN AROUND AWHILE - BUT STILL IS FUNNY:  
ONE SUNDAY MORNING, THE PASTOR NOTICED LITTLE JOHNNY WAS STARING UP AT THE LARGE PLAQUE HANGING IN THE FOYER OF THE CHURCH. IT WAS COVERED WITH NAMES & SMALL AMERICAN FLAGS WERE MOUNTED ON EITHER SIDE OF IT. THE SEVEN-YEAR-OLD HAD BEEN STARING AT THE PLAQUE FOR SOME TIME, SO THE PASTOR WALKED UP, STOOD BESIDE THE BOY & SAID SOFTLY, "GOOD MORNING, JOHNNY."

"GOOD MORNING," REPLIED THE YOUNG MAN, STILL FOCUSED ON THE PLAQUE. "WHAT IS THIS FOR?" JOHNNY ASKED.

"WELL, SON, IT'S A MEMORIAL TO ALL THE YOUNG MEN & WOMEN WHO DIED IN THE SERVICE."

SOBERLY, THEY STOOD TOGETHER, STARING AT THE LARGE PLAQUE. LITTLE JOHNNY'S VOICE WAS TREMBLING & BARELY AUDIBLE WHEN HE ASKED, "DID THEY DIE IN THE 9:00 O'CLOCK OR 10:45 SERVICE?"

TO SOME PEOPLE IT IS A VERY SERIOUS MATTER AS TO WHICH WORSHIP SERVICE YOU ATTEND. UNFORTUNATELY THERE IS STILL SOME LINGERING SENTIMENTS EVEN HERE AS TO WHICH SERVICE IS *TRUE WORSHIP*? SOME VERY DYNAMIC CONGREGATIONS HAVE SPLIT RIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE OVER CONTEMPORARY VS. TRADITIONAL WORSHIP STYLES TO BE LEFT CRIPPLED IN THEIR WITNESS FOR JESUS. WE ARE VERY BLESSED AS A CONGREGATION TO HAVE TWO VERY DYNAMIC WORSHIP STYLES. *WHICH IS TRUE* WORSHIP? THAT WAS THE ISSUE RAISED BY THE WOMAN AT THE WELL WITH JESUS. BUT FIRST SHE NEEDED TO BE CONVICTED BY JESUS TO HAVE FAITH IN HIM. TRUE WORSHIP IS IN JESUS.

WHAT IF YOU MET SOMEONE WHO KNEW YOU INSIDE & OUT? SOMEONE WHO KNEW YOU EVEN BETTER THAN YOU KNOW YOUR-SELF? THIS PERSON WOULD KNOW ALL YOUR DEEPEST & DARKEST SECRETS. WE ARE HARDLY TRANSPARENT TO EVERYONE ON EVERYTHING. JESUS PUT THE WOMAN TO THE TEST - "GO BRING YOUR HUSBAND HERE." AT LEAST SHE WAS HONEST WITH HIM ABOUT HAVING NO HUSBAND BUT JESUS KNEW HER EVEN DEEPER THAN THAT - JESUS REVEALED HIS INSIGHT INTO HER

LIFE - JESUS HAS SUCH INSIGHT INTO OUR LIVES AS WELL.  
 BREATHE A SIGH OF RELIEF - JESUS KNOWS THE TRUTH ABT EACH  
 OF US & STILL CARES FOR & LOVES US, ACCEPTS US JUST THE WAY  
 WE ARE RIGHT NOW!

JESUS DUG DEEPER INTO HER LIFE AS HE REVEALED A  
 SUPER-NATURAL AWARENESS OF HER 5 FAILED MARRIAGES. THIS  
 WOULD STRIKE THE WOMAN AS MIRACULOUS. WE DO NOT NEED  
 TO GET PARANOID ABOUT IT BUT JESUS HAS SUCH X-RAY VISION  
 ABOUT OUR LIVES AS WELL. WE OUGHT NOT BE SURPRISED ABOUT  
 IT. JESUS IS NOT SATISFIED TO STAY ON A SUPERFICIAL LEVEL  
 WITH US BUT WANTS TO DIG OUR FAITH DEEPER.

SO THE WOMAN AT THE WELL GOT DEFENSIVE WITH JESUS &  
 TRIED TO SIDE STEP HER REVEALED GUILT BY CHANGING THE  
 SUB-JECT: MOST OF US ARE A BIT SHY ABOUT OUR UNDER BELLY.  
 THE HOT TOPIC OF THE DAY WAS **TRUE WORSHIP** - THERE WAS A  
 PLACE OF WORSHIP IN SAMARIA (MT. GERIZIM) VS. THE TEMPLE IN  
 JERUSA-LEM (MT. ZION). SAMARITAN VS. JEW. WE DO THE SAME  
 THING ALL THE TIME TO DODGE OUR OWN GUILT BY OBJECTIFYING  
 SOME OTHER ENTIRELY DIFFERENT ISSUE OR THE OTHER. DO NOT  
 REVEAL MY SIN, OH JESUS....

SO, JESUS TOOK THE WOMAN AT THE WELL TO TASK. SHE  
 SAW JESUS TO BE A PROPHET - MUCH LIKE JUDAISM & ISLAM DO  
 TODAY - THEY ACCEPT JESUS AS A PROPHET - JESUS TOOK THAT AS  
 A STARTING POINT TO DIG DEEPER INTO HER FAITH & HE WILL  
 TAKE US TO TASK TO TAKE US DEEPER INTO OUR FAITH.  
 ABRAHAM FAITH - FAITH IN THE LAW & PROPHETS - DOES NOT GO  
 DEEP ENOUGH. GOD WANTS MORE FROM US. THE LAW & THE  
 PROPHETS KEEP GOD OBJECTIVE. WITH JESUS, GOD GETS UP CLOSE  
 & PERSONAL WITH US. GOD WANTS, DESIRES A RELATIONSHIP  
 WITH US - THAT RELATIONSHIP IS THRU THE PERSON OF JESUS.

THE FORM & PLACE OF WORSHIP IS NOT SO IMPORTANT WITH  
 GOD - SAMARITAN OR JEWISH - CONTEMPORARY OR TRADITIONAL.  
 NOTICE THE PROGRESSION JESUS MADE:

TRUE WORSHIPERS  
 WORSHIP NOT ON MT GERIZIM OR MT ZION  
 WORSHIP THE FATHER  
 IN SPIRIT & TRUTH  
 JESUS IS THAT SPIRIT & TRUTH - I AM HE!  
**TRUE WORSHIP**, JESUS SAID, IS FOUND IN OUR

**RELATION-SHIP** WITH GOD AS **FATHER** THRU JESUS THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD. THIS WAS A HUGE BREAK WITH ABRAHAM BASED FAITHS (JEWISH, SAMARITAN, ISLAMIC FAITHS) WHO HOLD GOD AS LAW GIVER. TRUE WORSHIP IS TO ESTABLISH, MAINTAIN & PROMOTE RELATION-SHIP WITH GOD AS FATHER. NOW THEN, IF YOU HAD A BAD, BAD RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR EARTHLY FATHER - THAT IS NOT WHAT JESUS HAD IN MIND. JESUS INTENDS FOR THERE TO BE A LOVING, GRACIOUS, RESPECTFUL & OBEDIENT FATHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD - AS DEMONSTRATED IN THE BIBLE. NOT ALL EARTHLY FATHERS GET IT RIGHT, NOT ALL THE TIME. THINK OF GOD AS THE FATHER WHO INDEED DOES GET IT RIGHT ALL THE TIME - ONE YOU CAN TRUST & DEPEND UPON ALL THE TIME, ANY TIME. JESUS ADDRESSED GOD A FATHER THREE TIMES IN THIS PASSAGE FOR EMPHASIS - HE MEANT IT!

NEXT, JESUS MEANS FOR US TO RELATE TO GOD THRU WOR-SHIP IN **SPIRIT & TRUTH**. SPIRIT & TRUTH ARE NOT ABOUT FORM & PLACE BUT RELATIONSHIP THRU THE ONE WHO REVEALS GOD AS FATHER - JESUS. ***GOD AS SPIRIT*** IS A FAITH REALITY ALL ABRAHAM BASED FAITHS COULD AGREE ON. I GOT A PHYSICAL BODY, YOU GOT A PHYSICAL BODY BUT OUR PERSONS ARE MUCH MORE THAN PHYSICAL - WE HAVE A SPIRITUAL NATURE THAT YEARNs TO BE IN COMMUNION WITH GOD THE SPIRIT. OUR PHYSICAL BODIES (TIME & SPACE) ARE NOT CREATED FOR ETERNAL VOYAGES - TRUST ME - THEY WEAR OUT WAY TOO QUICKLY. BUT ALL THE WHILE OUR SPIRITUAL SELVES GROW IN VITALITY & STRENGTH FOR OUR ETERNAL CONNECTION WITH GOD. IN TRUE WORSHIP, GOD CONNECTS WITH US SPIRIT TO SPIRIT - TRANSCENDS EVEN THE FEELINGS & MIND OF OUR PERSONS. LET YOURSELVES GO IN WORSHIP - TRUST IN YOUR SPIRIT TO SPIRIT CONNECTION WITH GOD - FEEL & TRUST GOD'S PRESENCE & POWER AS SPIRIT. YEARN TO EXPERIENCE WORSHIP AS A SPIRITUALLY MOVING EXPERIENCE FOR THAT IS GOD'S DESIRE & YEARNING! BE SPIRITUALLY PREPARED FOR GREAT WORSHIP TO HAPPEN - GOD IS HERE IN SPIRIT & TRUTH!

**TRUE WORSHIP IS IN TRUTH** - DUH? JESUS' MEANING IS THAT TRUE WORSHIP IS NOT ON MT. GERIZIM OR MT. ZION BUT IN HIM. ALL TRUTH IS GUIDED, DIRECTED BY FAITH IN JESUS AS THE MESSIAH, THE CHRIST, THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD. NOTICE THAT THE WOMAN AT THE WELL WAS EXPECTANT, LOOKING FOR THE

MESSIAH TO COME - JESUS SAID, "***I WHO SPEAK TO YOU AM HE.***"  
WHAT AN AWESOME, EXCITING EVENT IN OUR LIVES WHEN JESUS  
COMES INTO OUR LIVES. MANY OF US HAVE GROWN UP IN THE  
FAITH & MAY BE TEMPTED TO TAKE OUR FAITH PRESENCE WITH  
JESUS FOR GRANTED. WORSHIP IN TRUTH KEEPS US VITALLY &  
ENERGETICALLY CONNECTED TO JESUS. IF YOU LEAVE HERE  
TODAY BORED & NOT REVITALIZED, WELL, YOU HAVE NOT TRIED  
OR PREPARED HARD ENOUGH - FOR THE LORD IS HERE IN SPIRIT &  
TRUTH - OPEN YOURSELF TO JESUS!