

DIVISION IV

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIVING WATER, 4:1–42

CHAPTER 4

IV. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIVING WATER, 4:1–42

A. The Offer of Living Water, 4:1–14

1. Jesus left Judaea

- a. He left out of necessity
 - 1) For John's sake

When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,
2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)
3 He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.

- 2) For His destiny: "He had to go"

4 And he must needs go through Samaria.

- b. He left to confront a Samaritan woman
 - 1) He entered Sychar, Samaria^{1,2}

5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

- 2) He was weary, sat by a well

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with *his* journey, sat thus on the well: *and* it was about the sixth hour.

- 3) He requested drink from a woman

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

- 4) The disciples had gone for food

8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

- c. The woman questioned Jesus

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?

- 1) She was shocked that Jesus talked with her

2) She questioned Jesus because offer the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.
racial prejudice

2. Living water is truly alive

- a. Is "of God"
- b. Is "the gift" of God
- c. Is given by asking for it

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

3. Living water is from a Person much greater than a religious father

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?

4. Living water is the only water that will quench thirst

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.

A. The Offer of Living Water, 4:1–14

(4:1–42) **DIVISION OVERVIEW: Salvation:** Jesus offered the Samaritan woman living water, and she showed an intriguing interest. However, there were some matters that she had to straighten out before she could ever have the living water. There was the matter of sin in her life, of worship, of the Messiah, and of laboring for God. Therefore, Jesus began to discuss these subjects with her one by one.

(4:1–14) **Introduction:** this is one of the most profound revelations of Jesus: He is the Living Water, the water which men can drink and thereby never thirst again.

- 1. Jesus left Judaea (vv.1–9).
- 2. Living water is truly alive (v.10).
- 3. Living water is from a Person much greater than a religious father (vv.11–12).
- 4. Living water is the only water that will quench thirst (vv.13–14).

1 (4:1–9) **Jesus Christ, Mission:** Jesus left Judaea. Note two significant facts.

a. Jesus left Judaea out of necessity. He left for John's sake. The crowds were leaving John and coming to Jesus, and the religionists were using the fact to downgrade John's ministry (see note—Jn. 3:22–26). Jesus did not want to create a competitive scene that would damage John's ministry, so He left the area to return to Galilee.

Note the words, "He *must* needs go through Samaria." The word *must* (edei) means necessity, compulsion, destiny. Jesus was driven to go through Samaria for the sake of His mission. Samaria needed the gospel as much as other areas. (The word *must* is so often used in connection with Jesus' mission that it makes an excellent word study. See Jn. 3:14; 9:4; 10:16; 12:34; 20:9.)

b. Jesus left Judaea to confront a Samaritan woman. He entered Sychar, a city of Samaria (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn. 4:5). He sat on the wall of a well, for He was both tired and thirsty from His journey. While sitting there, one of the events for which He had come into Samaria happened: He confronted a woman with the claims of the Messiah.

She came to draw water, and He initiated a conversation by asking her for a drink of water. She was shocked, for the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn. 4:5). She asked Jesus why He would ask her, a Samaritan, for a drink. It was this question, this subject of water, that Jesus used ...

- to discuss one of the greatest truths of spiritual life, that of living water
- to present the claims of God upon a life

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(4:5) **Samaria—Samaritans:** Samaria was the central part of Palestine. Palestine was a small country, stretching only 120 miles north to south. The country was divided into three sections:

- ⇒ Judaea, the southern section
- ⇒ Galilee, the northern section
- ⇒ Samaria, the central section, lying right between the two

There was bitter hatred between the Jews and Samaritans. Two things in particular caused this hatred.

1. The Samaritans were mongrel or half-Jews, a mixed breed *by birth*. Centuries before (about 720 B.C.), the King of Assyria had captured the ten tribes of Israel and deported a large number of the people, scattering them all throughout the Media empire (see 2 K. 17:6–41). He then took people from all over the Assyrian empire and transplanted them into Samaria to repopulate the land. The result was only natural. Inter-marriage took place and the people became a mixed breed, a breed including ...

- the transplanted people
- the weak of the land who had been left behind
- the outcast and irreligious who had intermarried with the original Samaritans

The fact of a mixed breed, of course, infuriated the strict Jews who held to a pure race.

2. The Samaritans were mongrel or half-Jews, a mixed breed *by religion*. The transplanted heathen, of course, brought their gods with them. Eventually the God of Israel won out, but the Samaritan religion never became pure Judaism. Three things happened to cause this.

- a. When Ezra led the Jews back from exile in Babylon, the first thing the Jews did was to start rebuilding their temple. The Samaritans offered to help them, but the Jews rejected their help, declaring that the Samaritans—through intermarriage and worship of false gods—had lost their purity and forfeited their right to worship the only true God. This severe denunciation embittered the Samaritans against the Jews in Jerusalem.
- b. The Samaritans built a rival temple on Mount Gerizim to stand in competition with the Jewish temple at Jerusalem.
- c. The Samaritans twisted both the Scripture and history to favor their own people and nation.
 - ⇒ They twisted Scripture in that they accepted only five books of the Bible, the Pentateuch. (Just imagine! They missed all the richness and depth of the Psalms and prophets.)
 - ⇒ They twisted history in that they claimed three great events took place on Mt. Gerizim that set it apart as a place of worship. They claimed it was the place where Abraham offered Isaac, where Melchizedek met Abraham, and where Moses built his first altar after leading Israel out from Egyptian bondage.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(4:5) **Sychar:** little is known about the city; however, three significant Biblical events happened there.

- ⇒ Jacob bought a piece of land in the area (Ge. 33:19).
- ⇒ Jacob, as he was dying, willed the land to Joseph (Ge. 48:22).
- ⇒ Joseph's bones were buried there (Jos. 24:32).

2 (4:10) Water, Living—Jesus Christ—Salvation: living water is truly alive. To the Jew, living water was water that was always flowing and moving along, such as a creek fed by springs or a lake with both an inflow and an outflow. Dead water was stagnant water such as ponds or pools that were always sitting still with no inflow or outflow. However, when Jesus spoke of “living water,” He meant much more than living streams and lakes.

a. Living water is “*of God.*” It is of Him who is living, always has and always will be living. The water that God gives is the most *alive* water there is. No other water, no matter how alive it may be considered, can compare with the living water that is of God.

“For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light” (Ps. 36:9).

b. Living water is “*the gift*” of God. The word “gift” means it is freely given, is *not earned* and is *not deserved*.

“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price” (Is. 55:1).

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ep. 2:8–9).

c. Living water is given by asking for it. Note what Jesus said: “If thou knewest ... thou wouldest have asked.” The woman had never received living water because she *had never known* about it and *had never asked* for it. It was now available simply by asking for it.

3 (4:11–12) **Water, Living—Jesus Christ:** living water is from a Person much greater than a religious father. The woman saw clearly that Jesus was making an unusual claim. She did not yet understand what the claim was, but she knew He was alluding to something. She noticed He had no leather pouch with which to draw water, so she asked two significant questions.

⇒ From where did He get this living water?

⇒ Was He *greater* than Jacob who was one of the great religious patriarchs of the Samaritans? Jacob had to dig the well in order to secure water for his family. Was Jesus greater, able to do more than Jacob did?

The point is this: the woman recognized something most people do not. Jesus was claiming to be greater than one of the greatest religious fathers, Jacob himself. He was claiming to have access to a much better water for quenching the thirst of men.

Thought 1. Throughout Scripture Jesus claimed to be ...

- greater than the temple (Mt. 12:6)
- greater than Jonas (Mt. 12:41)
- greater than Solomon (Mt. 12:42; Lu. 11:31)
- greater than Abraham, “before Abraham” (Jn. 8:53, 58)
- greater than Jacob (Jn. 4:11–12)
- worthy of more glory than Moses (He. 3:3; Jn. 5:45–47)

“He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all” (Jn. 3:31).

“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence” (Col. 1:18).

“For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house” (He. 3:3).

4 (4:13–14) **Water, Living—Jesus Christ:** living water is the only water that will quench thirst. Men have two thirsts: a physical thirst and a spiritual thirst.

“As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God” (Ps. 42:1).

**“In that day there shall be a fountain opened ... for sin and for uncleanness”
(Zec. 13:1).**

Men know immediately how to quench their physical thirst, but their spiritual thirst is a different matter. Within their hearts men sense a thirst for ...

- purpose
- meaning
- significance
- satisfaction
- fulfillment
- something that is missing
- something to fill the void, the emptiness and the loneliness
- deliverance from a sense of being lost
- freedom from undue anxiety, stress, and pressure

Men have a problem, however. They usually misunderstand the spiritual thirst and try to quench it with the stagnant waters of the flesh and of this world. The result is poison and death.

- ⇒ The stagnant waters of the flesh are such things as lust, immorality, drunkenness, indulgence, and pride.
- ⇒ The stagnant waters of the world are such things as the love of money, cars, houses, lands, clothes, extravagant living, position, and power.

The stagnant waters of the flesh and the world never quench a man’s thirst. They are like salt water; they only make a man crave for more and more. (See *DEEPER STUDY # 1, Lust—Js. 4:1–3.*)

“For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water” (Je. 2:13).

Note several facts about the living water.

a. The living water comes from Christ. He and He alone is its source.

“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink” (Jn. 7:37).

“And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely” (Re. 21:6).

b. The living water keeps a man from ever thirsting again. His inner thirst is gone forever. It is quenched and fully satisfied.

**“In that day there shall be a fountain opened ... for sin and for uncleanness”
(Zec. 13:1).**

“And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not” (Is. 58:11).

c. The living water is “a well of water” placed “in” the man. The well is not placed outside the man, not placed anywhere out in the world, not in his home, nor in his business. It is placed “in” him.

“He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive)” (Jn. 7:38–39).

d. The living water springs up and continues to spring up and bubble, flowing on and on. It is ever in motion.

“Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation” (Is. 12:3).

e. The living water springs up into everlasting life. It will never end.

“For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (Re. 7:17. See Eze. 47:1–12, the river of life.)

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Re. 22:17).

(Note: Jesus interpreted what He was saying in Jn. 7:37–39. All five of the above facts are seen fulfilled in the Holy Spirit.)

B. The Subject of Sin, 4:15–18

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| 1. There was the request for living water | 15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. |
| 2. There was the first essential: Facing the truth, the fact of sin | 16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. |
| a. Jesus stirred conviction within the woman | 17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well |
| b. Jesus accepted no evasion from the woman | said, I have no husband: |
| c. Jesus knew all | 18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in |
| d. Jesus reproved the woman’s sin | that saidst thou truly. |

B. The Subject of Sin, 4:15–18

(4:15–18) **Introduction:** Jesus promised the living water of spiritual rebirth. However, something had to be discussed before spiritual rebirth could be given: the subject of sin.

1. There was the request for living water (v.15).
2. There was the first essential: facing the truth, the fact of sin (vv.16–18).

1 (4:15) **Water, Living—Satisfaction—Fulfillment—Purpose—Emptiness—Dissatisfaction:** there was the request for living water. Jesus had just made a profound claim.

“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” (Jn. 4:14).

The woman wanted such water. She asked for it, but note the reasons why:

- ⇒ That I thirst not (physical thirst).
- ⇒ That I will not have to come and draw water every day.

The woman may have been jesting with Jesus; some commentators think she was. They hold that she certainly knew this man (Jesus) did not have a well of water from which she could drink and never thirst again, water that would cause her to live forever, never having to die. She thought that Jesus was jesting with her, so she played along, humoring Him. Others think she was sincere and just did not understand, but whatever the man’s magical waters were, she wanted a drink.

Whatever the case may be, the woman was thinking in terms of the physical world, only of the physical benefits. She had grasped nothing of the spiritual meaning, nothing of the inner satisfaction that Jesus could give which would quench all the thirst of a person’s heart.

Thought 1. Note two facts.

- (1) Man does thirst, but his thirst is much deeper than physical thirst. Man has an inner, spiritual thirst. (See note—Jn. 4:13–14 for discussion of man’s thirst.)
- (2) Christ alone can satisfy man’s thirst. If a man drinks of the water Christ gives, he is infused with purpose, meaning, significance, energy, and motivation. Once a man drinks of Christ, he does not mind drawing water; that is, he does not mind work and labor. In fact, the water of Christ stirs him to work and serve, helping mankind in every way possible. He wants to help and to share the wonderful news of a saving God, a God who can save from the thirst of ...

- emptiness
- loneliness
- lostness
- despair
- hopelessness

2 (4:16–18) Sin, Exposed—Repentance: there was the first essential of facing the truth, the fact of sin. The woman had requested living water, but before she could be given the living water of spiritual rebirth, she had to be convicted of her sin and renounce it. Note four things.

a. Jesus stirred conviction and the confession of sin. Why was this necessary? Why did the woman have to face the truth of her sin before she could be spiritually reborn? There are two reasons.

- 1) She was weary and heavy laden, and it was caused by sin. She had to know this in order to seek the cure. Sin had to be removed and renounced, forgiven and cleansed before *true rest* and *true relief* could come. Once she was freed from sin, rest and relief would come. She would no longer be weary and heavy laden under the load of sin and irresponsibility, guilt and shame. She would be set free and given a life of spiritual rest and security. (See notes, *Rest*—Mt. 11:28, 30; He. 4:1 for more discussion.)
- 2) She had the symptoms of disease and did not know what the disease was; therefore, she was unable to cure her disease. She needed deliverance and did not know how to be delivered. The woman’s disease was the same as the disease of all men: sin. Sin had to be renounced before the living water of spiritual rebirth could be given.

“Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls” (Js. 1:21).

“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Re. 22:14).

“Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives” (Ezra 10:11).

b. Jesus accepted no evasion. Note how the woman tried to evade the fact of her sin. She told the truth; she did not have a husband, but she was living with a man just as she would live with a husband.

Thought 1. The point is clear: the sinner cannot evade his sin. He has to face it and renounce it if he wishes the living water of spiritual rebirth.

“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy” (Pr. 28:13).

“Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD” (Je. 3:13).

“Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD” (Je. 23:24).

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 Jn. 1:9).

c. Jesus knew all about the woman, that she had gone through five husbands. He knew the truth about her, what she had done to fail in so many marriages. He knew whether she was guilty ...

- of making ungodly, worldly choices
- of being argumentative and defensive
- of being a poor housekeeper, wife, and mother
- of being cold, distant, withdrawn, and indifferent
- of being unfaithful and immoral

Jesus knew the truth about her sin, and He knows the truth about every man's sin.

"If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity" (Jb. 10:14; see Jb. 14:16).

"For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God" (Je. 2:22).

"For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes" (Je. 16:17).

"He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him" (Da. 2:22).

"And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain" (1 Co. 3:20).

d. Jesus reproved her sin. She had not only gone through five different husbands, but she was now living with a man who was not her husband.

Thought 1. Christ not only knows all—He keeps an account. The sinner is guilty of every act of disobedience. He stands guilty of every law he breaks.

"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that *continueth not* in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.... And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them" (Ga. 3:10, 12).

Man has to face the truth, the fact of his sin, and renounce it if he wishes to receive the living water of spiritual rebirth. A man has to do what Christ is pointing out to the woman: renounce his sin. Once he has done this, he can then ask for the living water and Christ will give it. But note: drinking the water of Christ is essential.

"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" (Jn. 4:14).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Ac. 3:19).

"Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device

[imagination]. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (Ac. 17:29–31).

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Ro. 6:23).

C. The Subject of Worship, 4:19–24

1. **The woman was troubled**
 - a. She sensed that Jesus was a prophet
 - b. She sensed her sin & the need for true worship

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.
2. **Fact 1: The place of worship is not what is important**

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.
3. **Fact 2: True worship & salvation are from the Jews (through the Messiah Jesus Christ)¹**

22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.
4. **Fact 3: True worship is worshipping God in spirit & in truth^{DS2,3}**

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.

DIVISION IV

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIVING WATER, 4:1–42

C. The Subject of Worship, 4:19–24

(4:19–24) **Introduction:** man’s whole concept and approach to worship is changed by Jesus in this passage.

1. The woman was troubled (vv.19–20).
2. Fact 1: the place of worship is not what is important (v.21).
3. Fact 2: true worship and salvation are from the Jews (through the Messiah Jesus Christ) (v.22).
4. Fact 3: true worshippers worship God in spirit and in truth (vv.23–24).

1 (4:19–20) **Conviction, Response to:** the woman was troubled. Jesus had confronted her with her sin (v.15–18), and she could either respond or react. She could have reacted by ...

- being angry
- ignoring
- neglecting
- arguing
- counting it as foolishness

However, she did not react. Instead, she was stirred and convicted, and she sensed two things.

a. She sensed that Jesus was a prophet, a man who was in touch with God; therefore, Jesus was a man who could help her.

b. She sensed her sin and the need to take care of her sin, to truly worship God. But where was she to worship? There was a dispute about where God’s presence really was, a dispute about where a person could truly meet God. The Samaritans said that God’s presence was in Mount Gerizim; the Jews said He dwelt in Jerusalem (see note—Jn. 4:5).

Standing before her was the prophet who wrought the piercing conviction in her that she was to worship. He was a prophet; therefore, He could help and direct her, so she asked Him where to worship. Where could she find help from God?

Thought 1. The woman was under a powerful conviction. She knew that she had to worship God, to make sacrifice for her sin. When a man is stirred and convicted, he needs to turn to God immediately. If he does not know how to turn to God, he needs to ask a person who is in touch with God.

2 (4:21) **Worship:** first, the place of worship is not what is important. Note three things.

a. Note the phrase “the hour cometh.” Jesus said that *an hour* was coming that would change the whole nature of worship. The way men approached God was going to experience a volcanic eruption. Worship of God was going to be radically and completely changed. There was an hour, an historical event coming that would change it. Jesus was, of course, referring to His death and the coming of the Holy Spirit. The place of worship is no longer the temple or any other particular location on earth. God’s presence now dwells in the hearts and lives of His people. His people worship Him wherever they are, and they can worship Him every day all day long.

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Co. 6:19–20).

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (Jn. 14:16–17).

“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness” (Ro. 8:9–10).

“But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him” (1 Jn. 2:27).

“And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them” (Eze. 36:27).

b. The place of worship is not what is important. Some do worship in Mount Gerizim and some worship in Jerusalem, but the place is not what is important.

c. What is important is *the object of worship*, being sure one is truly worshipping *the Father, God Himself*. A person may be in the temple worshipping, and yet not be worshipping the Father: “Ye worship ye know not what” (v.22). A man’s whole being must be focused upon the only true and living God, the Father Himself, to be truly worshipping.

“Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me” (Is. 43:10).

“That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ro. 15:6).

“By him [Christ] therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name” (He. 13:15).

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” (1 Pe. 2:9).

3 (4:22) Salvation, Source—Jesus Christ, Mediator—God, Ignorance of—Jesus Christ, Ignorance of: second, worship and salvation are of the Jews. Note three things.

a. The word *salvation* in the Greek has the definite article (he soteria), “the salvation.” The Messiah, who is the salvation of all men, comes through the Jews, not from any other source.

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (Jn. 14:6).

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (1 Ti. 2:5–6).

“But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises” (He. 8:6).

“And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance” (He. 9:15).

“And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel” (He. 12:24).

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 Jn. 2:1).

b. Jesus said “we.” He identified Himself with the Jews. He was a fully born Jew; He was not of another nationality, nor was He a mixture of bloods.

c. Salvation is of the Jews. All other worship is an expression of man’s own ideas, no matter how rational and highly esteemed and followed: “Ye worship ye know not what.” (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Israel*—Jn. 4:22 for more discussion.)

1) Men are ignorant of God Himself, of the only living and true God.

“For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them” (Mt. 13:15).

“For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you” (Acts 17:23).

“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things” (Ro. 1:20–23).

“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient” (Ro. 1:28).

“For they, being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God” (Ro. 10:3).

“Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart” (Ep. 4:18).

“For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water” (2 Pe. 3:5).

“Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (2 Ti. 3:7).

“Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways” (Jb. 21:14).

“For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge” (Je. 4:22).

“Therefore I said, Surely these are poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God” (Je. 5:4).

“Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord” (Je. 8:7).

“And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD” (Je. 9:3).

“For they know not to do right, saith the Lord, who store up violence and robbery in their palaces” (Am. 3:10).

“But they know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they his counsel: for he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor” (Mi. 4:12).

“But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his Spirit by the former prophets” (Zec. 7:11–12).

2) Men are ignorant of Christ, the Son of God.

“He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not” (Jn. 1:10).

“Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water” (Jn. 4:10).

“Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also” (Jn. 8:19).

“The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes” (Jn. 9:30).

“Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?” (Jn. 14:9).

“And these things [persecutions] will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me” (Jn. 16:3).

“For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him” (Ac. 13:27).

“Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him” (1 Jn. 3:6).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(4:22) Israel—God’s Plan—History—Jews: why did Jesus Christ come to the Jewish nation and come to earth as a Jew? Very simply stated, the Jews were God’s special people. They had been born by a special act of God. It all started long, long ago. God had wanted four things.

1. He wanted a people who would love Him supremely and give Him their first loyalty. (See Ge. 17:7; Is. 43:10.)

2. He wanted a people who would witness to all other nations that He and He alone was the one true and living God. (See Ge. 12:3; 22:18; Ac. 13:26, 47.)

3. He wanted a people through whom He could send the promised Seed, the Savior and Messiah, Jesus Christ, to all men everywhere. (See Ge. 3:15; 17:7; 22:18; Ga. 3:16; Jn. 4:22.)

4. He wanted a people through whom He could send His written Word, the Holy Bible, and preserve it for all generations. (Ro. 9:4–5; 1 Pe. 2:10–12.)

In searching the earth for such a people, God could find none (see Ro. 1:18–32). God could do only one thing. He had to find one man and through him begin a new people, a new nation.

1. God found and chose Abraham and through him established the Jewish nation. (Ge. 12:1–5; 13:14–17; 15:1–7; 17:1–8, 15–19; 22:16–18; 26:2–5, 24; 28:13–15; 31:13; 35:9–12.) God chose one man and challenged him to worship God supremely. If that man would worship God supremely, then God would cause a special people to be born of his seed. That man was Abraham. Abraham was the first Jew (see Ge. 12:1–4; Ga. 3:16). In the Old Testament the Jews and their land (Palestine) were continually pointed to as the very special people and land of God. They were called ...

- ⇒ God’s special people (De. 7:6).
- ⇒ God’s peculiar people (De. 14:2; 26:18).
- ⇒ God’s peculiar treasure (Ex. 19:5; Ps. 135:4).
- ⇒ the LORD’s portion (De. 32:9).
- ⇒ the LORD’s land (Le. 25:23; Je. 2:7; 16:18; Ho. 9:3).
- ⇒ the holy land (Zec. 2:12). (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro. 4:1–25 for more discussion.)

However, the Jewish nation failed to obey God supremely. The whole plot of the Old Testament centers around God’s pleading and dealing with the Jews. Again and again, He gave the nation the opportunity to obey Him. He dealt with them in mercy and in judgment, but at every turn they refused to heed His pleading.

2. God chose the family of David. (See DEEPER STUDY # 4—Jn. 1:49.) God had no choice but to make another move, so He chose one faithful family within the Jewish nation and

gave to that family one great promise. The family was that of King David, and the promise was that of the Messiah, God's great King, God's very own Son. God's Son was to come through the line of David and establish an eternal nation of people who would love God supremely. However, the Jewish nation again failed God. They misinterpreted God's Word—the prophecies of His coming.

- a. The Jews misinterpreted God's Word by saying the seed of Abraham included only the Jewish nation. In their minds, God had no children except the children of the Jewish nation. The Bible says explicitly that the seed of Abraham is Christ, and the special people of God are those individuals within all nations who worship God supremely (Ga. 3:16).
- b. The Jews misinterpreted God's Word by saying that the eternal kingdom promised to David was the Jewish nation and the Jewish nation only. They expected Israel to be established as an earthly nation forever and all other nations to be subservient to Israel. But again, God's promise was not that narrow, nor was it that prejudiced. The Bible says there is not, and never has been, any respect of persons with God (De. 10:17; 2 Chr. 19:7; Jb. 34:19; Ac. 10:34; Ro. 2:11; Ga. 2:6; Ep. 6:9; Col. 3:25; 1 Pe. 1:17). God did say that Christ was to come from the Davidic line, but He also said that He was going to establish an *eternal nation* made up of people everywhere who would love God supremely (Ro. 2:28–29).

By misinterpreting God's promises, the Jews failed to be the missionaries to the world that God had chosen them to be. They became *earthly bound* and *materialistic minded*. They twisted the idea of the promised Messiah to fit their own schemes. They conceived of Him as One who was to establish an earthly kingdom for the Jewish nation alone. They failed to see that God was speaking ...

- of an eternal kingdom of righteousness
- of a kingdom that is of another dimension entirely—the dimension of the spiritual
- of a new heaven and a new earth that would give each person an eternal life beyond just one earthly generation

3. God had no choice but to make a third move. This He did by sending His own Son into the world through the Jewish nation. God sent Him so that the world through Him might be saved (Jn. 3:16–19). However, man rejected God's Son and crucified Him. This act—the killing of God's Son—was the final blow. When man slew the only Son of God, the whole world *was* involved. Both Jew and Gentile were represented symbolically in the Jewish religionists and the Roman authorities. They both actually did the plotting, sentencing, and execution. If the world were ever to be saved, it was now perfectly clear that God had to make every move Himself.

This He did once-for-all. In His eternal purpose and plan for man's salvation, God took the sins of all men and laid them upon His Son while He was being slain upon the cross. He allowed His Son to bear the sins of the world (1 Pe. 2:24). Then He took His Son and

raised Him from the dead—never to die again. He did what man had always failed to do: in His Son’s resurrection God began to build a lasting kingdom of righteousness, a new nation that is presently being made up of men from all earthly nations who desire and are willing to follow Jesus Christ supremely. He is calling out and forming a new people who have genuinely been born again—spiritually. These new born people shall live eternally—beyond just one earthly generation. These people are identified as His church, as a body of people who genuinely believe and follow Him. They are destined to be the inhabitants of the new heavens and earth. (See notes—pt.5, Lu. 8:21; Ep. 2:11–18; 4:17–19.)

God, acting solely upon His own through the death and resurrection of His Son, has fulfilled His promises to both Abraham and David. All the people of the nations of the world now have the opportunity to become children of God, the special people of God.

4 (4:23–24) **Worship:** third, true worshippers worship God in spirit and in truth. Note four points.

a. Note the change in worship: “The hour cometh, and now is.” Christ changed worship. Before Christ, men worshipped God in special places, for example, in temples and before altars. Since Christ, place and locality mean nothing. Christ has opened the door into God’s presence from anyplace in the universe (see note—Jn. 4:21 for more discussion).

b. Note the nature of worship. Man is to worship God in spirit and in truth. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn. 4:23.)

1) To worship God in spirit means to worship God ...

- with the *spiritual drive and ability* of one’s soul, seeking the most intimate communion and fellowship with God
- with the *spiritual core* of one’s life and being, trusting and resting in God’s acceptance and love and care

2) To worship God in truth means ...

- to approach God in the right or true way. There is only one way, through His Son Jesus Christ (see note—Jn. 4:21; 14:6)
- to worship God sincerely and truthfully, not coming half-heartedly with wandering mind and sleepy eyes

c. Note the reason for worship. The Father seeks men to worship Him. God desires worship, for He created man to worship and fellowship with Him. Therefore, God seeks men who will worship Him in spirit and truth.

“The LORD hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil” (Pr. 16:4).

“Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.... Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me” (Is. 43:7, 10).

“For whom he did foreknow [believe], he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn [preeminent One] among many brethren” (Ro. 8:29).

“He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved” (Ep. 1:4–6).

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” (1 Pe. 2:9; see Ro. 15:6; 1 Co. 6:20).

d. Note the one essential in worship. It is not the place that is important in worship but how a person worships God. A person must worship God in spirit and in truth. There is no other way. **“God is Spirit, and they that worship Him *must* worship Him in *spirit* and in *truth*.”**

To worship in spirit means ...

- *from* the spiritual drive and depth of the soul
- *from* the spiritual core of the life and being

To worship in truth means ...

- as God dictates, that is, worship must be in the name of God’s Son, Jesus Christ
- in sincerity

“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” (Mt. 4:10).

“And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy” (Lu. 24:52).

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (He. 10:25).

“Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” (Re. 14:7).

“Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness” (1 Chr. 16:29).

“Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness” (Ps. 29:2).

“O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker” (Ps. 95:6).

“O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth” (Ps. 96:9).

“Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy” (Ps. 99:5).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(4:23) **Man, Creation—Spirit—Worship:** man is to worship God in Spirit. Three points need to be looked at to fully understand what this means.

1. There is the creation of man.

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Ge. 2:7).

The material used to form man was *dust*; or as Isaiah said, “clay” (Is. 64:8); or as Luther translated, a lump of earth (erdenkloss). Man’s physical material or substance is of the earth; the forming of his body is like that of an earthen vessel (Jb. 10:8–9; Ro. 9:21); the food he eats is of the earth (Job 28:5); and the end of his body is to return to the earth (Ec. 3:20).

There is a sense in which man is a paradox. He was created with all the dignity and honor possible—created by the hand of God and given the very breath of God. Yet, he was also created out of the most base and lowly stuff of all—dirt. So in one sense man has every reason to glory; in another sense he has every reason to be humble. What is to be man’s attitude, his air? There is nothing wrong with glorying; there is nothing wrong with being humble. It is the reason or object for glorying and being humble that makes one right or wrong. Man is to worship and glory in God—that God gave him life and the dignity and honor (privilege) of life. Man is to walk humbly toward God and toward other men because all men come from the same material, the earth. (Je. 9:24; see 1 Co. 1:31; 2 Co. 10:17; Ro. 11:36; Ga. 1:5; 2 Ti. 4:18; He. 13:21; 1 Pe. 5:11.) Therefore, man is exhorted to present his body to God as “a living sacrifice” and as “the temple of the Holy Spirit” (Ro. 12:1; 1 Co. 6:19–20).

But note: man is not only body and soul; he is also spirit (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn. 4:23–24). This is man’s distinctive difference from all other creatures. As the Psalmist says, “I am fearfully and wonderfully made ... my substance was not hid from thee” (Ps. 139:14–15). Two distinctive facts need to be noted here.

- a. It is not just the breath of life that is given to man. It is the very breath of God Himself. God’s breath is life, eternal life; therefore, man was given the eternal life, the very Spirit of God Himself. Just think! God’s very own breath, His Spirit, is within every person who is “renewed” (recreated) after the image of Him that created him.

“And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Ep. 4:24).

“And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him” (Col. 3:10).

- b. God breathes His own breath or spirit into the nostrils of man. Just imagine the picture. The body of Adam was lying before God; it had just been formed by God’s hands from the dust of the earth. Adam was lifeless—just a body—never having breathed. God then breathed into Adam’s nostrils His own breath

or Spirit, the life of His very own being (which is the life that goes on and on, never ending, that is eternal).

Now, here is the point. God made no other creature like this. God gave no other creature His own breath, nor did He use this method of creation with any other creature. These two facts make man's creation distinctive.

What a shame that man cleaves to this earth and its worldliness! "He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul" (Pr. 15:32). How often the spirit of man should breath after God (Mt. 5:6)!

2. The creation of man is in *the image and likeness of God*.

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.... So God created man in His own image" (Ge. 1:26–27).

Whatever *the image and likeness of God* means, it is that which distinguishes man from all other life which God created. No where else does God say He created a being in *His own image* and *after His own likeness*. Only man is in the image and likeness of God. What is the *image and likeness* of God in man?

- a. It is unlikely that it means the *soul* of man. The Bible says all living creatures are souls. They were created as *living souls*. This is clearly pointed out in the Hebrew language of Ge. 1:20 which says, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly *living souls* [nephesh] that hath life." All living creatures possess the breath of life. (See DEEPER STUDY # 5, *Soul*—Mt. 22:37 for more discussion.)
- b. It is unlikely that it means the ability to reason. Apparently animals have the ability to reason and learn to varying degrees. Animals show ability to think when facing an enemy or difficulties in the innumerable experiences of life.
- c. It is unlikely that it means the ability to be moral and just. Some animals (both individually and within family groups) have rules, practices, deeds, or acts that lead to moral and virtuous behavior among themselves and even toward others. There seems to be an exercise of right and wrong among some animals. However, it needs to be pointed out that just as man is far superior to animals mentally, they are also far superior to animals morally. Man is far superior to animals both as a rational being (a being that reasons) and a moral being (a being that is just, relating to others as he should). (Note that being *spiritually* and *mentally renewed* in Christ affects the rational and moral powers of man. Man can be *created* in righteousness and *true* holiness. Man can be delivered from the legalistic bondage and rules of a man-conceived righteousness and holiness. See Ep. 4:24; Col. 3:10.)
- d. It means that God gave man His spirit: His immortal breath, His life that lives forever just like God. God went beyond what He had made when He created the animals of the earth (a soul, an earthly life, a temporal breath); God made man a spirit (an eternal life, an immortal breath) that is just like Himself, just like His own life. To be in the image and likeness of God means "God is Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him *in spirit* and in truth" (Jn. 4:24).

Apparently, no animal is a spirit; animals are only souls. As living souls, they are enabled by varying degrees to breathe, to reason and to relate; but none of them have the inherent power to breathe eternally, nor the drive and ability to reason after God and to relate to God. Man does have that power, that drive, and that ability. *Man is spirit, even as God is Spirit.* Man is not only body and soul as the animals of creation. Man is not only a *living, breathing soul made for this earth; man is a spirit, an immortal being made to live with God eternally.*

3. In light of the above fact, there are at least two distinguishing marks of God's image in man, two distinguishing marks of man as a spirit.

- a. God's image in man is the *spirit or power of immortality*. Man lives beyond this earth, lives eternally just like God. As mentioned above, according to the Bible, no animal is a spirit. Animals are only souls. As souls they are enabled to breathe and to live on this earth, but they do not have the inherent power to breathe eternally. However, man does have that power. Man is spirit, even as God is Spirit. *Man is not only a living, breathing soul and body like the animals made for this earth; man is a spirit, an immortal being made both for this earth and for eternity.*
- b. God's image in man is the *spirit or the drive and ability (choice) to worship*. Man has not only the soulish ability to reason and to relate, but an unquenchable spiritual drive and ability to reason after God and to relate to God. Again, as mentioned above, no earthly animal has that spiritual drive and ability (freedom of choice). The Bible does ascribe to souls varying abilities, but no animal soul has the ability to reason *after God* or to *relate to God*. Worship is a spiritual drive and ability, an ability of spirit (of man) only. Just like animals, *man knows and understands the things* of this earth; but man is to know, believe, and understand God first and foremost (Is. 43:10). Man is to worship God. God is Spirit and He has created man as spirit; therefore, man is to worship God in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:24).

There are two very significant facts to be noted about the image of God in man or of man as a spirit.

1. The rebellion of man against God (man's fall) affected God's image within man. God had created man as an immortal being. Man was to live on this earth and to live with God forever. When man exercised his ability or choice and turned against God, he lost both rights. He could no longer live on the earth forever, nor could he live with God forever. In his rebellion against God, man was saying that he preferred a different world other than God's world and he preferred a different god (his own will) other than God Himself. Man thereby condemned himself to leave this earth (to die, Ge. 2:17; 3:1f; 3:19) and to be separated from God eternally (Jn. 3:18). Note that man was already created as an immortal being.

Therefore, man would continue on, he would exist forever—but he was (a) to be placed somewhere else other than this earth (he had chosen such); and (b) he was to be

separated from God forever. It was his choice. The image of God—the power of immortality and the drive and ability to worship and live with God—was marred eternally.

2. The image of God within man can be renewed.

a. Man can now put on the new man.

“And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Ep. 4:24).

“The new man ... is renewed ... after the image of Him [God] that created him” (Col. 3:10).

b. Man can be “born again” spiritually; he can be made alive to God just as he was in the beginning—never to perish. (Jn. 3:3f; 1 Pe. 1:23).

c. Man can live and worship God forever (Jn. 3:16; 2 Pe. 1:4). He can now partake of God’s divine nature and be assured of living forever in the new heavens and new earth (2 Pe. 3:3–4, 8–18; Re. 21:1–7).

d. Man is renewed, reborn, recreated in Christ Jesus. “Who his own self *bare our sins* in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed” (1 Pe. 2:24; see 3:18. See notes—Ro. 5:1; 2 Co. 5:1; see 5:17.)

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ... so God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Ge. 1:26–27).

“As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly” (1 Co. 15:49).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(4:23–24) **Spirit—God, Spirit:** what is meant by “spirit”? At least three things are gleaned from Scripture.

1. Spirit is not flesh and bone. Spirit is not physical and material. Spirit is immaterial, non-physical, incorporeal. Spirit is of another dimension of being, another dimension entirely different from the physical and material dimension of being.

2. Spirit is the innermost part of being, the very core and heart of life. Spirit is the very *breath of God’s life*, the very *breath of God’s existence*, the very *being of God’s life*. That is, spirit is *eternal existence and being*. It is permanent, unending existence. A spirit has the breath of life, of existence, of *being forever*.

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Ge. 2:7).

3. God is Spirit. This means He is the very embodiment of life eternal, of permanent, unending existence. His nature is not flesh and bone; for the physical ages, deteriorates, dies, and decays—it ends. But not Spirit, not God. God exists forever and ever. He is life, the very embodiment of life eternal. Whatever life is—in all of its perfection—*God is*. God

is the perfect Person, Life, Intelligence, Being. The basic nature of God is Spirit: eternal being, eternal life, the Perfect Being, the Perfect Life.

“And this is life eternal ... thee the only true God” (Jn. 17:3).

D. The Subject of Messiah, 4:25–30

- 1. There was the sense that Jesus was the Messiah** 25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.
- 2. There was the great claim of Jesus: He is the Messiah** 26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am *he*.
- 3. There was the spirit contrary to the Messiah: A spirit of evil thought & pride** 27 And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?
- 4. There was the proclamation that Jesus is the Messiah** 28 The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,
29 Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?
- 5. There was the response of searching for the Messiah** 30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

D. The Subject of Messiah, 4:25–30

(4:25–30) **Introduction:** this is a dramatic picture of conversion and witnessing. The Messiah was discovered, and the discovery was excitedly shared.

1. There was the sense that Jesus was the Messiah (v.25).
2. There was the great claim of Jesus: He is the Messiah (v.26).
3. There was the spirit contrary to the Messiah: a spirit of evil thought and pride (v.27).
4. There was the proclamation that Jesus is the Messiah (vv.28–29).
5. There was the response of searching for the Messiah (v.30).

1 (4:25) **Jesus Christ, Messiah—Gospel, Open to—Truth, Open to:** there was the sense that Jesus was the Messiah. The woman’s heart was burning within her. There was an intense, flaming sense

of God's presence. The subject of her sin and of true worship was causing her heart to reach out for God. She sensed something very, very special about Jesus ...

- that no man could speak as He had spoken unless He had a very special relationship with God
- that perhaps He was the Messiah Himself

She brought up the subject. Note the two things *she believed*.

a. That the Messiah was coming (erchetai). The idea is that the Messiah was *coming soon*. His coming was at hand, imminent. Her belief was based upon such Scriptures as Ge. 3:15; 49:10; Nu. 24:17; De. 18:15.

b. That the Messiah would be the Supreme Authority: "He will tell us all things."

The point is this: the woman did not deny the Messiah; she believed in the coming and authority of the Messiah. Her belief was not a saving belief, not a belief of commitment (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn. 2:24). It was only a mental or an intellectual belief, a belief of knowledge; but the fact that she believed in the Messiah made her *open* to personal belief. She did not reject the witness of Jesus: she was not rude; she listened to Him. Therefore, God was able to give her a sense of His presence.

Thought 1. The person who constantly rejects Jesus Christ or claims to be agnostic or atheistic is seldom reached for Christ. However, a person who listens to the Scripture and believes intellectually, mentally accepting the facts of God's promises, stands a much better chance of being reached by God. Mental or intellectual belief is more open; it is exposed to God's Word. Thereby it is more likely to become a saving belief, the belief of commitment.

However, a warning does need to be issued. A person with only a mental belief can hear and reject so much that he becomes gospel-hardened, that is, so hardened against the gospel that he never trusts Jesus Christ as his Savior. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt. 13:4, 19 for more discussion.)

"And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God" (Mk. 12:32–34).

"God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him" (Is. 28:26).

"Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein" (Ho. 14:9).

"The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going. A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident" (Pr. 14:15–16).

"The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge" (Pr. 18:15).

“A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished” (Pr. 22:3).

2 (4:26) **Jesus Christ, Messiah:** there was the great claim of Jesus, that He was the Messiah. Note three phenomenal claims.

1. He claimed to be “the Messiah” (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn. 1:20 for discussion).
2. He claimed to be the great “I Am,” which is the basic name for God. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn. 6:20 for discussion.)
3. He claimed to be the Supreme One, the Supreme Authority who would tell her all things. He claimed ...
 - that what He told her about her sin was true
 - that she must take care of her sin
 - that the only way to take care of her sin was to worship God in spirit and in truth (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn. 4:23 for more discussion)

3 (4:27) **Prejudice—Evil Thoughts—Tongue:** there was the spirit contrary to the Messiah, the spirit of evil thought and pride. Just as Jesus made His phenomenal claims, the disciples arrived. They marveled (ethaumazon): were astonished, amazed, bewildered because He was talking with the woman. There were two reasons for this.

a. She was a woman. The Rabbis of that day would not be *alone* or *talk* with women in public. They feared what people might think and say.

Thought 1. Very honestly, there is some merit to this idea. A person, especially a leader, must guard himself and his thoughts around the opposite sex. Of course, one can carry the practice too far. Wisdom and self-control are both needed.

“But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Mt. 5:28).

“Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Co. 10:5).

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things” (Ph. 4:8).

“And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Ge. 6:5).

“A heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief” (Pr. 6:18).

“Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth” (Eze. 8:12).

b. She was a Samaritan, a person considered despicable, below their social standing, unfit to be seen with in public. Note how Christ tore down the barriers of both problems and how the disciples controlled their tongue from questioning and gossiping.

“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him” (Ac. 10:34–35).

“For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him” (Ro. 10:12).

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Ga. 3:28).

“If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thine hand upon thy mouth” (Pr. 30:32).

“I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred. My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue, LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am” (Ps. 39:1–4).

4 (4:28–29) Witnessing: there was the proclamation that Jesus was the Messiah. Note the tender, yet meaningful statement: “The woman then left her waterpot.” She was very excited. The Messiah had confronted her; she had actually met Him, and He had met the need of her heart and life. She had to tell everyone about Him.

Note also the strength of the woman’s witness. She was an outcast from society, had no friends because of the immoral life she had lived. However, meeting the Messiah changed all that. He dealt with her sin and shame. She could now face everyone. They, too, must have the opportunity to meet the Messiah.

Thought 1. What a lesson for every believer!

“Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee” (Mk. 5:19).

“For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20).

“For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard” (Acts 22:15).

“These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee” (Tit. 2:15).

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Pe. 3:15).

“Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul” (Ps. 66:16).

“I will mention the loving kindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all the LORD hath bestowed on us” (Is. 63:7).

“I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me” (Da. 4:2).

5 (4:30) Jesus Christ, Response—Seeking, Jesus: there was the response of searching for the Messiah. Note two facts.

a. The woman was of no social importance, not to the men of the city. In fact, she had often been misused, and she was often the very subject of gossip and jokes. But now something had happened to her: she had met the Messiah. The event had so changed her appearance, behavior, and attitude that people listened eagerly to what she said.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Co. 5:17).

“But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Tit. 3:4–7).

“Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures” (Js. 1:18).

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you” (1 Pe. 1:3–4).

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh” (Eze. 36:26).

b. The people responded—at least a good number did. The idea of the words “came unto Him” is that of a long streaming procession. The people “kept on coming to Him.” It was her dynamic witness, the striking change seen in her life, that caused this enormous response. Because of her witness, many set out to find the Messiah for themselves.

“I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and laid meat unto them” (Ho. 11:4).

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (Jn. 12:32).

E. The Subject of Labor for God, 4:31–42

1. Physical vs. spiritual concerns

a. The disciples’ concern: nourishment

31 In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him *ought* to eat?

b. Jesus' concern: Spiritual food—to do the will & work of God
34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

c. Jesus' challenge: Work & labor for God right now
35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold, I say unto

2. Labor—for the harvest is ripe, the task is urgent
you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

3. Labor—for there are rewards & great benefits
36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

- a. Wages
- b. Eternal life
- c. Joy & rejoicing

d. The privilege of having a specific part in God's great work
37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

e. The privilege of being sent forth by Christ
38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured,

f. The privilege of serving with other great servants of God
and ye are entered into their labours.

4. Labor—for results follow
a. Many believed the woman's testimony
39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

b. Other opportunities were given
40 So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.

c. Many more believed: "This man really is the Savior of the world"¹
41 And many more believed because of his own word;

42 And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard *him* ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

E. The Subject of Labor for God, 4:31–42

(4:31–42) **Introduction:** the believer is to labor for God. His life is to be focused upon the will and work of God. His purpose for being on earth is to serve God, to obey and work for Him.

1. Physical vs. spiritual concerns (vv.31–35).
2. Labor—for the harvest is ripe, the task is urgent (v.35).
3. Labor—for there are rewards and great benefits (vv.36–38).
4. Labor—for results follow (vv.39–42).

1 (4:31–35) **Concern, Physical vs. Spiritual—God, Work—Diligence—Faithfulness—Commitment:** physical vs. spiritual concerns. The disciples returned from town. They had gone to buy food (v.8). Earlier, when they had arrived at the well on the outskirts of the city, Jesus had been tired and hungry. But now, as the disciples sat eating, they noticed Jesus made no effort to eat. He had been famished and exhausted. They were concerned, so they suggested He eat. Note two significant points.

a. The concern of the disciples was for physical nourishment. Their minds were not on the woman to whom Jesus had just witnessed, not on her spiritual needs. They had no spiritual depth yet. Their minds were not ...

- focused on Christ and His mission of salvation
- concentrating upon a world lost in sin and shame
- looking for every opportunity possible to reach and help people for God

They had not yet learned the great warfare being waged between the physical and spiritual concerns of life. Their minds were on the physical: on food, on not missing a meal, on satisfying a temporary craving of the body.

b. The concern of Christ was for spiritual food and nourishment, to do the will and work of God. Three points are seen in this verse.

- 1) The will that must concern men is *God's will*, and the work that must concern men is *God's work*, the will and work of ...
 - leading people to the Living Water (Jn. 4:10)
 - helping people quench their inner thirst (Jn. 4:14)
 - bringing people to God
 - seeking and saving the lost, even *Samaritans*: those who are looked upon with prejudice, thought to be of a lower caste, treated as the most despicable *outcasts* (Lu. 19:10)

No greater will or work exists or can be done. *God alone* is God. His will and work is supreme.

⇒ Note the *esteem* with which Christ holds God: it is *God's will and work* that is to be done.

⇒ Note the *devotion* of Christ to God: God's will and work *must* be done.

- 2) God sent Christ. The words “sent me” are significant (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn. 3:34). Christ was not sent to do the will of men, but of God. His work was not the work of men, but of God.

Thought 1. Note two lessons.

- (1) Note the warning to all believers. *Believers* are sent by God. They are to be single-minded. They are not to allow their *goals* and *energy* to become entangled with the business and affairs of the world.

“No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (2 Ti. 2:4).

- (2) Note the mission to all believers. Believers are *sent* by God. They are on earth primarily to do the will and work of God, even in their *secular* labor in the world.

“Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you” (Jn. 20:21).

“Let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth” (Ep. 4:28).

- 3) Christ had to finish the will and work of God. God expected it to be completed. God expected obedience, faithfulness and perseverance until His will and work was done. Note: Christ did complete God’s mission (Jn. 17:4; 19:30). He now challenges His followers: “Labor for God—finish your task—complete your purpose for being on earth.”

Thought 1. Note two warnings.

- (1) Note the responsibility and duty of believers. Believers are expected to finish the work that God sent them to do. Believers are not to become entangled and distracted by worldly affairs. They are to conquer wandering thoughts and desires, cravings for food, complacency, sleepiness. They are not to be given over to the world and the flesh, indulgence and license, money and material possessions.
- (2) Note the accountability of believers: God *expects* believers to be faithful, so there has to be a day of accounting, a day when wages are paid out.

2 (4:35) Vision—Evangelism: labor, for the harvest is ripe, the task is urgent. Note three points.

a. The heart of Jesus was upon the harvest of souls. Men focus their hearts upon the world’s harvest, the planting of seed and the reaping of grain, the investment of energy and money, and the receiving of wages and gain. But the heart of Jesus was, and still is, upon people, upon the planting of the gospel seed and the reaping of souls for God.

b. The challenge of Jesus was, “Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields.” The challenge was to quit looking down upon the earth and upon the affairs of the world, but instead to *look up* and observe the fields of people streaming across the world. The scene was probably dramatic. The Samaritans in their long flowing white robes were probably streaming across the fields by the hundreds, if not the thousands. Jesus’ heart and arms reached out in a burst of compassion and

intense feeling; He cried, "Look, lift up your eyes and look on the fields of lost souls streaming toward you. Let the things of earth grow strangely dim."

c. The fields of souls are white *already*: they are ready for harvesting *right now*. Since Christ has come to earth, God has put His Spirit into the world and supernaturally activated ...

- a thirst for God
- a sense of sin, a conviction of coming short
- a deep loneliness and emptiness
- a sense of purposelessness
- the knowledge that Jesus Christ has come to earth claiming to be the Savior of the world, the very Son of God

It is absolutely necessary that believers lift up their eyes and look *now*. If not, the ripe harvest of souls and bodies will ...

- remain in the fields of the earth
- ripen *beyond* being tasteful and useful (be too old, too far gone)
- rot and be lost forever
- fall to the ground and decay

Thought 1. Two significant points for the believer.

(1) We must lift up our eyes in order to look. We cannot see ahead or around us if we do not lift up our eyes to look. The things of the earth have to grow *strangely dim before* we can look and see.

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro. 12:2).

"And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away" (1 Co. 7:31).

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Ga. 6:14).

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 Jn. 2:15).

(2) We must look where we are so that our eyes will see the reality of what is around us. It is the harvest of souls around us that we are to look upon and focus our attention upon.

Note: we can look upon foreign fields through the challenge of others. Note another fact: the world is becoming more and more *one neighborhood*. Distance is becoming more and more insignificant. Every believer is becoming more and more responsible for the individual in the foreign land. In fact, a man's country is foreign to everyone else in the world, no matter who he is.

“For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (Ga. 6:8–9).

“But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come” (Mk. 4:29).

“Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest” (Lu. 10:2).

“And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Mt. 4:19).

“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit [souls] should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you” (Jn. 15:16).

“For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh” (Ro. 9:3).

“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel [any nation] is, that they might be saved” (Ro. 10:1).

“For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law.... To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some” (1 Co. 9:19–20, 22).

“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” (Js. 5:20).

“And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh” (Jude 23).

“They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him” (Ps. 126:5–6).

“Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you” (Ho. 10:12).

3 (4:36–38) **Rewards:** labor, for there are rewards and great benefits. Christ mentioned six particular rewards and benefits.

a. The laborer will receive wages. God is going to pay the believer and pay him well. Note that the wages are already there, ready to be paid (see note, *Rewards*—Lu. 16:10–12; Mt. 20:8–16. See Lu. 10:7; 2 Ti. 2:6.)

“And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life” (Mt. 19:29).

“His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord” (Mt. 25:23).

“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever” (Da. 12:3).

b. The laborer gathers fruit unto *life eternal*. What he does is of supreme value. It is the greatest work imaginable. His work is lasting; it endures forever. His work actually delivers people from *ever* perishing, and it causes God to give them abundant and eternal life.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (Jn. 3:16).

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (Jn. 3:36).

c. The laborer experiences the overflowing joy of serving God with other laborers. (See note, *Joy—Ph. 1:4.*) Note: there is no envy or conflict between the two laborers. Both laborers work and rejoice together. (How different from so many!)

“And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance” (Lu. 15:6–7).

“For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy” (1 Th. 2:19–20).

“He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him” (Ps. 126:6).

d. The laborer is given the privilege of having a specific part in God’s great work. It may be sowing; it may be reaping. It does not matter. It is God’s work, and it is a privilege for any man to have a part in it.

Note something else. Each man has only a part. No man does it all. One man sows, and another man reaps. The task is too great for one man. All men are needed.

- ⇒ If the sower fails to sow, the reaper cannot reap. Some soul is not fed enough to ripen for the picking.
- ⇒ If the reaper does not reap, the soul ripened by the sower passes its usefulness: it rots and falls to the ground and decays.

“I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour” (1 Co. 3:6–8).

e. The laborer has the privilege of being chosen and sent by Christ, the Son of God Himself.

“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you” (Jn. 15:16.)

f. The laborer is given the privilege of serving with other great servants. Other great believers are laboring, and each servant enters into the labors of all others. (What a challenge to pray for all of God’s servants and to get to the task of either sowing or reaping, whichever God has called us to do!)

“For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Co. 3:9–11).

4 (4:39–42) **Witnessing, Results—Ministry:** labor, for results do follow. What follows gives a picture of exactly what Christ had been saying about laboring for God.

a. Many “believed on Christ” because of the woman’s testimony. The seed had been sown in the woman’s heart by the prophets of old and through the first five books of Scripture (see v.12, 19–20). Jesus reaped her soul. She in turn went and bore her testimony within the city. And “many ... of that city believed on Him for the saying [testimony] of the woman.”

b. Other opportunities were given. The new believers begged Christ to stay with them. They wanted to learn more, and they had friends who needed to hear Him as well.

“We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak” (2 Co. 4:13).

“Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name” (Mal. 3:16).

c. Many more believed that Jesus was “the Christ, the Savior of the world.”

1) The Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn. 1:20).

2) The Savior of the world (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn. 4:42).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(4:42) **Jesus Christ, Savior:** the word *Savior* (soter) means a Deliverer, a Preserver. It has the idea of a Deliverer, a Savior who snatches a person from some terrible disaster that

leads to perishing (see Jn. 3:16). (See DEEPER STUDY # 6, *Salvation*—Mt. 1:21 for more discussion.)

1. Jesus Christ is said to be the Savior (Lu. 2:11; Jn. 4:42; Ac. 5:31; 13:23; Ep. 5:23; Ph. 3:20; 2 Ti. 1:10; Tit. 1:4; 2:13; 3:6; 2 Pe. 1:1, 11; 2:20; 3:2, 18; 1 Jn. 4:14).

2. God is said to be the Savior (Lu. 1:47; 1 Ti. 1:1; 2:3; 4:10; Tit. 1:3; 2:10; 3:4; Jude 25).

DIVISION V

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE OBJECT OF FAITH, 4:43–54

V. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE OBJECT OF FAITH, 4:43–54

A. The Evidence of Faith, 4:43–45

- 1. The setting: Jesus entered Galilee¹** 43 Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee.
- 2. The first evidence of faith: Honoring Jesus** 44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.
- 3. The second evidence of faith: Welcoming & receiving Jesus** 45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.

A. The Evidence of Faith, 4:43–45

(4:43–45) **Introduction:** this passage is very simple, yet it pictures one of the great lessons of the gospel—the evidence of faith.

1. The setting: Jesus entered Galilee (v.43).
2. The first evidence of faith: honoring Jesus (v.44).
3. The second evidence of faith: welcoming and receiving Jesus (v.45).

1 (4:43) **Jesus, Ministry:** Jesus entered Galilee. He had spent two days with the Samaritans and had experienced great success. However, Galilee was the area especially prepared by God for the

Lord's ministry, so Jesus returned to the area where most of His ministry was to be conducted. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Galilee*—Jn. 4:43.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(4:43) **Galilee:** the district of Galilee was the northernmost part of Palestine. Palestine was divided into three districts: Judaea in the far south, Samaria in the middle, and Galilee in the north. God had prepared Galilee down through history for the coming of His Son's ministry. Several facts show this (see Ga. 4:4).

1. Throughout history Galilee had been invaded and repopulated again and again with different people and cultures from all over the world. Over the years such an influx of differing people had created an atmosphere susceptible to new personalities and ideas.

2. Galilee was strategically located. The world's leading roads passed right through its borders. Merchants from all over the world passed through and boarded in the inns of the cities.

3. Galilee was heavily populated. It was also surrounded by the Samaritans, Phoenicians, and Syrians, making it an open door for world evangelization. It was one of the most fertile lands in that part of the world. This fact, plus the travelling trade, led numbers of people to settle within its borders. There were within the district over two hundred cities with a population of fifteen thousand people or more. There were multitudes for Jesus to reach.

4. Galilee was open to new and fresh ideas. Its people, having come from all over the world, were liberal minded, always looking for new and fresh ideas to stimulate and challenge their thinking.

It was for these reasons that Jesus chose Galilee to begin His ministry. The area was an open door for people to spread the news that the Messiah had come and that the Kingdom of Heaven was being ushered in.

2 (4:44) Honor—Jesus Christ, Honored—Belief: the first evidence of faith is honoring Jesus. When Jesus went into Galilee, He stayed away from His hometown of Nazareth. His neighbors and fellow citizens had rejected Him and had attempted to kill Him (Lu. 4:29). As a result Jesus had declared, "No prophet is accepted in his own country" (Lu. 4:24).

- ⇒ Joseph was not honored by his brothers (Ge. 37:23–36).
- ⇒ David was not honored by his brother (1 S. 17:28).
- ⇒ Jeremiah was not honored by his hometown, Anathoth (Je. 11:21; see Je. 1:1).
- ⇒ Paul was not honored by his countrymen (Ac. 9:23–24; see note—2 Co. 1:12–22).
- ⇒ Jesus was not honored by His hometown (Mk. 6:1–6).

Now as Jesus returned to Galilee, bypassing the city of Nazareth, He again referred to the fact that a prophet has no honor in His own country.

A question needs to be asked. Why did Jesus make the declaration about dishonor here? It seems out of place. Glance at the three verses again (vv.43–45). There are at least two reasons.

1. Jesus' heart was broken over His hometown. They were a special people to Him: He had played with some of them as a child, grown up with them, lived as a friend with them; and had fellowshiped, worked, eaten, and moved among them day in and day out. The thought of their

rejection and hostility toward Him often preyed upon His mind. (See outline and notes—Mk. 6:1–6 for discussion of their rejection.)

2. Jesus had to prepare the disciples for persecution. They were to be severely persecuted by their fellow countrymen. He repeated the fact time and again to drive it into their minds. He wanted them prepared and not caught off guard when persecution came.

Now, note the point: the first evidence that a person has faith is that he honors Jesus. A sharp contrast is being drawn between the refusal of Nazareth to honor Jesus and the receiving of Him by other Galilaeans. Several things need to be considered.

a. Jesus is due honor. He is due all the honor and glory in the universe.

1) He is the Son of God who brought God's presence among men.

"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Mt. 1:23).

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (Jn. 1:14).

2) He is the Savior of the world who came to save men from perishing and made it possible for them to live forever (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn. 4:42).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn. 3:16).

"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Ac. 5:30–31).

3) He is the Son of Man who came to earth to experience all the trials of life that He might feel and be touched by man's infirmities and thereby become qualified to help man in all his suffering.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt. 20:28).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (He. 4:15–16).

b. People who believe in Jesus honor Him. Honoring Jesus is a clear evidence of faith. The word *honor* (timen) means to value, esteem, respect. It has three ideas that are significant.

1) The idea of superior standing, exaltation, distinction, homage, reverence, and, of course, worship when referring to the Son of God.

“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Ph. 2:9–11).

- 2) The idea of a price paid or received, of credit due, of counting something of extreme value. Jesus is due the payment of man’s life. True honor pays the price due to the Lord: the man who honors the Lord gives his life to the Lord (see note, *Self-denial*—Lu. 9:23).

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Co. 6:19–20).

“Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it” (Mt. 13:46).

“Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Th. 1:11–12).

- 3) The idea of preciousness. The Greek word for precious (time) means *to be due honor, to be of precious value*.

“Unto you therefore which believe He is precious” (1 Pe. 2:7).

“Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ” (Ph. 3:8).

c. People who do not believe in Jesus do not honor Him. This is particularly seen in the dishonor of Jesus by His fellow citizens and the religionists (see outline and notes—Mk. 6:1–6; Lu. 4:16–30; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn. 5:15–16). An unbeliever ...

- does not give Christ the worship, exaltation, or reverence due His name
- does not pay the price of surrendering his life to Christ as Lord
- does not count Christ as precious (due honor). Jesus’ fellow citizens demonstrated this fact. He, the very Prophet of God Himself, had no honor in His own country

“For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them” (Mt. 13:15).

“I am come in my father’s name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honour

one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn. 5:43–44).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn. 12:48).

"And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Ti. 4:4).

"Men shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place" (Job 27:23).

"To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it" (Je. 6:10).

"Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house" (Eze. 12:2).

"But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear" (Zec. 7:11).

3 (4:45) Faith, Evidence—Receiving, Jesus Christ: the second evidence of faith is welcoming and receiving Jesus.

The only way to be saved and to receive the benefits of Jesus' presence is to welcome and receive Him. Common sense tells us that a person who does not have the presence of Jesus Christ does not have the blessings of Jesus' presence. Jesus is just not there to bless and care for the person. However, this was not the case with the Galilaeans. They were receiving the benefits of Jesus' life and ministry, and they were receiving His blessings for three very specific reasons.

a. They had heard the Lord preach and seen His marvelous works in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast. They had not been the target of Jesus' ministry there; the citizens of Jerusalem had been the people upon whom Jesus had focused in Jerusalem. However, the Galilaeans had not felt slighted, not to the point that they shut Him out and refused to listen. They were attracted to Him, for their souls were reaching out for God. Therefore, they attended His preaching and observed His ministry. They opened their hearts to what He was saying about repentance and receiving the Kingdom of God. (See note—Mk. 1:14–15.)

Thought 1. A man can never be led to believe in Christ *until* he is receptive to Christ. He *must be willing* to listen to the message of Christ.

"But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear" (Mt. 13:16).

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Ac. 17:11).

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Th. 2:13).

“Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath” (Js. 1:19).

“Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors” (Pr. 8:34).

“The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise” (Pr. 15:31).

“Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil” (Ec. 5:1).

b. They were a people seeking and worshipping God. Note why they had been to Jerusalem. They had gone to seek and worship God at the Passover, and it had cost them. The journey was long and difficult, for they were in the northernmost part of Palestine, whereas the temple was in Jerusalem which was in the south. Also, they had to take a circular route because Samaria lay between Galilee and Jerusalem, and the Samaritans considered them enemies, posing a threat to their safety.

The point is this: these Galileans had a hunger for God; therefore, their hearts were better prepared and willing to receive Christ.

Thought 1. A man who *sincerely* seeks God is better prepared to receive Christ. For this reason, men should be constantly seeking after God. Seeking God and receiving Christ are evidences of true faith (He. 11:6).

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth” (Mt. 5:6).

“But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul” (De. 4:29).

“Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near” (Is. 55:6).

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (He. 11:6).

c. The idea being conveyed is that the Galilaeans welcomed and received Christ. They wanted to experience Christ for themselves. They had seen Him preach and minister in Jerusalem, and they wanted the same experience for themselves and for the rest of their people. Of course, some Galilaeans did not receive Him into their lives and hearts. They deserted Him (see Jn. 6:66). But “as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.” (See note—Jn. 1:12–13.)

Thought 1. Welcoming, receiving, and experiencing Christ for oneself is the greatest evidence of genuine faith.

“But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit to perfection” (Lu. 8:15).

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” (Re. 3:20).

B. The Stages of Faith, 4:46–54

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| <p>1. A beginning faith</p> <p>a. There was a desperate need</p>
<p>b. There was hearing about Jesus</p> <p>c. There was coming to Jesus</p> <p>d. There was begging Jesus to help</p> | <p>46 So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.</p>
<p>47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.</p> |
| <p>2. A persistent faith</p> <p>a. A lesson in faith</p>
<p>b. A desperate insistence</p> | <p>48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.</p>
<p>49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.</p> |
| <p>3. A trusting, obedient, & working faith</p> <p>a. The promise: Your need is met</p> <p>b. The result: He believed & obeyed Jesus' Word</p> | <p>50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.</p> |
| <p>4. A confirmed faith</p> <p>a. He was on the way home</p> <p>b. He received glorious news: His prayer was answered</p>
<p>c. He confirmed the supernatural vs. the natural</p>
<p>d. He believed & knew that Jesus had healed his son</p> | <p>51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told <i>him</i>, saying, Thy son liveth.</p>
<p>52 Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.</p>
<p>53 So the father knew that <i>it was</i> at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.</p> |
| <p>5. A witnessing faith: Shared with his household</p> | <p>54 This <i>is</i> again the second miracle <i>that</i> Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee.</p> |

B. The Stages of Faith, 4:46–54

(4:46–54) **Introduction:** this nobleman was a government official, probably holding some high position in Herod’s court. His experience reveals the various stages of faith, the kind of growing faith that every man should experience.

1. A beginning faith (vv.46–47).
2. A persistent faith (vv.48–49).
3. A trusting, obedient, and working faith (v.50).
4. A confirmed faith (vv.51–53).
5. A witnessing faith (vv.53–54).

1 (4:46–47) **Faith—Seeking Jesus—Contrition:** the first stage is a beginning faith. When Jesus entered the city of Cana, a *nobleman* (basilixos), an official of the King’s royal court, approached Jesus. The actions of the man demonstrated exactly what is involved in a beginning faith.

a. There was a desperate need. The man’s son was at the point of death.

Thought 1. Needs confront every human being. Eventually the severe needs arising from accident, illness, disease, suffering, and death strike everyone. No one is exempt. One may be an official in government or even the king himself—it does not matter. The day eventually comes when every man needs help. The severe disasters of life are beyond any man’s control.

b. There was hearing about Jesus. The man heard about Jesus, and he listened attentively to what he heard. He did not ...

- turn a deaf ear to the message
- think himself too important
- consider the message to be foolish
- mock the person sharing about Jesus

c. There was coming to Jesus. Facing one of the severe disasters of life, the man came to Jesus. Jesus was the only person he had ever heard about that might be able to help. Note what the man had to sacrifice in order to go to Jesus.

- 1) The man had to leave the side of his dying son knowing he would be gone for many hours. Imagine the anxiety and fear that his son might die while he was away. The man would literally have to tear himself away from his son. Such an act shows how strongly he believed that Jesus could help him.
- 2) The man had to travel almost a day’s journey to reach Jesus. Capernaum was about twenty miles from Cana. Imagine the concern and apprehension gripping the father’s heart every foot of the way, wondering if he should have left his son’s side. The fact that he *persevered* and kept his eyes on the hope of Jesus shows the faith of his heart.

“Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD” (Ps. 31:24).

“Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy” (Ps. 33:18).

“And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee” (Ps. 39:7).

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God” (Ps. 42:11).

“For thou art my hope. O Lord GOD: thou art my trust from my youth” (Ps. 71:5).

“Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God” (Ps. 146:5; see vv.6–9).

“Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is” (Je. 17:7).

- 3) The man did not let his high position keep him from Jesus. He did not wrap himself in pride nor did he allow what others might say keep him from Jesus. Swallowing his pride, he confessed his need in the face of all who ridiculed, and he went to Jesus.

“He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him” (Ps. 91:15).

“Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity” (Is. 58:9).

“Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not” (Je. 33:3).

d. There was begging Jesus to help. The man literally *begged* (*erota*) and kept on begging for Jesus to meet his need.

2 (4:48–49) **Faith—Belief—Signs:** the second stage was a persistent faith. Note two crucial lessons.

a. A lesson in faith. The man said, “Come down, and heal my son.” Jesus was saying, “Unless I come down and you see signs and miracles you will not believe. Is that what you are saying?” Jesus had to teach the man that *His Word alone* was enough. *Belief in His Word* was what was going to assure the request. His power was at the nobleman’s disposal if he would just believe Him. Belief is to precede signs and wonders. Note that “you” is plural. Jesus was addressing both the man and the crowd. He wanted the crowd to get the message as well. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn. 2:23; DEEPER STUDY # 2—2:24.)

b. A desperate insistence. The man was in no position to argue, not even to think through what Jesus had just said. He was desperate. A severe disaster had stricken his life. He believed Jesus was the only One who could help him, and he was determined to secure Jesus’ help. He cried out, “Lord [Kurie] come down ere my child die.”

Note two significant points. (1) The man did not allow Jesus’ rebuke to deter him, and (2) he kept after Jesus.

Thought 1. Note the crucial lessons.

- (1) Signs and wonders (the boy’s healing) were not as important as *believing Jesus*. A man’s eternal salvation was at stake, and the man had to believe to be saved.

(2) The man was helped because he persisted. Persistence was absolutely necessary in securing the Lord's help. Persistence shows that one really recognizes and acknowledges his need and really believes God can and will help. Note: if a man ceases to ask, he shows that he does not believe God will answer. He gives up on God, disbelieving Him. This man did not allow the Lord's hesitation to stop him.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Mt. 7:7–8; see v.9–11).

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (He. 11:6).

"The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate" (Ps. 34:22).

"Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is. 26:4).

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Je. 29:13).

3 (4:50) Faith—Obedience: the third stage was a trusting, obedient, working faith. Note three things.

a. The charge and the promise of Jesus was forceful.

⇒ The charge: "Go thy way."

⇒ The promise: "Thy son liveth."

b. The man's belief in Jesus' Word and his obedience. He "believed the word that Jesus had spoken," and "he went his way." The idea is that of *instantaneous faith and action*: he believed immediately and he turned immediately, heading home to his son. He *acted* on his faith. Note what he believed.

⇒ The Lord's love, compassion, and concern: that Jesus cared for those who had desperate need.

⇒ The Lord's knowledge (omniscience): that Jesus knew his son was healed, although he was twenty miles away.

⇒ The Lord's power (omnipotence): that Jesus had the power to heal his son, even from a great distance.

c. Both faith and obedience were necessary to receive the promise and help of Jesus. The man would not have received the help of Jesus if he had not *accepted and believed* the Word of Jesus or if he had rebelled and acted childishly. The man could have easily acted like so many when they bring their needs to God: "Your word is not good enough. My son is not healed. He is there in Capernaum and you are far away, *no place close* to him. How could he be helped with you so far away? Come, visit, *show yourself, stand before us*: help us." Such, of course, is pleading to God for help; but it is not crying to God in faith, not basing one's request upon the Word and

promise of Christ. It is asking God to help, but it is also dictating how God is to help. It is telling God how He is to act instead of *accepting and acting* upon His Word.

Thought 1. There is no real faith apart from obedience and work. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn. 2:24; DEEPER STUDY # 1—He. 5:9.)

“But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible” (Mt. 19:26).

“For with God nothing shall be impossible” (Lu. 1:37).

“Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed” (Lu. 7:7).

“And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed” (Lu. 17:14).

“And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him” (He. 5:9).

“Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone” (Js. 2:17).

“I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee” (Jb. 42:2).

“Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!” (Ps. 31:19).

“The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate” (Ps. 34:22).

“Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass” (Ps. 37:5).

“They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever” (Ps. 125:1).

“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding” (Pr. 3:5).

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength” (Is. 26:3–4).

4 (4:51–53) **Faith:** the fourth stage was a confirmed faith. Note the words “as he was now going.” He was in the act of *obeying Christ* when he received the glorious news that his prayer was answered. Again, it was believing the promise of Jesus and obeying Him that brought the blessing. Both belief and obedience were essential.

Note also that the man confirmed the supernatural vs. the natural. He asked the exact hour the boy recovered. He wanted to be certain; he wanted absolute confirmation. He was reaching out for stronger faith in Jesus. He was so full of joy and thankfulness to Jesus that he wanted to believe on Him more and more.

“And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that

those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them” (Mk. 11:22–24).

“But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee” (Jn. 11:22).

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (He. 7:25).

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (He. 11:1).

“For I am the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall be no more prolonged: for in your days, O rebellious house, will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord GOD” (Eze. 12:25).

5 (4:53–54) Witnessing: the fifth stage was a witnessing faith. Note two things.

a. The man witnessed to “his whole house.” He told them about the experience, the Word of promise and instructions Jesus had given, and they all believed. They committed themselves fully to Jesus as the Messiah.

b. Witnessing for Jesus was not easy for this man. He was a high official, moving about in the halls of a corrupt government and among immoral officials. He would definitely be facing ridicule and persecution, and perhaps loss of position and even loss of life. But note: his faith was a witnessing faith. He loved Jesus for what Jesus had done for him, and he wanted others to know Jesus’ glorious salvation.

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Mt. 5:16).

“Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him” (Lu. 8:39).

“And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Ac. 16:30–31).

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Pe. 3:15)¹

¹ Leadership Ministries Worldwide. (2004). [*The Gospel according to John*](#) (pp. 76–102). Leadership Ministries Worldwide.