

## John 3:17 – 4:20

+ O + O + O +

~ The last leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God took us across what I am sure is the most well-known passage in the entire Bible. We stayed on track until verse seventeen, where we sped up so fast, I feel we missed several key messages. So, this report will drop back and pick up a few additional points of interest that we need to know. Because this Gospel is couched and clothed in such simplistic language, it's deceptive to automatically assume everyone understands everything the Spirit of God is saying. The grammar is plain, and the Greek is even read very easily but, in a very real sense, what we have here is so totally profound, deep and penetrating - and the themes run all through this section of Scripture - that we're really only scratching the surface on safari. I feel like I have missed so much, and this is only report number seven from John....

### III

*17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

~ So, Jesus is speaking to Nicodemus here. Nicodemus was a Pharisee, as we have seen. The Pharisee's believed that the Messiah would judge when He came to this earth; and they had a good reason to believe that. In the Old Testament, there are two aspects presented regarding the Lord coming to the earth. First, He came as the Savior, Who came to pay the penalty for our sins by dying on the cross for those sins and the sins of the world. Next time the Lord returns to the earth, He is coming as the Judge! We should note the rapture is not a return to earth because we go up to meet Him in the air. Well, Jesus here is making it clear to Nicodemus that He is come that the world might be saved through Him. That is God's redemptive purpose that embraces the entire world today....

*18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

~ Many people feel as if the world is on trial today. The world isn't on trial, friends; the world has been tried, found guilty, sentenced and condemned. You and I were lost and we're NOT to wait until judgment day to see that we are totally and hopelessly sinful, filthy and depraved. The man in prison who is offered a pardon must be willing to accept said pardon. That's the Gospel, friends – we do not tell men they are on trial; we tell men they are lost and condemned without the mercy and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Mankind is in spiritual prison on death row waiting for Satan to come along and carry out the sentence. If man will not accept God's pardon that man will die in the prison of his trespasses and sins....

*19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

~ The deeds of mankind today are habitually evil, and men certainly love the darkness. Every major music event and theatrical presentation is done in the dark. It's natural that men do not want light. Only the man that has come to Christ and turned to Him desires to operate in the light. Verse nineteen is another classic example of the Lord Jesus approaching things from the negative viewpoint. If you think there is power in positive thinking you will do well to realize there is equally, if not more, power in negative thinking. Jesus does a lot of negative speaking elsewhere when He saith, "I came NOT to call the righteous...." and "...the Son of Man came NOT to be ministered unto, but to minister." God sent NOT His Son into the world to condemn it. The negatives used throughout the Bible are striking....

*20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.*

*21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.*

~ This speaks of the person who practices habitually that which is wrong. I believe it also ties into a believer's daily confession of sins in prayer - or lack thereof - or refusal to confess in the first place. Here, light and truth are one in the same. Error and lies are always an exact opposite of light and truth; spoken of as darkness. If you're honest with yourself, you'll recognize this tenet of spiritual truth constantly reveals our unworthiness. Anyways, from here, Jesus travels, geographically, to Judaea; and moves out from there and we know John Baptist is still preaching at this point....

*22 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.*

*23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.*

*24 For John was not yet cast into prison.*

*25 Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.*

*26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.*

~ This is extremely interesting to me, and it seems as if these men of John are jealous! They don't even mention the name of the Lord Jesus! These men are saying to John, "... you're going to lose your following." Well, there's no escaping the tremendous force of John's answer; and we have these teachings again and again throughout Scripture. When Jesus says, "no man can come unto Me except it were given him of My Father," - well, that's what you can call definitive, dogmatic and decisive....

*27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.*

*28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.*

*29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.*

*30 He must increase, but I must decrease.*

*31 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.*

*32 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.*

*33 He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.*

*34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.*

*35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.*

*36 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.*

~ That is the record whereby John Baptist's ministry comes to an end in Scripture. It is utterly profound. He could have written "Period. Full stop" instead of saying A-Men. John preached the Gospel message very clearly. John's message was that men are lost without Christ Jesus; and that brings our safari up to date with where we concluded our previous report. As we move along with Jesus into Samaria, we come to another very recognizable account of the Gospel; and one that is only found here in John. So, let's take a seat at the well with Jesus and this woman while the disciples are not present....

## IV

*1 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.*

*4 And he must needs go through Samaria.*

~ Jesus must needs get out of the area to avoid precipitating a major crisis before the appointed time is what verse four could say. However, Jesus had to go through Samaria because there was a woman there who needed salvation. It would have been necessary to travel through Samaria to reach Galilee; but the REAL reason Jesus 'must needs' go is because it was the Father's will. There were three routes Jesus could have taken; but He went through Samaria, of course. Now we see the Lord Jesus moving on a schedule – a Heavenly schedule – and that schedule has been prepared Personally by the Father. Jesus has made it clear He has come to do the Father's will. Jesus makes it clear no man has the power to take His life, also – He says in this Gospel that it is He Who lays His life down; and Jesus says this is all done at the command of the Father. You'll must needs decide for yourself if you believe the Bible is the Word of God....

*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.*

*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.*

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

~ The sixth hour, according to Roman time, would have been about six o'clock in the evening. On Jewish time, this would have been twelve noon. We are following Roman time here, apparently. Jesus was weary with the journey; I don't think that would have happened until closer to the end of the day. The disciples had gone to get food, so that likely meant dinner and provisions for the night. John makes clear that the Word was made flesh and, here, we see a weary Jesus.

We also see a dissolute woman whose type was as common as pig tracks in this impoverished region in Samaria. This woman is rude and immoral. The word we have for her today is not very nice. She is the complete opposite from the man we met in the last chapter, Nicodemus. The Lord Jesus was harsh and blunt with old Nikki, the religious ruler; but Jesus is going to be soft and gentle with this lost sinner. Well, even so, she resented His approach as He appeals to her sympathy; and twice she rejects Him. This woman resists any spiritual implication that Jesus makes here. Jesus was the Water of Life, and we see Him asking for water! I think it was late in the day and very hot and dry. The disciples must have been out trying to round something up for dinner....

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

*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? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.*

~ This woman is just plain indignant and impertinent. We can almost see her tossing her hair and tilting her saucy little head as she speaks to Jesus in this racially discriminate tone. It is said the Samaritans would sell goods and services to the Jews, but they wouldn't eat or drink from the same vessel. Well, this woman will leave behind her own little waterpot and she'll be drinking from the vessel of God before this is all over. Jesus is taking the very lowest place He could go to at this time. Jesus is skillful and sympathetic with this woman, but He deals with her forcefully, factually and faithfully. See, Jesus isn't a candidate for a political office here; He

simply appeals to her womanly curiosity and creates an interest and a thirst....

*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.*

*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?*

~ Well, she's calling Him 'sir' now; she had left that out before. Again, as with Nicodemus, this woman can only think in terms of the physical, which means her thinking rose no higher than the water level down below at the bottom of the well! She also purposely attempts to identify herself with Jacob here. This woman has no ability to understand anything when she asks....

*12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?*

*13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:*

*14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*

*15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.*

*16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.*

*17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:*

*18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.*

*19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.*

*20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.*

~ Two thirds of the earth's surface today is covered with water. Mankind monitors the physical waters so closely on earth that they can determine within fractions of inches – and hundreds of feet down – if the water level rises or falls. Interestingly, there's nothing in the world they can do about it - but they keep an eye on it anyways. Jesus made it clear He wasn't talking about physical water; but the world isn't looking for spiritual water today, friends. They have no interest in Christ whatsoever. Well, Jesus created a desire in this woman's heart for spiritual water. The water is available for all; the only condition is you must be thirsty.

What we have is a woman who was not popular with the other women in town because she was too popular with the men! This woman initially resists coming to Jesus as a sinner, so she is shocked into reverence. Then, all she wants to do is open a religious argument with the Lord! The liberal and apostate church today doesn't want to talk about sin; they just want to argue religion. The last two verses of this report make a good religious argument, too, to be sure. Where ARE we going to worship? Well, in the next leg of our Spiritual Safari, Jesus will move beyond that religious argument, and He will take away any cover this woman thinks she has for her sin. Jesus desires to give us the water of life. We don't need to argue religion. All we need to do is allow the Holy Spirit to take the Word of God and make it real to our hearts and lives ~

+ O + O + O +