

“Wired to Worship: This is How We Do It!”

John 4:19-24 (NIV)

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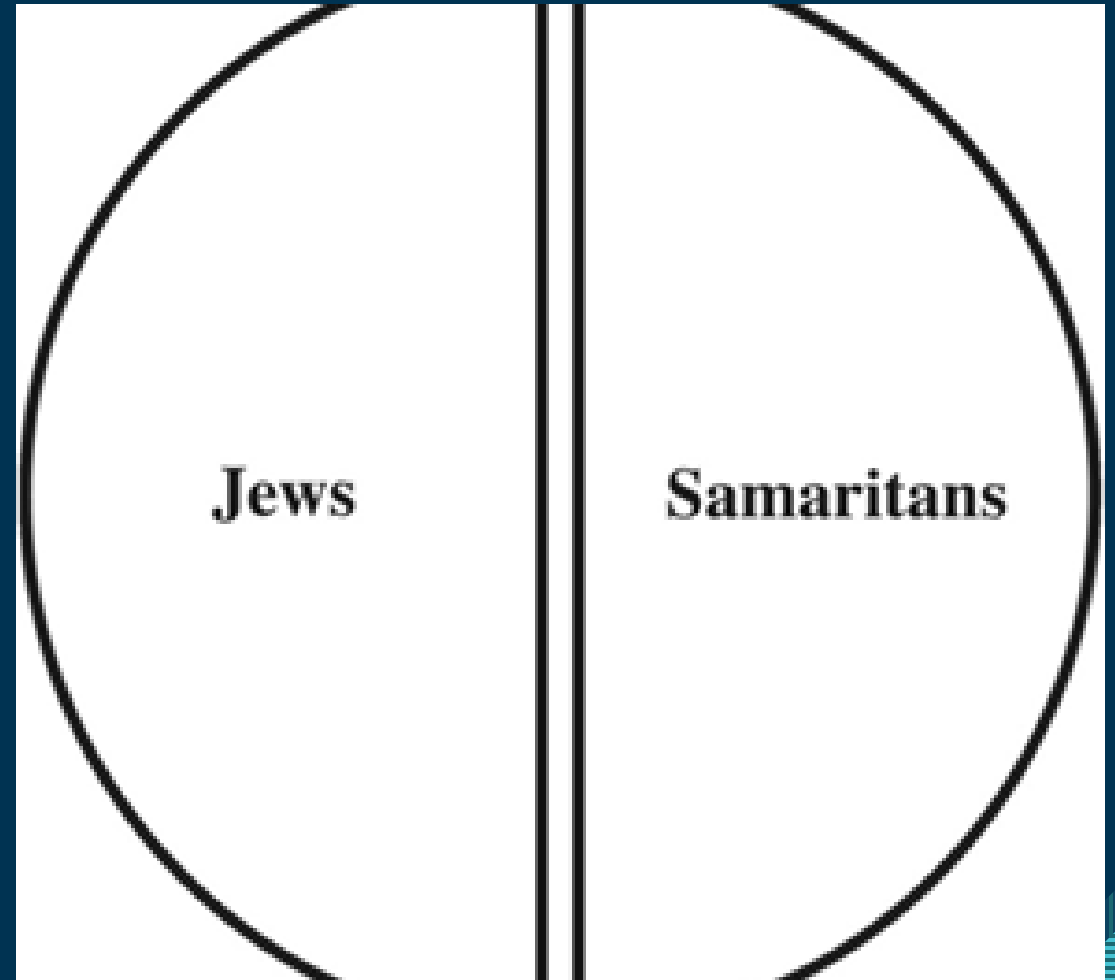
JOHN 4: 19 -24 (NIV)

- ¹⁹“Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.” ²¹ “Woman,” Jesus replied, “believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”



Understanding the Socio-Historical Background

- Jews and Samaritans didn't get along + had no interactions with one another
 - Term "Good Samaritan" was a contradictory statement for Jews
 - Jesus "must need go through Samaria" (John 4:4)
- Disagreed on where worship should take place, not the temple because Moses set up altars on Mount Ebal (pronounced curses) + Mount Gerizim (pronounced blessings)
- Samaritans rejected all of the Old Testament except for the Pentateuch (1st five books of Hebrew Bible)



Identity of Worship

- Verse 19 + 20 : ““Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”
- She called him *prophet* (v19), but not *messiah* (v25)
- Messiahship entailed: One who had been anointed (smeared with oil), in lineage of David, political revolutionary, + Messiah wouldn't be resurrected
- It's not an either or, it's a both, and
 - He's both Prophet and Messiah
 - He's both Creator and Sustainer
 - He's both Lord and Liberator
- Jesus asked the disciples who do men say that I am? Who is God to you in your experience of worship? Your identity animates your activity!

Integrity of Worship

Verse 22: “You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.”

- Worship is not about a *location* (where we profess), it's about our *locution* (what we profess)!
 - Samaritans believed they should worship at the Shrine on Mount Gerizim (historical lineage of Moses) – legality/legacy
 - Jewish historian Josephus reported that Alexander the Great gave permission to the Samaritans to build a temple on Mount Gerizim.
 - Ancient Jews subscribed to “Temple Theology” – the idea that YHWH dwelled, or lived, in the temple (Solomon’s Temple) in the City of Jerusalem
- [We] worship what we know, you all worship out of tradition, custom, ritual.

Intensity of Worship

- Verses 23 + 24: “Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”
- Johannine literature is invested in Jesus’ claims to be “truth”
 - “I am the truth, way, and the life” (John 14:6)
 - “Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.” (John 17:17)
 - “Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.” (John 18:38)
- Spirit as pneumatological, not ontological – God is Spirit/immaterial, not being/flesh
 - We use human language to understand God, in our finitude, but God cannot be limited to human expression [Rudolph Otto, *Idea of the Holy*]

QUESTIONS?

- Who is God to you, in worship, that makes worship more personable?
 - Where have you experienced God most intimately?
(outside the temple or the mountaintop, according to Jesus)
- What does it mean for you to worship in Spirit and in truth?