

“The Spirit of the Thing”

ONCE UPON A TIME... A grateful talking frog, three wishes with a condition... ‘A mild heart attack!’
INTELLIGENT!! BUT “a wife not quite entering into the spirit of marriage.”

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO DO WHAT WE DO IN THE RIGHT SPIRIT?

A waiter brings you food but doesn't seem to want to?
Your child does what he is told but with a ton of attitude?
The goalie stands in the net, but doesn't seem all that committed to stopping the ball?
The person you once loved is still your marriage partner, but doesn't seem to want to be?
“The spirit of the thing” matters!

In the gospel of John, we read of an encounter between Jesus and a woman: a married woman with the same sort of problem. It's by no means her ONLY problem, but it IS always a problem: Failing to enter into marriage in the right spirit. (Or any IMPORTANT relationship!)

And it is in this story that we encounter this strong statement!

John 4:23 "... 'such people' the Father seeks to be His worshippers. " **!!!!**

“DOCTRINE” There is a certain sort of person God actually seeks to be His worshippers!

“QUESTION” What sort of person is God seeking to be His worshippers?

Psalm 27:8 When You said, "Seek My face," my heart said to You, "Your face, O LORD, I shall seek." **???**

CONTEXT: John 4:1-10

➔ What sort of woman was this? **Is SHE the sort of person that God seeks**
?????

11 She said* to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water?

➔ **So here is a lady who is grounded in the physical realities:** “A drink? Hm. You need a bucket!”

Is this the sort of person that God is looking for? People with their feet firmly planted on the ground? Not “so heavenly minded that she is no earthly good!” Because there is a lot to do in this world!!!!
Or is this just the sort of woman that God is NOT seeking? (Compare her to Mary and Martha?)

Wait! SHE had a bucket! No intention of sharing what she had with a stranger? **Unsharing! Ungiving! ???**
Or is this an admission that she knew that He wouldn't think of using a bucket she herself used?
Aware of her own inadequacies? Her own unworthiness? Is THIS the sort that God is looking for?

John 4: 12-15 ➔ She thinks, “With water like that, I wouldn't have to walk to the well so often!”
Again, “practical, down-to-earth, grounded!” **???**

Jesus could be down to earth and focused on the earthly realities, too! **John 4:16-18**

SO... Here is this woman, married five times. Not actually married to the man she is now with. Failing, at least in that aspect of life, to have lived according to THE SPIRIT OF THE THING.
And perhaps actually open to a new relationship with this Man she has just encountered! (“I have no husband”)

Q: SO WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE THAT GOD SEEKS TO BE HIS WORSHIPPERS?

John 4:19-22 She cared about theological truth! Truth about God!

1. People who do so in truth! “What is actually true” matters!

NOTE: The narrow-mindedness of Christianity. (What we think about Jesus.)

"Would it be OK to believe this about Him if it were actually true?"

Like believing in gravity. And light. And food. And water. And air.

John 8:31-32 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

John 4:23-26

2. People who do so in the right spirit.... (vs. 24 "in spirit" and truth.)

→ **What IS the right spirit?**

a) **A spirit of holiness and righteousness and purity**

Matthew 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Psalms 15:1-2 O LORD, who may abide in Your tent? Who may dwell on Your holy hill? He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness, And speaks truth in his heart.

Psalms 24:3-4 Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? And who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood And has not sworn deceitfully.

And this might be THE END OF THE ROAD for the woman at the well... → John 4:21 "... you will..." !

Matthew 5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Matthew 5:3,4 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

b) **A spirit of humility and brokenness**

Psalms 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

Maybe this woman's "messed-up personal life" distinctly prepared her to get the point...

→ **John 4:10** "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."

→ **John 4:15** The woman said* to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty..."

Q: SO WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE THAT GOD SEEKS TO BE HIS WORSHIPPERS?

1. People who do so in truth!

2. People who do so in the right spirit

a) **A spirit of holiness and righteousness and purity**

b) **A spirit of humility and brokenness**

Here are the same two answers, a different way, sort of.

1. People who have the truth! Christ is the Truth!

John 14:6 "I am the way, and the truth, and the life..."

John 8:12 "I am the Light of the world..."

1. "People who have Christ!"

2. People who have the right spirit.... **2. People who have the Holy Spirit!**

→ The water He gives is His Spirit, who *quenches our thirst...AND washes us clean.*

John 6:35 "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.

Titus 3:5 He saved us...according to His mercy by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit

SO WHAT SHOULD WE DO???

Seek Jesus!

i) **TRUTH! Do what you know to do to get the Word of Christ into you!**
Read, listen, study, think!

ii) **SPIRIT! Do what you know to do to get the Spirit of Christ into you!** *Ask!*

Luke 11:13 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"