

John 4:21 – 54

+ O + O + O +

~ Our Spiritual Safari witnessed a tired and thirsty Jesus at a well in Samaria, interviewing a Samaritan woman in our previous report. Jesus was telling her about the living water of life, and she was having a very difficult time grasping the spiritual value of the Word of God. Jesus called attention to her sins when He mentioned her husband, which was a touchy subject since she had divorced five husbands - and didn't have one now. This woman has resorted to living unmarried in adultery; and she never thought twice about it before. She would make a Hollywood starlet blush.

Well, when we turn to the Lord Jesus, our sin will have to be dealt with. As we also considered in our previous report, this woman wants to enter into a religious argument with this Jewish Man. So, she changes the subject to focus on the proper place to worship God. It's merely a distraction and deflection away from her own problems. Most people today who claim Christianity really just want to argue on some self-perceived higher level than their thinking actually attains. Their insistence on Biblical ignorance is alarming, and they have never even come close to living a life pleasing to God.

The superficiality plaguing the modern Christian is covered up sin. The average Christian is honey-combed in hypocrisy, because they compromise at every turn with evil. They refuse to confess their sins in prayer. The church's approach is that, while there may be sin in your life, God just overlooks it and winks at you with a smile; after all – you're saved, right? Modern preachers may even admit sin is a problem in your life, but they cannot – or will not – teach you how to deal with it. They preach the easy sermon about the sins of the Moabites four thousand years ago while totally ignoring the satanic practices going on right in their own church.

It is truly fascinating how many unbelievers flock to movies and buy books about the second advent of the Lord Jesus. They simply refuse to open the Bible to attempt learning it properly, correctly and completely. That may be

John 4:21 – 54

+ O + O + O +

because they usually flip to Romans, where the first eight chapters deal entirely with sin. From there, they either abandon the Bible wholesale or they start picking and choosing theologies. There is a deep resentment when you mention someone else's sin. The wonder of the Word of God is seen in the power of the Holy Spirit moving to break a man or woman, and seeing a change take place in their lives.

Of course, there is always that little group of people who simply cannot resist criticizing the teacher or preacher. They do it to take attention off of themselves and away from their total and complete illiteracy concerning the Bible. You won't find those people supporting sound doctrine, but they sure want to be active in criticizing it; in fact, these people usually want to run the church and be the associate pastor – or something. The last thing in the world on their minds is dealing with the sins in their lives! Well, friends, Jesus is not about to avoid or side-step the issue of your sin. If you have doubts, and a sincere argument for unbelief, then the Lord Jesus will certainly reason with you. God will always be honest with you, too. So, that's exactly what the woman at the well is experiencing with Jesus....

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

~ The only thing important to this woman was WHERE to worship. She wanted confirmation that she was to worship in Samaria because that was where she worshipped. Of course, Jesus told her that she will worship in neither place very soon. The point is: it's irrelevant where we worship God!

John 4:21 – 54

+ O + O + O +

The real question is HOW do you worship Him? The answer the Lord gave her was adequate; she had no ritual or location that determined proper worship....

25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

~ The fact that the Samaritans were looking for the Messiah to come is extremely interesting. This woman is profoundly interested, which reveals a longing in her heart. The second coming of Christ is believed and loved by those who are His children. Those who are not His have a nagging feeling that this might be true. They will insist they do not believe it, but they are still greatly disturbed. If the atheist is honest, he will admit he just doesn't know - but the Bible might be true. They seem to understand that they will be in big trouble if Jesus does return to the earth – they just don't seem to care! It is utterly frightening to contemplate the issues in their lives....

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

~ That is both majestic and sublime as she comes face to Face with the Messiah – the Savior of the world. My question to you is: have YOU come face to Face with the Lord Jesus Christ in your life? This woman did, and she found herself in the presence of the Son of God! This is the time when the woman turns to Christ sincerely and in genuine faith....

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?

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?

~ This woman is only speaking to the men, because she isn't very well-liked by the women in town. Some of the men she told this to were involved with her, you may be sure. That meant the men would also be extremely interested in whether or not Jesus could tell all things that she had done! Well, this is the testament of her faith in the fact that she witnessed to other people. And we see the men of the city turn to Him and they do so because of her witness! This is so very important for us to see....

30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

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?

34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

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.

37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

~ Jesus makes it clear that His business of doing the Father's work is the whole reason they are even in Samaria. Today, our business, as Christians, is to sow the seed of the Word of God. I am attempting to sow the seeds of Christ in this safari. It's my prayer that churches and other different organizations will do the reaping and that many will testify to that. I can only hope and pray this ministry actually reaches someone somewhere that truly needs to know how wonderful the Lord Jesus Christ can be in their

life. People are leaving the church in droves today – and I can't blame them - but they don't know where to go or what to do. Maybe by reading these reports they will discover anew that what they really want is the true Word of God taught properly, correctly and completely. I also pray the Holy Spirit will work through me to supply it....

38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

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.

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

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.

~ So, we find this woman with the shady past has reached a whole bunch of people with her testimony. This is a remarkable statement because the men aren't going to acknowledge her! They said they heard them for themselves, but they weren't even the least bit interested in Jesus until this woman said He told all the things ever she did. So, I don't believe these men, actually; but I could be wrong. It really doesn't matter, because what we do know for sure is these men believed that the Lord Jesus Christ was, in fact, the Christ and the Savior of the world.

A thirst for the things of Christ must be developed, but never will be developed until you realize you are a sinner. You'll start at the cross with God - or you won't start with Him at all. Everyone that thirsteth may come to the water to drink. Jesus said in the temple, "if any man thirsteth...." That means ANY person, and the only condition is you must be thirsty. Well, many Samaritans came to Jesus that day and they all drank of the

living water. Many people come to realize they are sinners through the influence of another. In fact, this is the effect of life upon life; the impact of one personality on another!

The most important aspect of an effective witness for Christ is that our faith stand on a surer ground than the other person. The Word of God MUST be taught with absolute authority; otherwise, you are merely discussing it - and that is utterly pointless. Many come to Christ because of the influence of their parents but have no real contact with their Savior. It is wonderful to have such an influence on a child or another person; but, later in life, they usually stumble and fall completely when that influence is gone. This happens again and again in many Christian families. Let's not just stand around being idle; let's make sure the Word of God really gets through to them – and that, friends, is sound advice directed at parents today....

43 Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee.

44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.

~ I have always desired to have the ability to understate a fact in my life and still be completely accurate in my comment. I have been known to over-state the obvious, repeatedly. What really happened to the Lord Jesus in verse forty-four is that they would have thrown Him off a cliff if they could have. His little sermonette from Isaiah struck a nerve so deep they couldn't even reason. The way the Lord states it is awe inspiring, to say the least. From here, we have a whole lot of geography, and if you have a decent Bible with maps, you'll want to follow this trail....

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.

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.

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.

~ A father walks onto the pages of Scripture and exercises faith on behalf of his son. This illustrates, highlights and underscores the message to parents to MAKE SURE your own child establishes personal contact with the Lord Jesus Christ. We have a right to claim our loved ones for Christ. We heavily influence the lives of others. We must be a proper witness. Our own lives must reveal we have a living faith in Christ - and that it is living, functional and works. Christians who have a life that doesn't seem to work – doesn't seem to quite make sense – and will not make a good witness. Unconstructive criticism will cause a loss of influence, too. We should seriously consider these things privately in our hearts with the Spirit of God Who can make it all real in our lives....

48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

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.

~ The faith here is wonderful - but it's too bad the man didn't bring the boy into the presence of Christ! That is so important – in fact, it's ALL important. That woman at the well was a bad person, friends. She had hurt many people and done awful things. Well, that bad person brought all of those men into the presence of the Lord Jesus. We influence others, you may be sure. Every one of us has an individual out there – somewhere – who only we can reach for the Lord Jesus. Make sure you find that person and serve them the Gospel of Christ, my beloved....

51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.

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.

53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.

54 This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee.

~ It's difficult to ascertain what time standard John is using in this Gospel. It could either be Roman Standard or Jewish time. One thing is sure – this man knew it was the same hour that this miracle occurred. Our influence is tremendous on others when we allow Christ to live through us. Most interestingly, the word in verse fifty-four for 'miracle' is 'sign' – so – this is done for a sign. The physical healing of the nobleman's son by Jesus was a secondary attribute of His earthly ministry; and is a secondary type of work for the Spirit of God.

So, from here our Spiritual Safari goes down to the pool in Bethesda at the sheep gate in our next report. We haven't spoken much about the gates in Israel, but we need to begin getting familiar with them. Our next chapter has so much rich and meaningful content for us today that it's difficult to put it all in perspective without writing a thousand reports on that chapter alone. We're going to Bethesda at the feast time. There has always been some controversy over which feast this was - because we are not told. The only reasonable conclusion is that we don't know. We do know Bethesda means "house of olives" and there was a pool of water by the gate where the sheep came in at night. It also has five porches - all full of sick people. This is where we will see the single most important miracle in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ ~

+ O + O + O +