

The Messiah's Revelation Part 2

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 4:1-26

Preached on: Sunday, January 26, 2014

I would encourage you to take your Bibles now and turn to John's gospel, chapter 4. We will continue examining the second part of the Messiah's revelation that is found here in his encounter with the woman at Sychar, the woman of Samaria.

As we prepare to understand more of what the Spirit of God has for us here in this text, may I remind you that 2,000 years prior to this encounter Sarai, Abram's wife, had contempt for her servant Hagar who had conceived a child by Abram and Hagar had to flee from Sarai and in Genesis 16:7 we read that "the angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness." Then the text tells us that "she called on the name of the Lord who spoke to her" and she says "thou art a God who sees" and she called the well Beer-lahai-roi which means "a well of the living one who sees me." Now, here in John 4, the Lord meets another outcast woman by a spring of water in the wilderness of Gentile ignorance and blindness and he sees her as well. She is an object of his electing love and he is able to peer into her very heart. And at a well, once again, the Living One Who Sees offers this woman of Samaria, the living water of saving grace.

Later in Genesis 21, going back to the story of Hagar, we read how that Hagar and her son, Ishmael, were together banished, again, into the wilderness and we read how that when their skin of water had been depleted, they sat down to die and Hagar "lifted up her voice and wept," the text tells us. Once again, the Lord came to her rescue and we read, "God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water and she went and filled the skin with water and gave the lad a drink." In similar fashion, the Lord reveals himself to this woman of Sychar by opening her eyes to her sin and to the Savior, the well of living water. Like Hagar, she had an empty container and after making her thirsty for living water, the Lord Jesus satisfied her thirst completely, offering her the living water of salvation that she also took to her kin and son. What pictures of sovereign, saving, pursuing grace. Can we all see ourselves in these accounts as we look upon our past and realize what God has done for us?

Hagar would have died physically unless the Lord had opened her eyes to the well which had been there all along she could not see. Likewise, the woman of Sychar would have died spiritually. Indeed, each of us require his grace to open our eyes so that we can see the well of living water lest we perish in our sins.

So let's bring our lives, once again, to this amazing text longing for the Holy Spirit to use these words to show us the majesty and the excellency of Christ and transform us more into his image. I had suggested last Sunday that we examine this under three headings: a divine appointment, a divine offer and a divine revelation. By way of review, we looked at the divine offer last week. We have seen that the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ had to pass through Samaria because it was his Father's will to do so. He had a divine appointment to seek out an unnamed, uneducated, immoral Samaritan woman that the Father had given him from all eternity, an outcast without hope but an object of the Father's drawing, the Spirit's quickening and the Son's pursuing love.

Website: otcr.org

Online Sermons: otcr.org/content/sermon/885/The_Messiah-s_Revelation_Part_2.html

The Messiah's Revelation Part 2

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 4:1-26

Preached on: Sunday, January 26, 2014

So, according to verse 5, “He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph; and Jacob's well was there.” We learned that Sychar was the ancient site where Jacob had purchased a field when he returned from the land of Canaan and the text tells us that he erected there an altar and called it El-elohe-Israel which means “a mighty God is the God of Israel.” There he dug a well, a well that still exists to this day and 2,000 years later, this is where the mighty God of Israel comes to reveal himself as the Messiah, even a Savior unto the Gentiles. That place in Sychar was the ancient site where Jacob bequeathed this plot of ground to his son Joseph and it was there that Joseph wanted to be buried so during the Exodus, the Israelites carried Joseph's bones back to this place where his father erected an altar that he called “a mighty God is the God of Israel.”

As you think about it, what should have been the birthright of Jacob's firstborn, Reuben, was transferred to Joseph as we read in 1 Chronicles 5:1. Why was that? Well, it was because of Reuben's sin. Likewise, Christ, the second man, takes the inheritance which was forfeited by the first man, Adam, because of his sin. So, my friend, when we look into the word of God we see that it is no coincidence that the Spirit of God gives us these very precise locations for they are rich in redemptive history and theological significance. To be sure, it was no coincidence because we know that Joseph was a type or a picture, a pattern, an example of Christ who is the antetype which is always far greater and superior to the type. Scripture affirms in numerous passages that both were shepherds of their father's sheep; both were dearly loved by their father; both were first hated by their brothers; both were sent by their father to their brothers; others plotted to harm both of them; robes were taken from both of them; both were taken to Egypt; both were sold for the price of a slave; both were tempted and falsely accused; bound in chains; both were placed with two other prisoners, one who was saved and the other lost; both were exalted after suffering; both were 30 years old at the beginning of their public recognition; both of them wept; both forgave those who wronged them; both saved their nation; and in both cases, what men did to hurt them, God turned to good.

So, from all eternity, it had been foreordained that the Son of God, the Messiah of Israel, go through Samaria and arrive at this ancient place called Sychar, so rich in redemptive history. It is there that this woman comes to draw water and she finds this weary Jewish traveler who asks her for a drink. In verse 9, the Samaritan woman said to him, “Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)” Literally, “For Jews do not use vessels, they do not use the same utensils together with Samaritans.” Here is where we will begin our study this morning.

In verse 10, “Jesus answered and said to her, ‘If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, “Give Me a drink,” you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.’” Living water is an Old Testament metaphor that speaks of the spiritual cleansing and eternal life that comes from salvation when a person is born again by the power of the Spirit of God. The imagery here of the water is fascinating as I think about it. Despite man's great scientific prowess, he is utterly unable to make water.

Website: otcr.org

Online Sermons: otcr.org/content/sermon/885/The_Messiah-s_Revelation_Part_2.html

The Messiah's Revelation Part 2

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 4:1-26

Preached on: Sunday, January 26, 2014

Likewise, salvation is a gift from God that man cannot create. Even as water is indispensable to physical life, so too the living water of salvation is indispensable to spiritual life. Even as all men need water, all men are in need of salvation and even as water is an element of which we never tire, one that cleanses and refreshes and satisfies like nothing else, so too the living water of salvation and even more so.

But here we see a very important spiritual truth that we must not overlook: here we see that every sinner must first know the gift, the gift of God, who is the Lord Jesus Christ before he will ask and receive the living water of salvation. You see, asking must proceed from knowing the person of the Lord Jesus Christ so Jesus does not ask her here to know some religious creed, to know some religious dogma, some statement of faith, she must know who it is who says to you, he says. Not what is being said to you but who it is that is talking with you and each of us must also have a personal encounter with the person of Jesus Christ. Not some body of doctrine for he alone is the source of living water.

Here we also see illustrated what is taught all through Scripture and that is that man never seeks for God. It is always God that must seek after him. Later on in John 6:37, Jesus says that “all that the Father gives me shall come to me.” But he goes on to say in verse 44 that “no one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him.” We see this all throughout the word of God. For example, in Romans 3 beginning in verse 10 where Paul quotes from Psalm 14:1, it says this, “There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one.” So, here with this woman, we see the Father drawing and Jesus tenderly, patiently seeking even as he did you and as he did me and perhaps, even as he might be doing right now in your life.

The riddle like character of Jesus' statement concerning the living water is designed to provoke thought, designed to get her to pensively reflect upon what he's saying, to wonder what he means. But we also witness Jesus beginning to expose her erroneous assumptions as somehow she has something to offer him when, in fact, just the opposite is true. She really has nothing to offer him; it all must come from him. She is the one who is thirsty; he is the fountain of living water that can satisfy her thirst. Now, of course, she doesn't understand any of this as yet so the Lord must awaken her conscience so that she can apprehend her thirst, her longing for sins forgiven, for a different kind of life on earth and for the eternal life of heaven. You know, often eternal realities are eclipsed by the temporal distractions that we have in our life and also by the idols of our heart that we love, that we worship until they eventually destroy us.

Obviously she is confused and here is one of the reasons why: you see, in her culture, living water referred to spring water that fed the well at the very bottom. In fact, to this day in Israel, that's what living water refers to. So in her confusion, she says in verse 11, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water?” Mystified now, she continues but you will notice, with a hint of wonderment concerning the nature of this strange Jew. Verse 12, “You are not greater

Website: otcr.org

Online Sermons: otcr.org/content/sermon/885/The_Messiah-s_Revelation_Part_2.html

The Messiah's Revelation Part 2

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 4:1-26

Preached on: Sunday, January 26, 2014

than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?" Obviously, her question anticipates a negative answer but Jesus is going to shock her by saying to her, in effect, that "I am infinitely greater than Jacob." The reason why is because the gift of living water that he is offering her is infinitely superior to the property and the well that this patriarch bequeathed to Joseph and his descendants.

So, in verse 13 we read this, "Jesus answered and said to her, 'Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.'" This brings us to the second point in our little outline: the divine offer. We've seen the divine appointment, now we come to the divine offer. So, Jesus is making it clear here that the physical water from Jacob's well is incapable of permanently quenching your thirst but the living water that I offer will do that forever.

We could also see that he is saying that Jacob's water originates from outside of a man and must enter into the body but the living water that he is offering, springs forth from within and forever brings refreshment and satisfaction to the soul. In similar fashion, we can conclude that Jacob's well water is limited in quantity, Jacob's physical water evaporates, it disappears when you drink it but the living water that Jesus is offering is unlimited in quantity and it brings eternal life.

Let's ponder this for a moment very practically: having been made in the image of God, all men have a spiritual thirst, however, not for the one true God. Because of our sinful nature, we prefer a god that we can manipulate hence we have the Santa Claus Jesus that hands out the goodies these days; we've got the smiley faced Jesus that winks at sin and so on and so forth. So, we come up with gods of our own making and we become idolaters. Paul tells us that "sinful man suppresses the truth in unrighteousness even though God has revealed himself within them through reason and conscience," Romans 1:18 and following. So, it is for this reason that all men are without excuse. Paul goes on in that text and says, "For even though they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks. They became futile in their speculations and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools."

So, sinful man will worship everything but the one true God and the sad thing is that nothing satisfies their thirst, the thirst within them. You see, this is a thirst that lies too deep within the soul for the waters of the world to ever quench. I think of Solomon who enjoyed luxuries and pleasures more than any other man that ever lived, yet at the end of his life, he said that "everything under the sun is vanity and vexation of spirit." Think about it: you know that smell when you buy a new car or a new truck? You can't wait to get in it and you look at it and you get out of it and you walk into a place and you turn back and you look at it. Ah, it just feels so good. It's such a neat thing. How long does that last? Isn't it interesting: they change the styles every year so that yours is kind of obsolete and you've got to have the next one. Think of that new gun, guys. That new guitar. Kids, that new ipod. That new iphone. That latest fashion statement where you can't wait to walk by the mirror and look at yourself. How long does that last? What

Website: otcr.org

Online Sermons: otcr.org/content/sermon/885/The_Messiah-s_Revelation_Part_2.html

The Messiah's Revelation Part 2

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 4:1-26

Preached on: Sunday, January 26, 2014

about our kids when they open up all those presents under the trees? I would submit to you that within hours, they are playing with the boxes. Isn't that how it works? The point is, friends, nothing in life lasts long enough to really give you any real satisfaction.

I was reading the other day about the curse of winning lottery tickets. I was reading of what happened to people and you read about divorce and drug and alcohol addictions, death, premature death, violence, violent murders and suicide. Again, how long does anything in this world bring real satisfaction? The point is: it's all vanity. Solomon said that the only thing that matters is this, Ecclesiastes 12:13, "Fear God and keep his commandments." That's where you'll find life, "Fear God and keep his commandments. Fear Yahweh, the personal, covenant-making, covenant-keeping God of Israel," and this is the God who now stands before this woman at Sychar, the source of living water.

If I can be just real clear to you: you know, if you're not trusting in Christ, if you're not worshiping him, if you're not serving him, if you don't enjoy communing with him, if you don't enjoy hearing his voice in his word, you have no life. All you're doing is allowing your lust to rule you and you're chasing after anything that will bring satisfaction. Oh, it'll bring great satisfaction but there is only pleasure in sin for a season and then it's gone. Nothing ever really satisfies except Christ.

So, Jesus says to her, "Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life," verse 14. That is, by the way, a reference to the Holy Spirit who alone can cause a man to be born again. That's the great doctrine of regeneration which is the instantaneous, supernatural impartation of spiritual life to the spiritually dead.

Verse 15, "The woman said to Him, 'Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw.'" Now, as we would say, clearly she is stuck on stupid at this point. She doesn't get it. She can't seem to make this transition from the physical to the spiritual so Jesus now, in his love, and the Father as he draws, and the Spirit as he begins to move upon her heart in conviction, together they must arouse her conscience. The way you do that, the way we see it here, is by making her acutely aware of her sin. You see, a sinner will never ask for living water until he or she is confronted with the reality of their sin and their need for a Savior.

Verse 16, "He said to her, 'Go, call your husband and come here.'" Whoa, talk about a shift, an abrupt shift in conversation. This definitely got her mind off the physical water but rather than offering a humble confession of sin at this point, she is going to redirect him, gotta change the subject. Let's not go there. Can we all identify with that? "I don't want to go there. My goodness." Verse 17, "The woman answered and said, 'I have no husband.'" I'm sure in her mind, she's thinking, "Boy, that's a nice little half-truth. It oughta do the job if it'll get him off this subject here." Well, it didn't happen. "Jesus said to her, 'You have correctly said, 'I have no husband.'" You know, if you pause there for a second, I'm sure for a split second she's thinking in her heart, "Phew, boy, I dodged that

Website: otcr.org

Online Sermons: otcr.org/content/sermon/885/The_Messiah-s_Revelation_Part_2.html

The Messiah's Revelation Part 2

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 4:1-26

Preached on: Sunday, January 26, 2014

one.” But in verse 18, he says, “for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly.”

So, as we would say, busted. She's caught; the Lord has exposed her and we know that she's also stunned. Wouldn't you be if someone suddenly told you all about sins that you wish no one knew about? Your past and so forth. We know she was stunned by her statement that she later makes to the people of Sychar in chapter 4:29. There she says, “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done.”

Let's go back to her response to Jesus when she said in verse 17, “I have no husband.” You know, we are masters at spinning sin. Obviously, her answer does not do justice to the truth. She's not ready to make a full confession. She's not ready to be unmasked so she hides behind a half-truth. What a picture of our pride. What a picture of our own depravity. Don't we all prefer to conceal our sin rather than confess it? Sometimes we even do this in our own prayer life, “Oh Lord, forgive me for not being the man I need to be,” and then we move on to something else, some general statement. How different to say, “Lord, forgive me for the way I neglect my wife and the way I demean her as I did a few minutes ago. Lord, forgive me for the pornographic images that I'm constantly drawn to. Lord, forgive me for the way that I neglect you, for the way that I cause division within the church,” etc. etc. No, we would much prefer to conceal our sin and, my friends, we are hopelessly biased in our own favor. We are defensive. Oh, we can see the speck in our brother's eye for a mile but we can't see the log in our own.

We think we can hide from God, don't we? We think we can lie to God and this is kind of what's going on with her. We think that somehow we can spin our sin and still remain in good standing with the transcendent, infinitely holy, omniscient God who has created us. How foolish. You know, friends, you will never be saved from your sin until you confess it and cry out for undeserved mercy. Confession, by the way, in the original language comes from a compound Greek word, homolegeo. Homo means “the same,” legeo means “to speak.” So, confession literally means “to say the same thing about your sin as God says.”

But she's not ready to do that. Scripture tells us that all men everywhere are called to repent and be saved and repentance is based upon confession of sin and until we see the sort of divine justice looming over our own unholy head, we will never beg Christ to save us. But won't you also notice a precious mixture here of grace and truth in our precious Savior as he stirs her conscience to focus on her sin. Jesus asked her to do two things, notice this: he asked her to go and then secondly, to come here. I find that interesting. “Go call your husband. Go deal specifically and honestly with your sin. Go look at it face-to-face,” that's the idea. “Go, call your husband.” But aren't you glad he didn't stop there even in our lives? Then he says, “Come back.” It's as if he's saying, “Come back in your true character, unmasked, broken, contrite, humble, honest and receive mercy.” I'm so glad he never stops with the command, “Go.” He always summons us back. Truly, our Savior is full of grace and truth as John has already mentioned in John 1:14. Here he speaks truth to her conscience and he offers grace to her broken heart, a heart sick of sin,

Website: otcr.org

Online Sermons: otcr.org/content/sermon/885/The_Messiah-s_Revelation_Part_2.html

The Messiah's Revelation Part 2

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 4:1-26

Preached on: Sunday, January 26, 2014

weary of guilt. Oh, what a blessed thing to confess our sin, to ask for forgiveness and to experience that soul-satisfying joy of sins forgiven and the hope of eternal life.

Now that the Lord has her attention, now that he's pierced her heart and exposed her sin, she realizes that this man is from God. She doesn't know that he is God but she is highly suspicious here. Verse 19, "The woman said to Him, 'Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.'" Finally, her inner voice of her accusing conscience begins to speak, her ears begin to hear, her eyes begin to see. It reminds me of what the writer of Hebrews tells us in Hebrews 4 beginning in verse 12, that "the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword." That's what we see here and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit of both joints and marrow and able to judge the thoughts and the intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from his sight but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of him with whom we have to do. This dear lady, now, experiences this first hand.

So, by not denying the Lord's accurate portrayal of her degenerate lifestyle combined with her accurate assessment that Jesus was a prophet, a man sent from God, she begins to move toward genuine confession and repentance. The Holy Spirit now is working in her heart. By the way, this is a process that varies from person to person. You will see this as you look at your life, the lives of your children as they come to Christ and so forth. Some of us are little more hard-hearted and stubborn than others but because she's not quite ready to make a full confession and ask for the living water and because she doesn't truly know who he is, the gift of God and because she is embarrassed and wants to divert the conversation from this painful topic of her sordid lifestyle, she shifts the conversation to a controversial subject between the Jews and the Samaritans pertaining to the proper place of worship. By the way, our flesh is so clever, I was thinking about this, though her conscience has been deeply disturbed at this point, her natural knee-jerk response that will somehow silence the conscience, "Oh dear, this is getting a little uncomfortable here. I might have to look at my sin and realize that I'm not right with a holy God." So, what's the strategy? What's the strategy most people use? The very one she uses? "Let's focus on another religious topic."

How many times have we gone to people and entered into a conversation, began to give them the gospel, people that are enslaved by their sins, they're helpless, they're hopeless, they're utterly lost, they're filled with self-righteous pride and as you begin to give them the gospel, they start getting defensive and they bring up some controversial religious issue? I jotted a few of the biggies down. I went through kind of my mind in talking with people over the years, kind of the top ones. "Well, I just don't believe that the Bible is true. I think there are a lot of myths, there are a lot of contradictory things," and so forth. "I don't believe this idea that God created everything and the young earth theory and all that." Or they want to get off on the homosexual debate, "How could a loving God," and here we go with all of that. Or, "Why would a loving God send people to hell? I don't want that kind of a God." Or they want to talk about Calvinism as they define it. As they define it, I wouldn't want anything to do with it either.

Website: otcr.org

Online Sermons: otcr.org/content/sermon/885/The_Messiah-s_Revelation_Part_2.html

The Messiah's Revelation Part 2

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 4:1-26

Preached on: Sunday, January 26, 2014

Now, their understanding of these issues are on par with a cockroach who loves darkness rather than light about as much as they do. So, it's foolish to try to reason with them. If theological acumen were leather, they wouldn't have enough to saddle a bug. They just don't know. They're just clueless about these things so it's futile to try to reason with them. The word of God says that "a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness to him and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually appraised."

So, what do you do with people like this? You do the same thing that Jesus does. It's a great example here. By the way, the same thing that Jesus did with you and with me. Here's what you do: you be patient but you stay on topic, the very topic they are trying to avoid which is their sin and the Savior. You bring them back to the gospel. Don't get off on trying to explain the authority and inspiration of Scripture, they're not going to understand that. So, therefore, with those kind of people, I will tell them, "You know, you will never be able to understand the amazing truths of what Scripture says pertaining these matters until you first of all know the gift of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, until you are born again. When that happens, these things will become clear because the Spirit will make them clear to you."

That's precisely what Jesus does here. While it's clear that she would like to shift the discourse, this is also a topic that is important to her. It was important to the Samaritans because, especially with her, she did need to know where she should go to do business with God. Notice what she says in verse 20, "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." She was accurate in her statement because both Jews and Samaritans knew that God wanted his people to worship in a specific place. The problem is, because the Samaritans only believed the Pentateuch and not the entirety of the Old Testament, they believed that it was Mount Gerizim that they were to worship whereas the Jews, based upon an accurate understanding of God's specific location where he would meet with them based upon the Old Testament canon, they knew that you were to worship in Jerusalem.

But Jesus is not going to let her get off topic. That's what's important to see here. You see, the issue is not "where we worship," but "whom we worship" and "how we worship." So, in verse 21, he says, "Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe Me.'" By the way, he says this to emphasize the importance of what he's about to say, "Woman, believe Me," listen carefully to what I'm about to say. Let me be perfectly clear, "an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father." It's interesting that in John's gospel, John uses the phrase "an hour is coming" to point to the hour of Jesus' atoning work on the cross, to point to his passion, his crucifixion, his resurrection and his exaltation. So, it's as if he's saying, "Let's not waste time debating the relative claims of Jerusalem versus Gerizim because both sites will soon be rendered obsolete by those who worship the Father in Spirit and in truth." That's where he's going with all of this.

Website: otcr.org

Online Sermons: otcr.org/content/sermon/885/The_Messiah-s_Revelation_Part_2.html

The Messiah's Revelation Part 2

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 4:1-26

Preached on: Sunday, January 26, 2014

By the way, also remember that Jesus is in the process of ushering in the promises of the New Covenant which will supersede all of the external ceremonies and rituals of both the Jews and the Samaritans. I would also add that Jesus knew that in about 40 years, the Romans would come in to squelch a Jewish revolt in AD 70 and the temple in Jerusalem would be utterly destroyed. 1.1 million Jews would be slaughtered. About 97,000 would be taken into exile as slaves and likewise, thousands and thousands of Samaritans would also be slaughtered on Mount Gerizim. Jesus knew that.

But Jesus goes on to say in verse 22, “You worship what you do not know,” and of course, what he has in mind here is that “because you rejected the authority of the Old Testament canon, you do not understand God's revelation to you with respect to these things so your worship cannot be characterized by truth and knowledge. You worship that which you do not know, we worship that which we know for salvation is from the Jews.” Of course, this is accurate on two counts: first of all, God's revelation of salvation came to the Jews first and then to the Gentiles. Moreover, the source of salvation came through the Jewish Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, if I can digress for a moment, once again: when you hear these kind of controversial things as you're sharing Christ with people and you hear them spout off various errors, especially about creeds and denominations and church policy and all of this type of stuff, don't get side-tracked by some prolonged debate. Bring them back to Jesus, but by the same token, even as Jesus did here, even as he models, don't ignore some foolish, heretical statement. Confront it head on. Kindly but forthrightly rebuke them. As he said, “You worship that which you do not know, we worship that which we know, for salvation is from the Jews.”

Let me give you an example because I've encountered this many times, maybe you have too: you're talking with somebody and they say, “I want you to prove to me that there is a God and if he exists, why would he allow billions of people in the world to die in wars and to suffer with diseases.” Alright, at that point, I have a choice, basically two questions: we've got to prove that God exists and then explain why a holy God would ordain to allow sin and evil to enter into his perfect universe to ultimately display his glory because that's what Scripture teaches. Now, let's be realistic: I can spend hours trying to explain to a spiritual cadaver that has no capacity to understand spiritual truth, the existence of God and all of these matters with respect to why God would ordain to allow evil to come into his world thinking that perhaps on one of my points he's going to go, “Oh, wow! Stop there. That is so compelling! I get it! Oh, thank you for that.” My friends, that will never happen as it's not an intellectual issue, it's a heart issue.

So, what I would do, rather, is say, “My friend, you know, I could explain to you from Scripture that there is a God and I can point out to you many things that would resonate within your heart and, by the way, I don't really need to do that because you already know by reason and by conscience that there is a God but you suppress it in unrighteousness and I know you're not going to fully understand that. Moreover, I can explain to you why God ordained to allow sin to enter and evil to enter his universe to

Website: otcr.org

Online Sermons: otcr.org/content/sermon/885/The_Messiah-s_Revelation_Part_2.html

The Messiah's Revelation Part 2

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 4:1-26

Preached on: Sunday, January 26, 2014

dramatically display his glorious attributes. You're not going to understand any of that but, rather, what I would encourage you to do, rather than us get distracted on all of this, I would encourage you to get to know my Jesus. I want to point you to Christ. You don't know anything about him. Study him. Open up the gospel of John. Learn who he is because when you understand who he is, then by God's grace, you will be convicted of your sin, you will repent and cry out to him for his saving grace. He will save you. He will give you spiritual life and the Spirit of Truth will dwell within you and these things will become abundantly clearer to you by his power and then you will understand the truth and you will rejoice in it even as I do. Not because I'm smarter than you, not because I'm more righteous than you but because I have a different nature than you. So, my friend, I just want to invite you to Jesus. I want you to understand the gospel."

Well, that's what Jesus does here with this dear woman. Verse 23, he says, "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers." You know, here Jesus points her not to the where but the whom and the how of genuine worship. He knows that soon the veil of the temple will be torn asunder from top to bottom and all the external forms of ceremonial worship and all of the rituals are going to cease. He knows that true worship must be heart worship and, of course, this is totally foreign to this woman. It is totally foreign to the Jews and all the Samaritans. He's saying, "Not only is this time coming but now is." In other words, "It only awaits the dawning of the hour when I finish my atoning work on the cross, when I rise from the dead, when I am exalted as your Redeemer." So, he's in essence saying that "none of these things are going to be possible apart from me."

Friends, if I can put it a little bit differently: true worship will not exist except in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. That's the point. Just after the passion and exaltation of Christ, the gift of the Holy Spirit would be given. We read in John 7:38, "He who believes on me," Jesus says, "as the Scripture said, from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water. But this he spoke of the Spirit whom those who believed in him were to receive for the Spirit was not yet given because he was not yet glorified."

Isn't it great? We live on the other side of all of this, right? We live on the other side of all this so we can enjoy the indwelling presence, the fullness of the Spirit, the living waters that flow from our innermost being. That's why we can sing with great conviction the songs that we sang earlier. Jesus said, "True worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth." Spirit here speaks of the human spirit, not the Holy Spirit because he's underscoring the importance of internal, not external, worship, the core of the soul from which genuine worship must emanate. Truth refers to the Incarnate Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, the one that became flesh and dwelt amongst us, as John said earlier in John 1:14, "the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."

So, the truth of divine revelation found in Scripture must regulate the spirit. To put it a little bit differently: true worship is to give homage to God with an enlightened mind and with a humble heart that is overflowing with gratitude and praise. Again, the issue is not

Website: otcr.org

Online Sermons: otcr.org/content/sermon/885/The_Messiah-s_Revelation_Part_2.html

The Messiah's Revelation Part 2

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 4:1-26

Preached on: Sunday, January 26, 2014

where you worship but who do you worship and how do you worship? And he says, “For such people, the Father seeks to be his worshipers.” Again, all of the glory of authentic worship goes to our Sovereign God who made us objects of his electing love and drew us unto himself for if he had not done so, we would have never sought him. Then because of his steadfast love, he continues to seek us. Not seeking us for salvation, we're already saved, those of us that know him, but seeking us for sanctification. Seeking us that we might grow and become more conformed to the image of Christ and enjoy all of the things that he wants to bestow upon us. “He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.” Now, how does he do this? By his word and by his Spirit. Dear Christian, our worship will never be pleasing to him, it will never be pleasing to him unless it emanates from our innermost being and is based upon the truth of the word of God, the truth of who Jesus is. This is the sanctifying work of the Spirit and his word.

So Jesus continues with a characterization of what God is like. Verse 24, he says, “God is spirit.” This is such an amazing statement, isn't it? God is spirit. Think about this: he's saying that God is invisible. He is utterly incomprehensible. He is unknowable to us as human beings unless he chooses to manifest himself to us. How is he doing that? How did he do it? How is he doing it? Through the Lord Jesus Christ, the one that is standing before this woman. John says earlier in chapter 1:18, “No man has seen God at any time.” Then he goes on to say this, “But the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, he has explained him.” As spirit, he alone is the giver of spiritual life. Jesus says in John 3:6, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. It is the spirit,” he says, that gives life,” John 6:63.

Jesus also tells her, notice here, “And those who worship him must worship him in spirit and truth.” Must worship him. This is non-negotiable here. There is no other alternative. Anything other than this is not worship. Again, this can only happen as the result of the regenerating, sanctifying work of the indwelling Spirit, the one who reveals to us the knowledge of God through his Incarnate Word. Again, where we worship is not the issue. The issue is: who do you worship? How do you worship him? How do you worship the one through whom God's nature and character and attributes and will have been revealed?

Friends, do you want to know the invisible God? Get to know Jesus. It's real simple. If you want to worship God out of an overflowing supernatural delight out of your innermost being. Is that how you want to truly worship him? Something that only the Spirit can produce? Then get to know Jesus. Do you want to know how to worship God in a way that is acceptable to him? Then learn from Jesus. He says, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father but through me.”

So, the woman is obviously getting animated as she listens to Jesus. She's beginning to truly thirst for this living water of salvation. Verse 25, “The woman said to Him, 'I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ).'” John probably adds that. “When that One comes,” she says, “He will declare all things to us.” You see, on the basis of Deuteronomy 18:18, the Samaritans had Messianic expectations just like the Jews but she had no idea that the one who was talking to her was indeed the Messiah.

Website: otcr.org

Online Sermons: otcr.org/content/sermon/885/The_Messiah-s_Revelation_Part_2.html

The Messiah's Revelation Part 2

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 4:1-26

Preached on: Sunday, January 26, 2014

All this brings us to our third and final point: we've seen the divine appointment and the divine offer, now the divine revelation. Verse 26, "Jesus said to her, 'I who speak to you am He.'" You'll notice "He" is in italics. It is not in the original text. It literally says, "I who speak to you am." This is another one of those powerful "I AM" statements that the Lord uses 23 times in John's gospel. This was the name, you will recall, that he told Moses when Moses asked, "What's your name? What am I going to tell the people?" And he says, "Tell them I AM WHO I AM," which refers to basically, "I am the self-existent, eternal one who is and who will always be."

You know, it doesn't say this and it may not have happened, so please don't hear this as being actual truth from the word of God, but I would imagine when he said, "I who speak to you am," I would imagine that she took a few steps back. You know, later on that's going to happen in a profound way. You will recall that when Jesus was arrested in the Garden, there was a massive force that came to seek him and he said to them, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus, the Nazarene." And he said, "I am he." And the text says that "they all drew back and fell to the ground," because, my friends, this is the glorious, ineffable God, the Messiah. Oh, the glory and power of our blessed Savior. Amen. Never underestimate that.

So this, friends, is the primary theme of this whole chapter: Jesus' revelation of himself as the promised Messiah. He comes to the Gentiles to tell them this and as we're going to see, word is going to get around.

In closing, let me give you two thoughts by way of just practical application. First of all, may I encourage you: always examine your heart, your heart of worship. Is it mere ritual? Is it mere tradition? You know, for most people it's just Sunday in the south. It's just what you do before you go fishing in the afternoon, before you get the boat out. Or is it an overflowing of praise that bubbles up from a well within that has been placed there by the power of the Spirit? Based upon your new nature, based upon your solid grasp of the word. I hope that's what it is. If not, you need to do business with God.

Secondly, never try to get a person to drink the living water of salvation before you make them thirsty. All you'll do is make them choke and spit and sputter. How do you make them thirsty? Through your life. Through your love. As you keep pointing them back to Jesus and gently reminding them of their sin. Keep giving them the gospel. Don't be ashamed of it. It is the power of God unto salvation. Then, pray. Pray that the Spirit will give life. I pray that these truths will germinate in each of our hearts and bear much fruit for our good and for his glory.

Let's pray together.

Father, thank you for the power of your word that speaks so directly to our lives because, indeed Lord, we see ourselves here. Even though this was truly a woman, a Samaritan woman, Lord, we could put our own names there and we can see that even as you dealt

Website: otcr.org

Online Sermons: otcr.org/content/sermon/885/The_Messiah-s_Revelation_Part_2.html

The Messiah's Revelation Part 2

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 4:1-26

Preached on: Sunday, January 26, 2014

with her, so too you have dealt with us. So for this we give you praise. We humble ourselves before you.

I pray that if there be one here today within the sound of my voice that knows nothing of the gift of God, that knows nothing of this living water that bubbles up from our innermost being, O God, they have heard the gospel today and it will be according to your power to quicken them, to breathe spiritual life into that spiritual corpse. Lord, may today be the day that they confess their sin, that they repent of their sin, that they place their faith in the living Christ and experience the miracle of the new birth. We ask all of this in the precious name of Jesus and for his sake. Amen.

Website: otcr.org

Online Sermons: otcr.org/content/sermon/885/The_Messiah-s_Revelation_Part_2.html