*Worship in Spirit and Truth**

John 4:11-24 (11) The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?
(12) Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?
(13) Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:
(14) But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.
(15) The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.
(16) Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.
(17) The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:
(18) For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.
(19) The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.
(20) Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.
(21) Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.
(22) Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.
(23) But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.
(24) God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

It has been said, the Church of Christ speaks where the Bible speaks and remains silent where the Bible is silent. While that is a noble attribute to be sought by Christians, that does not always happen. Sometimes personal opinion prevails. Point in question - John 4:18; For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly. *This verse has been a source of confusion propelled by obvious personal opinion. Perhaps a more through understanding is possible.*

{In this verse Jesus gave the reason for verifying the woman's statement in the preceding verse. This has been a stumbling block for many who have been in confusion over the Biblical position on the marriage relation. The only marriage "ceremony" that God ever gave for the instituation is the fleshly union of one male with one female. That law is stated in Genesis 2:24 and verified by Jesus in Matthew 19:5; Mark 10:6-9 and by Paul in Ephesians 5:31. But the objector says this woman was thus joined to the sixth man, yet Jesus said he was not her husband. That is because the laws of man came in and required certain ceremonial regulations before a union would be recognized as legal. While the Lord did not originate this ruling, yet He recognized it, and requires His creatures to obey it. Bible Commentary E.M. Zerr}

While the Bible is silent concerning termination for her five previous marriages, whether by death or divorce, silence tho, has not prevailed. Many people conclude the marriages must have been terminated by divorce and therefore observe she was "living in adultery" with the man she now has, in an attempt to verify the traditional theory they hold to; that, "remarriage after divorce is living in adultery." That theory was codified in 1563 in the Catholic Council of Trent pronouncement of "perpetual adultery." The man whom she now has, may have been by promise or engagement, but not yet consummated or not recognized by law of the land. But the point is, to the woman Jesus said; true worshippers of God

shall worship in spirit and in truth, *and Jesus did not interfere with her right to do so. Neither should we. Our concern should be;* Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression (Psalm 19:13). *The Biblical silence challenges that weak brothers right to judge the woman concerning her five previous marriages. That right belongs to another tribunal, before which the conduct of the faithful Christian will not be condemned, but approved and upheld. Even if there should be anything objectionable to Christ, it is between that individual and Christ, and will have an answer at judgment. God had long ago divorced Israel and put her away (Jeremiah 3:8), but kept Judah. Jesus Christ was a Jew, born into the tribe of Judah and in Him alone is salvation received. The worship of God under the gospel, is not now appropriated to any one place, as it was under the law: but it is His will that men of obedient faith should pray, give thanks, and worship and serve Him everywhere. Our reason teaches us, indeed, to consult decency and convenience with respect to the places of our worship; but the true worshipers (baptized believers) enjoins that we give no preference to one place above another, in respect of holiness and acceptableness to God. They who prefer any act of worship merely for the sake of the house or building in which it is performed, forget that the hour is now when there should be no difference put in God's account; no, not even between Jerusalem, which had been so famous for sanctity, and the mount of Samaria, which had been so infamous for impiety. Reason teaches us to consult decency and convenience in the places of our worship; therefore the Church of Christ worshiping in spirit and in truth, gives no preference to one of it's congregations above another in respect of holiness and approval with God. Jesus purchased the Church with His own blood and He has given no man the right to judge one of His congregations that is clinging to Him*

in spirit and in truth, however much a weak brother may hold to his own personal opinion. However, absence of spirit and truth should be avoided. Before His return to heaven, Jesus established His institution for salvation absolute in these words; He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned (Mark 16:16). *Remember what He said;* the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life (John 6:63). *True worship of true believers consists of shewing forth the Lord's death in breaking of bread (1Cor 11:26), singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. (Col 3:16), pray with understanding (1 Cor 14:15), preaching the word (2Ti 4:2), and the collection for the Saints (1Cor 16:1-2). Now turn your Bibles to;*

Acts 2:1-4 (1) And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.
(2) And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.
(3) And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.
(4) And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Only ten days elapsed between His Ascension and Pentecost. The attitude of the elect during that time should be carefully noted. They obeyed implicitly Christ's command to wait for the 'power from on high.' The only act recorded is the election of Matthias to fill the place of Judas, and that act is at least questionable because they acted before the Spirit was given, and Christ's subsequent choice of Paul as an Apostle. But, with the exception of that one flash of doubtful activity, prayer, supplication, patient waiting, and clinging together in harmonious expectancy, characterized the hundred and twenty brethren. They must have been wrought to an intense pitch of anticipation, for they knew that their waiting was to be short, and they knew, at least partially, what they were to

receive, namely, 'power from on high,' or 'the promise of the Father.' So very early, on that day of Pentecost, they betook themselves to their usual place of assembling, probably the 'large upper room,' already hallowed to their memories; and in each heart the eager question, 'Will it be to-day?' Like the roaring of a tempest hurrying towards them, it hushed human voices, and each man would feel, 'Surely now the Gift comes!' Nearer and nearer it approached, and at last burst into the chamber where they sat silent and unmoving. But if we look carefully at Luke's words, we see that what filled the house was not agitated air, or wind, but 'a sound as of wind.' The language implies there was no rush of atmosphere that lifted a hair on any cheek, or blew on any face, but only such a sound as it suggested wind, but it was not wind. By that first symbolic preparation for the communication of the promised gift, the old symbolism which lies in the very word 'Spirit,' had been brought anew to the disciples', by remembrance of Christ's words to Nicodemus, with its associations of life-giving power and liberty; thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth (John 3:8). *As the former had not been wind, likewise, the latter was not fire, but 'as of fire.' One explanation is, the Spirit was to be in them as a Spirit of burning, thawing natural coldness and melting hearts with a gentle warmth, which should beget flaming enthusiasm, fervent love, burning zeal, and should work transformation into an unbelieving soul. The rejoicing power, the quick energy, the consuming force, the assimilating action of fire, are all indicated in the symbolism, and should all be possessed by Christ's disciples. Further, 'they were all filled," on Pentecost, when the great moment arrived. Suddenly the Spirit descended and took full control of every person in the upper room. He made His presence known through supernatural signs. Peter's quotation from Joel distinctly implies the unimpeachable gift, which the 'servants and handmaidens,' now received. Herein is the true Republic*

of Christianity. There are diversities of operations and degrees of possession, but all Christians have the Spirit. All 'they that believe on Him,' and only they, have received it. Otherwise there is confusion concerning diversities of operation and degrees of possession. Of old the light shone only on the highest peaks, on prophets, and kings, and psalmists; now the lowest depths of the valleys are flooded with it. Would that Christians generally believed more fully in, and set more store by that great gift and not set aside those in whom they perceive as; I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican (Luke 18:11). *The words were aptly chosen, and was obviously suggested by the presence of the supplicant, "Six publicans and half-a-dozen extortioners" had become a proverb; and the offensive epithet, if not meant to be heard by the publican, was at any rate, mentally directed at him. Judgmentalist are often the most opinionated of any class of people. They will pester those who happen to differ from them in opinion, we may have errors in opinion but concerning salvation and worship which is the main, I am satisfied we are right and walk together spiritually. Therefore, opinion should not be made a test of fellowship. Spiritual affections, as shown in fervent prayers, thanksgivings, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord, and remembering Christ in breaking of bread, form the worship of a born again Christian, in which God delights and is glorified. Differences of opinion have prevailed even among the immediate followers of Christ and their disciples. And attempts for producing absolute oneness of mind among Christians has not yet been fully achieved. Therefore let not Christian fellowship be disturbed with strifes of words where there are differences of opinion. It will be good for us to ask ourselves, when tempted to disdain or reject our brethren; Has not God owned them? And if He has, dare I should disown them? As a person is plunged beneath the water, we cannot tell whence his sins were remitted and he becomes a*

child of God in Christ, he is as; The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit (John 3:8). *Should there be any offense between a christian and Christ, that will be dealt with at judgment, expelling personal judgment by a weak brother. Turn your Bibles to;*

Romans 14:10-13 (10) But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

(11) For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

(12) So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

(13) Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

Since we are all subjects and servants, and must all stand at the same tribunal, what right have we to sit in judgment on others? If any judgment is to be formed at all, let it be rather as a principle to guide our own action, and not in the shape of a criticism upon others, seeing that judgment belongs to Christ. The apostle's meaning is, Since we are all the servants of Christ, and are to be judged by Him at the last day, we ought not to usurp His prerogative by pronouncing one another profane, or bigoted, or wicked, merely because we differ in opinion about matters, in which Christ hath commanded us to judge ourselves. Nevertheless, notorious wickedness, whether in principle or practice, whereby society or person is injured, or God dishonoured, "being a matter subject to ***no doubt****, we ought not only to judge in our own minds, but should rebuke those who are guilty of it." But even rebuke properly applied will;* Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins (James

5:20).

There is another life after this awaiting us, wherein we shall be either happy or miserable beyond conception, and forever. All baptized believers, born again Christians, are the children of the same Father; as they constitute one family; as they all bear the same image; as they share His favor alike; as they are under the same obligation of gratitude to Him, and are bound to promote the same common cause, and are to dwell together in the same home forever should love one another. And as all the children in a family love their common father, so it should be in the great family of which God is the Head. Perhaps one of the greatest challenges of a born again Christian is this;
James 3:8-18 (8) But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.
(9) Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.
(10) Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.
(11) Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?
(12) Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.
(13) Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.
(14) But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.
(15) This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.
(16) For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.
(17) But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.
(18) And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

The chief thought is meant, not the tongue of others but one's own tongue. A restless evil! Full of deadly poison! No man can, by his own power and strength, tame or subdue his tongue, or restrain it from evils it is habituated to, be it lying, cursing, swearing, or what else: but God, by His Spirit, power and grace, can, and often does, change the note of the curser, swearer, liar, and blasphemer; but no man can do this but by prayer and supplication to God. The wickedness of the tongue is compared to poison, in respect of the mischief it does to others and ourselves. It seems to allude to those kinds of serpents which have poison under their tongues, (Psalm 140:3), with which they kill those they bite. The poison of the tongue is no less deadly, it murders men's reputations by the slanders it utters, their souls by the lusts and passions it stirs up in them, and many times their bodies by the contentions and quarrels it raiseth against men. As we bless God, we ought with the same organ to bless those who are in the body of His Son. There is an absurdity in cursing men who are thus made, who are born again, having passed the test of Jesus Christ which He commanded in order to see the Kingdom of God. Works, with meekness of wisdom — "This beautiful expression," intimates, that true wisdom is always accompanied with meekness, but if ye have bitter envying (Ζηλον), or zeal, as the word properly signifies, or zeal accompanied with a bitter spirit, that is, an unkind disposition toward others, beware! True Christian zeal is the flame of love; but bitter, unhallowed zeal is evil, even if it be only in the heart, and go no further. Jesus dealt with unhallowed zeal but He never looked backward, only forward to achieving His Father's will. One unhallowed zeal is in;

Matthew 4:3-10 (3) And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

(4) But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the

mouth of God.
(5) Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,
(6) And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.
(7) Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.
(8) Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;
(9) And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.
(10) Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.
Serving God the Father should be the mind set of all humanity because: By faith God is offering to all the blessings of salvation on a grace basis. But faith in what? Faith in Christ, that is the effect of belief in His gospel. Jesus said; He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. *Only those who first believe the testimony of Christ, by faith repent of their sins, by faith confess Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and by faith are baptized into Him for remission of sins, have the full and explicit testimony of pardon. This is the gospel. It's invitation is open, do you believe? Do you have faith? If so come repenting, confess Jesus Christ and be baptized into Him for remission of sins. When you do, you will be added the the Kingdom of God's dear Son. If there is need of prayer for other reasons; Come while we gently persuade with song.*

This message approved by
Jack Warford
a minister for Christ

Ref. Benson Commentary
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Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers
MacLaren's Expositions
Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible
Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary
'Worship' presented to; WestvilleOk-Nov2014/ LostSheepOk-Nov2014/WestvilleOk-Sep2019/ PleasentViewOk-Sep2019/PineMtAr-Sep2019