

Prayer, in its fullest experience, embraces genuine connection and absolute truth

John 4:19-24 (NLT) - 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."

Study Guide

This last Sunday we returned back to the story of the woman at the well. Amidst the discussion about true life, the woman asks Jesus as whether the Jews or the Samaritans are right in how they worship. On one hand, the Jews demanded that true worship could only happen in the Temple, as God had commanded their ancestors. On the other hand, the Samaritans were not welcome in the temple, and thus worshipped God elsewhere. Jesus then took these two concepts and expanded what worship—prayer in its fullest form is worship—truly is. The fullest expression of prayer involves both genuine connection, and absolute truth.

Worshipping in Spirit, which we can understand as connecting to God emotionally, relationally, and in a living way, is amazing and wonderful! Likewise, reciting Scripture as a form of connection to God—a style of prayer—is an important way to not stray from God's teaching.

How do you approach prayer? Do you find it helpful to read Scripture, or maybe recite a pre-written prayer? Or, does prayer feel more like a conversation to you?

Where do you struggle with praying? What do you think you need to help improve your desire for prayer?