

**“LIFE IN HIS NAME”:**  
THE PURSUIT OF WHOLENESS AND THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

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*MOSHLACH* THE FINAL WORD  
(JOHN 4:25-26)

**I. Introduction**

**II. When Messiah Comes... (Jn 4:25)**

- A. The woman is not yet sure who Jesus is. While she believes that Jesus is a prophet, she is still not willing to take him at his word.
- B. Her words remind us of Nicodemus' in chapter 3.
  - 1. Nicodemus: “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him” (3:2).
  - 2. Samaritan Woman: “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet” (v 19).
- C. Like Nicodemus...
  - 1. she sees something special about Jesus.
  - 2. she does not yet see Jesus as the Goal. She is not willing to entrust her whole life to him.
- D. Verse 25 could be read as a conversation-stopper: “I know that Messiah is coming...When he comes, he will tell us all things” (v 25).
- E. We can credit this woman for her willingness to acknowledge the authority of the Messiah. *The Messiah is the final authority of all things.*
- F. John Calvin has good things to say of the lady:

What is beyond all controversy is that the woman puts Christ before Moses and all the prophets as a teacher. For in a few words she sums up three things. First that the teaching of the Law was not complete in every detail but only rudiments were delivered in it. For unless there had been some farther advance to be made, she would not have said that the Messiah would tell them everything. A contrast between Him and the prophets is implied, in that it is His proper office to bring His disciples to the finishing post whereas the prophets had only as it were entered them and started them off. Secondly, the woman says that she expects a Christ who will be the interpreter of the Father and the teacher and master of all the godly. Finally she declares that we must not desire anything better or more perfect than His Gospel, for this is the furthest bourne [= goal, boundary] of wisdom, beyond which it is unlawful to proceed. (*The Gospel According to St. John 1-10*, 102)

- G. Samaritans had some form of messianic belief based on Deuteronomy 18:18: “I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.”

### III. “I am He” (Jn 4:26)

- A. Jesus proceeds to complete what is lacking in her knowledge: “I who speak to you am he.”
- B. Everything that she has said about the Messiah, Jesus is.
1. Jesus is the Prophet who succeeds Moses and the other prophets who followed Moses’ message.
  2. Jesus is the Prophet who speaks all that God commands him.
- C. Our Lord is claiming to be the final authority, over this woman’s life, and over the entire Samaritan nation.
- D. When Jesus says, “I am he,” he is claiming to be nothing less than the Last Word over everything.

### IV. Who Or What Is In Control?

- A. The key issue: *Who has the final authority over our lives today?*
- Who has the right to tell us what is good or bad, what is right or wrong, what is true or false, and what ultimate reality is?
  - What shapes the millions of decisions we make on a daily basis, from whether to buy a particular kind of soap or how to interpret a specific report from the news?
  - Who has the final word over our lives as children of God?
- B. This is an important issue because...
1. What authority we live from determines the kinds of lives that we live, whether our lives will give life or bring destruction.
  2. Our society is in the midst of significant changes; and as Christians, we need to be careful that we are *not* seduced from our simple devotion to the Messiah.
- C. When we first came to Christ, we put our faith in Christ and came under his rule.
- D. But as we strive to live our lives under his lordship, it dawns on us that we are far more controlled by outside influences than we realize.
- E. We are influenced by...
- our parents
  - cultural traditions
  - education
  - significant others
  - the many formative experiences of our lives.
- F. What are some cardinal areas where our Lord Jesus must have absolute sway in our lives?

1. The area of *knowledge*: “Where must I go to find the truth about ultimate things?”
2. The area of *worship*: “Who am I supposed to worship?”
3. The matter of *salvation*: “How can I be saved? How can I be made whole?”

## V. “Salvation Is from the Jews” (Jn 4:22)

- A. In John 4, the Lord corrects the Samaritan woman on her understanding of knowledge: “You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.”
- B. While Jesus has plenty to criticize about his own culture, he will not criticize what Judaism got right.
- C. Implication: The source of our knowledge of God and of ultimate reality comes through the *Jews*, the people of Israel.
- D. When God chose to reveal his Law and his Gospel to the world, he chose to do so within the context of a Jewish/Israelite culture.
- E. While God has blessed other cultures with many things, he gave special revelation to Israel.
  1. As far as God’s Word on morality and salvation is concerned, we must listen to the Jewish Scriptures (= the Old Testament/the Law, Prophets, and Writings).
  2. The cultural roots of Christianity are Jewish. Our Lord Jesus and his apostles were all Jews.
- F. Why is this important? Because of the idea of cultural relativity.  
—All cultures must decide right and wrong based on the Word of God, not primarily based on what our cultures determine are right or wrong.
- G. Since Moshiach has said that “salvation is from the Jews,” I must listen to the Scriptures of the Jews.

## VI. Worship the Father (Jn 4:23)

- A. The second cardinal truth has to do with *worship*: “Who is truly deserving of my absolute adoration and allegiance? Who is deserving of my unquestioning obedience and trust?”
- B. Every human being was made to be a worshipper. There is no such thing as a non-religious person, because every person worships someone/something.
- C. If Jesus is the Final Word, who is deserving of our worship?
  1. Jesus calls him “the Father” (vv 21, 23), a name of authority and tenderness.
  2. The *Father* is the God who shows himself through the Jewish Scriptures.
    - a. He is the covenant God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Israel, and the house of David. He is the “I Am.”
    - b. He is the One who is now revealing himself through the words and deeds of Messiah Jesus.

- c. The only God who is out there, the only God who deserves our absolute trust and obedience is “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph 1:3).
- D. Why is this relevant? *Because your god will shape the person you become.*
  - 1. Worshipping the right God will lead to life; slaving for the wrong god will lead to death.
  - 2. The right God will inspire people to love mercy and do justice (Mic 6:8). The wrong god will inspire destructiveness.
- E. Since Moshiach has said that the true God is “the Father,” I must place my hope in this God and this God alone.
  - 1. With Messiah Jesus, I echo the Creed of Israel: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. <sup>5</sup> You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (Dt 6:4).
  - 2. In the Lord Jesus, this God is now my Father.

## VII. The Living Water (Jn 4:23)

- A. The third cardinal truth we must absolutely agree with the Lord Jesus on has to do with *salvation*: “How can I be saved? How can I be made whole again?”
- B. The answer that our Lord gives is, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water” (v 10).  
—The salvation and wholeness that we so desperately long for comes to us when we go to Jesus in faith.
- C. Why is this relevant? *Because your future is at stake.*
  - 1. Drinking the wrong water can kill you. It will leave you in your sins. It will not protect you from the Day of Judgment.
  - 2. But God is merciful. He offers us salvation through Jesus Christ.
    - a. For those who know that they need forgiveness, Jesus says, “whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.”
    - b. For those who long for wholeness, Jesus says, “The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (v 14).

## VIII. Jesus the Final Word

**Will we trust in the final Word that has been given through Messiah Jesus? Will we let him guide us to truth (v 22), to wholeness (vv 10, 14), and to God (v 23)? If you let Messiah Jesus have the final Word in these areas, you will not be misled. You will also find the other areas of your life gradually coming under his rule. And his rule is the kingdom of eternal life. Messiah has come to teach us all things. He has come to give us life. Let us go to him.**

## Questions for Reflection

1. Was there anything in particular about today's sermon that blessed and encouraged you?
2. Was there anything that you disagree with or found difficult to accept?
3. How is the woman like Nicodemus?
4. Where did the Samaritans derive their idea of the Messiah?
5. From v 25, what does the woman believe the Messiah would do?
6. What are three cardinal or foundational areas of life we must bow to Jesus as the final Word? Why are these areas important? How do they shape the rest of our lives?
7. According to Messiah Jesus, where must we go in order to know God's Law and Gospel?
8. Who is this God whom Jesus calls "the Father"?
9. According to Jesus, how can we be saved and restored?