

In Spirit and in Truth

(Go To Meeting)

Eduardo Elizondo—June 9, 2023

The reason for that title is because I would like for us to focus on those two words—Spirit and Truth—and how we are to worship God. We're going start by going to John 4, where those words are, and we're going to read what Jesus told the woman at the well as to how we are to worship God the Father and Jesus Christ.

It has to be in Spirit and in Truth! There's been a lot of things lately going on in many of the groups of the Church of God. I say the Church of God because there's only one Church of God, *one spiritual body!* We know and understand that there are many physical organizations and, and there are brethren in many of them, or most of them, or all of them.

We don't know, that's for God to determine because God sees the heart and who whoever has His Spirit are the ones who are called, who have answered the call and that are chosen and faithful. *God knows!* God's working with each and every one of us, ***but our focus is to be worshiping God in Spirit and in Truth!***

That's what I would like to talk about today, because I want for us to focus on the Word of God!

There can be many distractions, as we've seen lately in a lot of the groups and a lot of the things that are going on, especially with young people, and especially when it comes to other ways of doing things and other teachings and things like that.

- What is the focus?
- What should the focus be right now for all of us?
- *The focus should be on the Word of God and for us to be worshiping God in Spirit and in Truth!*

That's what we're going to study today: ***how do we worship God in Spirit and in Truth?*** and the importance of doing that! The importance of ***focusing on worshiping Him in Spirit and in Truth*** truly dedicated to Him. *Our eyes need to be on God!*

John 4:23—*Jesus is telling this Samaritan woman:* “But the hour is coming, and now is, when **the true worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth...**”

Does that mean that there are false worshipers? *It can be implied because it says **the true worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth...***—*it has to be both!* It has to be in

Spirit ***and*** in Truth, *not in Spirit only without the Truth!*

There are a lot of, places, a lot of churches, a lot of denominations that seem to have a lot of the spirit... I'm not saying that that's the Holy Spirit of God necessarily, but they're very spiritual. And there's a lot of people, especially nowadays and especially with the youth that say, 'I'm not religious, I'm spiritual.'

That could be actually a dangerous thing instead of a good thing. The word *Spirit*, it's been said that in the Churches of God it may have not a good connotation—*but it is!* The Spirit of God absolutely is; it's how we are to worship God in Spirit, in the Spirit of God, in the Spirit of the Truth. It has to be in Spirit *and* in Truth; that's the second part.

Also, if we have the Truth of God, but we don't have much of the Spirit of God:

- Are we truly worshiping?
- Are we being true worshipers?
- Are we doing the most?
- *Maybe barely!*

We have to have the Holy Spirit, as well? *It's both!* It's not just the Truth and it's not just the Spirit, *but it has to be both!*

We're going see what the Bible's talking about when Jesus talks about the Spirit. But here Jesus told the woman of the well:

“...for the Father is indeed seeking those who worship Him in this manner. **God is spirit, and those who worship Him must...** [it's not an option] **...worship in Spirit and in Truth**” (vs 23-24).

We have to be called by God and He has to give us His Holy Spirit in order to worship Him in this manner. We cannot generate this of our own. Our good intentions don't generate that.

The Holy Spirit is *a gift!* There really isn't anything that we can do to earn it. There are things that we can do to quench it, but there's nothing that we can do to earn it. We must worship Him in Spirit and in Truth with that gift of the Holy Spirit that He has given us a baptism and the laying on of hands.

Verse 25: “The woman said to Him, ‘I know that Messiah is coming, Who is called Christ; when He comes, He will tell us all things.’”

This is after He had already told her a lot of things about her life.

Verse 26: “Jesus said to her, ‘I Who speak to you am *He*.’”

The Messiah, the One sent from God—the Christ, the Savior—was talking to this woman and saying, the Father is seeking those who worship in this manner. ***So we have to be doing that! We have to be worshipping in Spirit and in Truth!***

Verse 27: “Now at this *time* His disciples came, and they were amazed that He was speaking with a woman; however, no one said, ‘What are You seeking?’ or, ‘Why are You talking with her?’”

Because it was strange for a Jewish man to be speaking with somebody from Samaria, this Samaritans. They didn’t really speak to one another or like one another, but to a woman a Samaritan woman...! This was on purpose and it was recorded on purpose ***to show that God is going to call whoever He desires and He’s going reveal Himself to whomever He desires***, because it is what He wants to do.

Sometimes, in groups or organizations we have lived through this. Some of, some of us have lived through this where people have actually said, ‘Don’t talk to that person or that other person.’ A top down government approach. We’re not to do that.

Those of us who are elders or ministers, we’re not the lord-over the brethren. I know that most of us know that and understand that, and believe that, but many sometimes in other groups are not doing that.

But here, clearly Jesus is talking to a Samaritan woman. That’s why the disciples said:

“...‘What are You seeking?’ or, ‘Why are You talking with her?’”

Sometimes that’s what happens in organizations. The leader does something and nobody asks ‘Why was that done?’ Sometimes people have suffered, people have been abused and beaten down and disassociated from different organizations.

I say ‘organizations’ because the Church is the *spiritual* Body of Christ. We know that, but we have to live according to that, and believe that. If we really are the Body of Christ, ***we have to worship God in Spirit and in Truth with the Holy Spirit of God and with the Truth of God, which is God’s Word!***

1-John 4—there’s something very important here, and it’s a ***warning. It’s a warning to all of us!***

This is not just a warning to some other people. This is to us. The Apostle John says:

1-John 4:1: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits** whether they are from God, **because many false prophets have gone out into the world.**”

- Isn’t that true today? *Probably even more than at any point in time in history!*
- Why? *Because we have communications that are instant and they’re global, they’re everywhere!*

YouTube and social media platforms. They have all these videos and they have all of these preachers and teachers. Sometimes it’s used for good and sometimes it’s not for good.

Sometimes our preachers that come out and they have a lot of Truth. They do; they really do! I recently listened to somebody that was talking about ‘hell’ and talking correctly about what the Bible teaches about hell saying it’s not an ever-burning place, and that’s not the God that we serve.

He was correct and he correctly defined Gehenna and Hades and all of the terms and everything that we understand about that. That’s just a sidebar. But there are people like him that are preaching some Truth, absolutely! That’s good, that’s great, because if it’s according to the Word of God, that is wonderful.

This preacher was basically saying, and it’s true, that probably no other doctrine makes any more atheists than that, than the doctrine of ‘hell,’ of thinking that God is going to put us in a place of ever-burning torment for living 60, 70, 80, whatever number of years we get to live on this life.

People refuse to believe that, but we know different. We know that that’s not the God we serve. But just as much as there are some preachers that are preaching some Truth in some topics, in some things, we also know that there are preachers who are preaching lies; there are false prophets and they’re preaching things that are not right.

The deception is getting more complex than ever, because now there’s a lot more Truth mixed in. The Sabbath, the Holy Days are fundamental for us to understand the Plan of God, but that’s not everything.

When it says we have to worship in Spirit and in Truth, it means ***all the Truth!*** It means everything in His Word It means everything that is written in the Word of God

It’s not only the Sabbath and Holy Days, those are foundational. If in other organizations or in

times past, we were taught that if somebody's keeping the Sabbath and keeping the Holy Days and they have the Truth, it may be right with respect to that which they are doing according to the Word of God.

But it may not be right with respect to some other doctrines. We know what doctrines that commonly are out there that are erroneous like keeping Passover on the wrong day. Or not understanding the nature of God or things like that.

There are a lot of different things that these false prophets have gone on into the world. But I just want to share because I'm sure we are all aware that there's a lot more awareness, maybe not more false prophets than before, but there's certainly way more ways to see them and to hear them out there in social media and all these different platforms.

It says they have gone on into the world and that's true today, but now they have a lot more of the Truth.

But in comes some other doctrine that is not correct, not according to the Word of God. We have to be careful, because this is what the Apostle John tells us: *to test the spirit*. If we go back to Deuteronomy—we're not going go there right now—there were two tests and the first one was

1. if a prophet tells you something, and the thing doesn't come to pass, you shall not hearken to them

You shall not hearken to him because it didn't come to pass. But then there's another one where it says, even if it happens, even if he prophesized something and it does come to pass, then the second test is

2. to see whether he's talking according to the words in the Bible, according to all the instructions that God gave the people of Israel.

God says, 'If he's speaking against what I have said, you should kill him. *Now, that's not what we're going do nowadays!* We're just not going to listen to them. *We have to test the spirits!*

John tells us how: 1-John 4:2: "By this *test* you *can* know the Spirit of God..."

The Spirit of God is absolutely what we need to worship God in Spirit and in Truth, it's just as important as the Truth. *It's the Spirit of God!* That connection, personal connection with God through His Spirit, through His power.

But John tells us that this is a test of: "...every spirit that **confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh** is from God" (v 2).

Let's pause here for a moment, because if we really think about this, *that automatically excludes Judaism*, because they don't believe that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. They don't believe that He was God, that He came in the flesh, that He was God in the flesh. *They don't believe that!*

They believe that He was an imposter, and with the things that He said, He cannot even be a prophet because He made Himself equal with God, *which He was being the Son of God! So that automatically excludes Judaism!*

Then on the other side it also excludes Catholicism and most of mainstream Christianity, because ***IF they believe in the Trinity and they believe in three and one. THEN*** He didn't really come in the flesh. But that was only part of Him because the other two parts were somewhere in heaven.

Then the Apostle John tells us what happens. It says:

Verse 3: "And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh..." [that understands that Elohim is plural, that understands that He was the Lord God who came in the flesh.

- He was the Word
- He became flesh
- He dwell among men

IF they don't confess that and understand that is not from God,

"...And this is the *spirit* of antichrist, which you heard *was* to come, and even now it is already in the world" (v 3).

It's is very important that we are aware of that, because sometimes there's way more than meets the eye here. You're saying and confessing that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.

Now we have, for example, we have Messianic Judaism, but at the end of the day *it's still Judaism!* Then we also have the *Hebrew Roots* movement, which comes from the Protestants. But that not starting to understand that there's things in the Old Testament that we still have to keep like the Feasts or the Sabbath. But at the end of the day, it's still Protestantism, *unless* they come to the full truth of what it says and the understanding of who Jesus Christ really is and really was when He came to the world.

Verse 4: "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them because greater is He Who *is* in you than the one who *is* in the world."

We can remember that the Apostle John is the one who wrote in his Gospel—the Gospel of John—in chapter 15, what Jesus said, ***dwell in Me and I in you!***

John is encouraging us here that we are of God because greater is He Who is in us, that Jesus Christ and God the Father, come and dwell in us through Their Spirit, Their very own power and essence of Who They are. They want come and dwell in us. They're not going to force us. We have free moral agency. We have a choice, but They want us to ***choose Them*** so that They can come and dwell in us.

Verse 4: “You [we] are of God...” ***We are of God the Father, and we have overcome!***

Verse 5: “They are of the world; because of this, they speak of the world, and the world listens to them”—***because***

- it sounds very plausible
- it sounds nice
- it sounds coherent

In fact, sometimes it's the majority of the things that they're actually teaching are right' until you get to:

- the nature of God
- the Passover

or some of the other things

- speaking in tongues, for example

Then it's just kind of like the disciples:

Remember when they, when they asked, ‘Do you want us to call down fire from heaven?’ What did He tell them? ***You do not know of whose spirit you are!***

Sometimes, people are doing altar calls and speaking in tongues and all this. ***They don't know of whose spirit they are!*** That's why the Apostle John tell us, ***‘Do not believe every spirit.’***

It's not to put a wrong connotation in the word ‘spirit’ because we are to worship God in Spirit and in Truth:

- with zeal
- with understanding
- with the heart
- with the mind

But “...the world listens to them.”

Verse 6: “We are of God; the one who knows God listens to us. And I don't mean us...”—***listens to John, listens to what's written] ... the one who is not of God does not listen to us....***—***to John and the other apostles and what they wrote:***

- to unlock the Old Testament
- to give us understanding of everything that happened from the very beginning

“...By this means we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception” (v 6).

Anything that is not the Truth is deception. It doesn't matter how much and what measure, it doesn't matter if it's 80% or 20% or 30% or 5%. It doesn't matter! There is ***a spirit of the deception*** and Satan doesn't care how off we go, as long he does get us off track.

He doesn't care that it's a little bit, because in time we might end up in a different point. It might just be a one degree difference or two degree difference, but if we're not going according to what God says in time, we're going end up in a very different place if we do not test the spirits, because this is not just about unity. ***Unity is great, but unity is not a goal!***

Unity is a consequence of all of us doing what Jesus said in John 4, ***of worshiping the Father in Spirit and in Truth!***. How do we do that?

Prov. 4—there's a lot of instruction regarding this. This is what we have to focus on: ***worshiping God in Spirit and in Truth through our Lord Jesus Christ, through our High Priest! Obeying:***

- every word that He spoke
- every word that He inspired in the Old Testament
- every word that the apostles wrote and canonized in the New Testament
 - ***testing the spirits***
 - ***testing what people are saying***

It's not necessarily wrong to listen to other pastors and preachers, ***as long as we are grounded in the Truth and we know how to distinguish the Truth from the lies***, and that takes time, it takes maturity. But each one of us is responsible for studying and for proving all things like the Bereans with the Word of God.

Proverbs 4:1: “O children, hear the instruction of a father, and be attentive in order to know understanding, for I give you good doctrine...” (vs 1-2).

Here it is, ***God is telling us directly that He gives us good doctrine!***

“...do not forsake My Law” (v 2).

It begins there! That's when we were called, that's when we started to understand. We have to

keep the Sabbath and the Laws of God that apply all the time to everybody.

That's what it says for I give you good doctrine. These false teachers, the ones that have the spirit of the antichrist, they don't have good doctrine. They may have some good doctrine or some good sounding doctrine, **but we are not to forsake the Law of God!** That's where he begins.

Verse 4: "He also taught Me... [speaking of His Father] ...and said to Me, 'Let your heart hold fast My words; keep My commandments and live.'"

God is telling us this, let your heart hold fast My words; keep My commandments and live, and His words are all recorded in the Bible. It's not an oral tradition. It's not because somebody had a dream! or It's here! **His words are written down!** Then He gives us further instruction. This is how we worship God in Spirit and in Truth:

- **IF** we hold fast His words
- **IF** we do not forsake His Law

because He gives us good doctrine! Everything in the Bible is good doctrine!

It's usually the interpretation that goes sideways many times. But he gives us good doctrine and we are to hold fast those words and keep His commandments. That's where it starts. We're to continue to keep them the rest of our lives and for all eternity.

That's what, that's what God is. **God is love and all His commandments are love!** God tells us in:

Verse 5: "Get wisdom; get understanding; forget it not, nor turn away from the words of my mouth."

IF we're not listening to what, what God is telling us through His Word, **THEN** we're turning away from the words of His mouth.

But we have to get wisdom. We have to ask God, like He says in James 1, **IF** anybody lacks wisdom, ask God and He will give us wisdom because it is the wisdom from above that we want is the wisdom of God. It says, "...get understanding...". **Understand all of the knowledge of God**, the knowledge is in the Bible, but we have to come to the next level of understanding all that knowledge and then applying it, *which is wisdom!*

Verse 6: "Do not forsake her... [wisdom] ...and she shall keep you; love her, and she shall preserve you. Wisdom *is* the principal thing; get wisdom; and with all your getting **get understanding**" (vs 6-7).

Meaning **IF** there's only one thing that you do in this life **is get wisdom!** Nothing is more worth it than that. **Getting wisdom is the principle thing!**

Verse 8: "Exalt her, and she shall promote you; she shall bring you honor when you embrace her."

- we have to get wisdom
- we have to get understanding

This is what God tells us and this is how we can worship Him in Spirit and in Truth:

- **IF** we're taking His words
- **IF** we are keeping His commandments in us
- **IF** we're getting wisdom
- **IF** we're getting understanding

We're crying out for those to God. Then God tells us:

Verse 11: "I have taught you in the way of wisdom..."

Which is the way of wisdom? *The way of all His commandments, laws and judgment!*

That's the way of wisdom, because the Law of God, He says in Psa. 19, makes wisely simple.

Verse v 11: "I [God] have taught you in the way of wisdom; **I have led you in the right paths.**"

We have to continue in those paths, in the right paths. This is not about an organization; **this is about God Himself.** This is about His Word and God leading us in the right paths. But it takes **personal responsibility for us to study, for us to diligently seek Him!**

Verse 12: "When you go, your steps shall not be hampered, and when you run, you shall not stumble.... [because God is with us] ...**Keep hold of instruction**... [all the words of God] ...do not let go; keep her, for **she is your life** (vs 12-13)—*instruction is our life:*

- **IF** we follow the instruction of God
- **IF** we follow after God
- **IF** we do all these things that we're seeing here

Then he gives us a warning:

Verse 14: "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not into the way of evil men."

This is every everywhere. This is not just in the New Testament when the Apostle John was saying that many deceivers *are coming* to the world, **well, they have come!** they were also here, there were also evil men here. There were deceivers, there

were people that were teaching false things as well, going after pagan gods.

But this is a warning to **not enter into the path of the wicked, to not seek!** That's exactly what God told the people of Israel. The reason that they were to exterminate all those nations that were in the 'promised land,' it was so that they wouldn't learn their practices. So they wouldn't ask how they worship their god and follow after that.

Honestly, sometimes right now, especially the youth, is doing that, is going and asking other people:

- How do you worship God?
 - How do you understand that?
 - you're Christian, too
 - you keep the Sabbath
 - you keep the Holy Days
 - you must know, tell us, share with us
 - Is that in Spirit and in Truth?
 - Is that testing the spirit?
- or**
- Is that going, maybe entering into that path of the wicked?

This is not to accuse anybody. This is just about in Spirit and in Truth, what we're supposed to be doing. We're supposed to be really fellowshiping with and learning with together.

Verse 18: "**But the path of the just is as the shining Light** that shines more and more to the perfect day."

Because before it says that the path of the wicked is dark, "**but the path of the just is as the shining Light...**"

Verse 19: "The way of the wicked *is* as darkness; they know not at what they stumble."

That's what happens! It starts by something that sounds really good, but ***IF*** we dismiss something that may be off that may be wrong and we dismiss that, ***THEN*** we're going to stumble on that! Or we are going to stumble on the next thing that they come up with that is out of their own hearts and not out of the Word of God.

There are a lot of false teachers, a lot of deceivers, that's what they are, and have come into the world, but God wants us to be attentive to Him!

Verse 20: "My son, attend to My words; incline your ear to My sayings."

Our eyes and our heart and our ears have to be in the Word of God. It says it in so much detail because this is what we have to do. ***This is what we***

need in order to worship God in Spirit and in Truth—both! God will give us of His Holy Spirit if we do these things.

Verse 21: "Let them not depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart."

Let it be what you're thinking of all day, on His commandments, like in Psa. 1—"Blessed is the one that meditates on the Law of the Lord, and that's His light day and night." Why?

Verse 22: "For they *are* life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh.."

This is literal, brethren! This is literal because Jesus Christ confirming, He said, "***The words that I speak to you, they are Spirit and they are Life!***"

"For they *are* life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh." ***It truly is!***

Thinking, meditating on the Word of God, on the sayings of God in His Word and praying. Those are healing things, physical and spiritual, is true help both ways. ***They are life!***

The words that Jesus spoke—Jesus was the Word, so He spoke everything that was inspired by God—He inspired all of this. They are spirit and they are life! "**For they are Life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh.**"

It's not only health in the resurrection, it's health now. Obviously everything has to be subject to the will of God. We're not going to go and say, well, I'm suffering physically, but I'm doing these things! ***It has to be subject to the will of God!***

If we do that, maybe we need more of it. Maybe we need more of these words to not let them depart from our eyes and really keeping them in the midst of our heart and putting our hope in God all day! Not only physical life, it tells us "...health to all our flesh."

Verse 23: "**Above all guard the door of your mind with diligence...**"—*paying attention!*

Being focused, paying attention to what's entering into our mind through the eyes, through the ears, through our hands, every sense that we have, ***we have to guard that door!***

It's not only for the evil, like obvious evil things in the world, with violence and with sexuality and with perverted music and all of those things! ***It includes that, absolutely.*** Those are the obvious ones. But:

- What about false teachers?
- What about false preachers that
 - ✓ maybe keep the Sabbath?

- ✓ maybe keep the Holy Days?

Are we guarding the door our mind?

This is something between each one of us and God. This is not something that somebody is going come and audit or check who you're listening to or whatever. *No!* God is the One! ***This is our personal responsibility, to be guarding the door of our mind with diligence!***

"...for out of it *are* the issues of Life" (v 23)—***of eternal Life!***

Those are the issues that have to do with the words of God. If we do these things, we have to find those words because they're going be life in health to us. ***That's worshipping in Spirit and in Truth! IF we're guarding the door of our mind, because IF you have Truth and you have the Spirit of God, which we do, but we're not guarding that door of our mind, THEN pollution starts to creep in!***

Not just doctrinal pollution, but every kind of pollution and pollution from our own heart. It doesn't even have to be from outside. God said that the heart is wicked, is evil and desperately wicked. He can know it:

- ***IF*** we come to Him
- ***IF*** we incline our ear to His sayings
- ***IF*** we can keep these words in our heart
- ***IF*** we really, really do what He's telling us to do
- ***IF*** we really attend to His words
- ***IF*** we don't let them depart from our eyes
- ***IF*** we keep them in the midst of our heart
- ***IF*** we guard that door of our mind

Even when these things come out from our evil heart, because Jesus said that out of our heart, the heart of man, comes all kinds of wickedness. Bring it to God and say, 'please cleanse me of this because this is evil and I reject it, and it's not according to Your Word.' ***That's also guarding the door of your mind because that's where it comes from!*** Sometimes evil thoughts and it tells us more:

Verse 24: "Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and devious lips put far from you."

- it's what we think
- it's what we say
- it's what we look at

Verse 25: "Let your eyes look right on, and let your eyelids look straight before you." *The answer is not:*

- in forming another organization
- coming together as a bunch of organizations

- doing something that has never been done before
- putting a bunch of young people together or finding out from another group what is it that they're doing and joining them

It's not about that!

What God wants is that your eyes look a right on and your eyelids look straight before you into the Word of God, and go directly before the Throne of the Most High through the blood of Jesus Christ. That's what matters, that your eyes look right on and your eyelids look straight before you. We take stock every time. It says here, every day:

Verse 26: "**Ponder the path of your feet,** and all your ways *will be* established."

Meditate upon your bed. In the Psalms it says to meditate upon your bed in your night watches; think about what you did. "Ponder the path of your feet...."

Where did you go today? Not just ponder the path of your feet by yourself, ***but bring it to God!*** Discuss it with God! Think about it and pray; ask Him to:

- cleanse you
- correct you
- direct you
- help you to increase in grace and knowledge
- guide you in the way

that's what He says in:

Verse 27: "Do not turn to the right hand nor to the left; remove your foot from evil."

Again, do not turn to the right hand or to the left! It says that it in the in Pentateuch, as well. It says it here, and Jesus Christ says it, as well; about the way that leads to Life.

We're not to deviate to the right hand to the left. We're not to go to the right hand, the biggest extreme of keeping the commandments, even though they're not necessarily commandments of God, but Judaism with all of its rules and regulations and everything. You're not going to go to the left where it's like you don't have to give anything like, like Protestantism.

You don't go to the right, you don't go to the left; ***you keep what God said to keep!*** You keep your eyes on the Word of God because those words are Spirit and they are Life.

- ***IF*** we incline our ear to His sayings
- ***IF*** we keep those commandments within us
- ***IF*** we keep His words

- ***IF*** we ponder the path of our feet
- ***IF*** we get wisdom
- ***IF*** we ask for wisdom
- ***IF*** we ask for understanding
- ***IF*** we have all these things

That's how we can worship God in Spirit and in Truth!

It's a beautiful thing when, when we can see that. When we can see that God is with us and that we are with God, which is more important. It's more important that we are:

- with God
- walking in His way
- drawing near to Him every day in everything we do

He will give us His Spirit!

Acts 5—we're going to read this passage of what's happening in the early New Testament Church, because this is something, this is something amazing!

Acts 5:14: "And believers were added all the more to the Lord."

To the Lord. Why? *Because that's where we have to go!* We have to go to the Lord. We have to go to the Word of God. We have to go to these words. We just read how to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

This is a testimony of what was happening there.

"...multitudes of both men and women, insomuch *that the people were* bringing out the sick into the streets and putting *them* on beds and stretchers, so that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them" (vs 14-15).

This is probably one of those that was even greater works than, than these shall they do; Jesus said that because He was going to the Father. That's what happened.

Verse 16: "And a multitude from the cities round about also came together to Jerusalem, bringing sick ones and those beset by unclean spirits; *and they were all healed.*"

We see that; we saw that in Proverbs. These words *are Life and they will be held to your flesh* and they were healed. But then what happens? There comes the challenges.

Verse 17: "Then the high priest rose up, and all those with him, being of *the* sect of the Sadducees; *and they were filled with anger.* And

they laid their hands on the apostles and put them in *the* public hold. But during the night an angel of *the* Lord *came and* opened the doors of the prison; and after bringing them out, he said, 'Go and stand in the temple, *and* speak to the people all the words of this life.'" (vs 17-20).

Which life? *The true Life!* That's why Jesus said, 'Let the dead bury their dead.' These are the words of this Life, the words that are in the Bible. Those are the words that we just read in Proverbs that we are to keep in the midst of our heart. Those are the words that are Life, that are held to all our flesh.

An angel commanded them to go stand in the temple! It's not about what the authorities are telling you, it's what God is telling you to do.

Verse 21: "And after hearing *that*, they entered into the temple at dawn and taught. Now, when the high priest and those with him came, they called together the Sanhedrin and all the elderhood of the sons of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. But when the officers came, they did not find them in the prison; and when they returned, they reported, saying, 'We indeed found the prison locked with all security, and the keepers standing outside in front of the doors; but after opening *them*, we did not find anyone inside.' And when they heard these words, both the *high* priest and the captain of the temple, and the chief priests also, were utterly perplexed as to what this could lead to" (vs 21-24).

And everything was fine and good until, until they heard this!

Verse 25: "But a certain one came *and* reported to them, saying, 'Behold, the men whom you put in the prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people.'"

That's what God told him to do! ***We are to obey God rather than men!*** We have to obey God. We have to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth!

Verse 26: "Then the captain went with the officers *and* brought them without violence, so that they might not be stoned.... [at the end of the day they were still afraid of the people because there were many] ...for they feared the people"—*very clearly!*

They feared *the people*; they didn't fear God. They did not have those words. These are some false teachers who were preventing the words of God to be preached. They put Him in prison. Why? Because they were not with them. They were not with their organization. They were not taught by them and sponsored by them, and all of that. ***But they still fear the people; they did not fear God!***

Verse 27: “And they brought them in *and* set them before the Sanhedrin. And the high priest asked them, saying, ‘Did we not order you by a *direct* command not to teach in this name?’” (vs 27-28).

Sounds like some ministers in the past that we’ve heard the direct commands and top down government.

Verse 28: “...And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, with *the* purpose of bringing this man’s blood upon us.’

- they were rejecting God
- they were rejecting Jesus Christ

They were not hearing the words that He spoke and that He inspired them to preach.

Verse 29: “But Peter and the apostles answered *and* said, ‘**We are obligated to obey God rather than men.**’” *But that’s*:

- ***IF*** we’re worshipping God in Spirit and Truth
- ***IF*** we’re doing this right, which the apostles were

Not of our own devices!

Verse 30: “The God of our fathers raised up Jesus Whom you killed *by* hanging *Him* on a tree.”

They were not afraid of telling it like this! That’s what happened, they hang Him. The high priest condemn Jesus to death.

Verse 31: “Him has God exalted by His right hand *to be* a Prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel. And we are His witnesses of these things, as *is* also the Holy Spirit, **which God has given to those who obey Him**” (vs 31-32).

- obey Him in Spirit and in Truth
- worship Him in Spirit and in Truth
- obey all the things that God wants
- for us in His Word (Prov. 4)

That’s how we can worship Him in Spirit and in Truth!

IF we’re doing those things that we read in Prov. 4. He’s also giving us His Spirit ***IF*** we are obeying Him. ***IF*** we are obeying Him humbly, because that’s the only way to learn from God, ***obeying Him!***

We have to trust the process, because don’t let anybody say that the work of God is all the magazines or TV programs or outreach or whatever; that’s not the work of God. That might be the work of the ministry of an organization.

The work of God is within us! It’s a transformation of our mind and of our heart. ***It’s our transformation into the image of Jesus Christ! That’s the true work of God!*** It’s in each one of us, but it has to come by the Word and by the Spirit so that we can worship God the Father, through Jesus Christ, ***in Spirit and in Truth!*** It has to be according to the words that are written.

Isaiah 8:11: “For thus the LORD spoke to me with a strong hand, and warned me against walking in the way of this people, saying, ‘Do not say, “A conspiracy!” to everything of which this people says, “A conspiracy!” And **do not fear their fear, nor be afraid**’” (vs 11-12).

People were afraid ***because they were not obeying God!*** They were not listening to His words. They were going against, they were entering into that path; they were fully in that path that goes astray. That’s where they were. They were afraid.

So everything was a conspiracy because when you have a guilty conscience, everything’s going happen to you. You’re afraid of everything that might happen, because you know you’ve done something that you shouldn’t have done. That’s what happened.

“...And do not fear their fear, nor be afraid.”

Who is He talking to? Those who listen to Him. This is what God is telling us to do right now, to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

Verse 13: “The LORD of hosts, Him shall you sanctify, and *let* Him *be* your fear, and let Him be your dread.”

It has to be what He tells us to do and, and be warned by Him through His commandments and His Laws. But not only is He our fear and our dread:

Verse 14: “And He shall be a sanctuary *for* you...”—***a place of refuge!*** Like David said in his distress, You are my refuge.

“...He shall be a sanctuary for you...”:

- a place of protection
- a tower of defense
- a rock of salvation

“...—but for a Stone of Stumbling, and for a Rock of Offence to both the houses of Israel, and for a trap and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem” (v 14).

Why? ***Because they don’t believe in Him!*** They never believed His words in the Old Testament or in the New. Some did, but the people at large, the people of Israel did not do that. That’s

why they had to go captive. That was the judgment of God.

Verse 15: “And many among them shall stumble and fall and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.”

But God is saying this; this shouldn't surprise them. He's telling us what to do. He's telling us that to draw close to God and to fear Him and have Him as our sanctuary, and we are now the Temple of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 16: “Bind up the testimony, seal the Law among My disciples.”

A prophecy of what was going to happen with the disciples writing and canonizing the New Testament. This is what we have to do:

Verse 17: “And I will wait upon the LORD, who hides His face from the house of Jacob; and I will trust in Him.”

IF we are worshipping Him in Spirit and in Truth. He will be all these things to us.

- we will fear Him
- we will love Him
- He will be our place of refuge
- we will trust Him with all our heart because we love what He tells us
- we love His ways and we want to live them
 - ✓ not just understand them
 - ✓ not just know them

A lot of people know them. A lot of people can quote Scripture very well, better than us. That doesn't mean:

- that they have understanding
- that they have wisdom
- that they have the Holy Spirit of God

It could be, ***but it has to be according to what the, the Word of God says! We have to trust in Him!***

Verse 18: “Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given me *are* for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, Who dwells in Mount Zion.” *That's us!. We are His children!*

Verse 19: “And when they shall say to you, ‘Seek unto them that have familiar spirits and to wizards who peep and mutter...’”

That's what they're saying. They, they were so ingrained in those ways walking away from God. They were not testing the spirits. That's what the apostles say, ***test the spirits!*** Because it has to be in Spirit and in Truth, not just a little bit of Truth, not

even just most of the Truth. It has to be full Truth and the Spirit of God, which He gives to those who obey Him!

“...*but* should not a people seek unto their God?... [that's what we are to do] ...*Should* the dead *be sought* on behalf of the living?” (v 19).

The Bible says that the dead know nothing. Why would the dead be sought if they know nothing? They're asleep. We know why, ***because there's evil spirits that presents themselves as whoever was in the grave!***

We have to test the spirits whether they are from God or not, or if they're evil spirits. The test is here in:

Verse 20: “To the Law and to the Testimony! If they do not speak according to this Word... [the Word of God, the Bible] ...*it is* because *there is* no light in them.”

And if there's no Light in them, they're going stumble. We just read that in Prov. 4. They know not at what they stumble because there is no Light in them. They don't know where they're going.

We have to be, we have to be careful that we are worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth!

2-John 5: “And now I beseech you, lady, not as though I am writing a new commandment to you, but that which we have *observed* from *the* beginning, that we love one another. And this is the love *of God*: that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, exactly as you heard from *the* beginning, that you might walk in it” (vs 5-6).

This is a commandment. Exactly as you heard from the beginning, that you might walk in it and he's telling us:

- this is what's going protect you
- this is what's going keep you
- this is guarding the door of your mind
- this is guarding the door of your heart
- this is getting wisdom, getting understanding
- this is walking in the way that God is leading us in

Verse 7: “Because many deceivers have entered into the world; those who do not confess *that* Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh *of true believers*. **This is the spirit of the deceiver and the antichrist.**”

This is referring again to those who do not believe that we have the Holy Spirit within us,

because God made that promise and God gave it in Acts 2, and we have it today.

But there are many deceivers that do not believe that, and they do not confess that Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh of true believers, They believe in the trinity. So it's only three in one and that's it! There's no Family of God. It completely cuts it off. "...**This is the spirit of the deceiver and the antichrist.**"

Then John gives us more warnings here:

Verse 8: "Watch out for yourselves in order that we may not lose the things we have accomplished..."—*because we have to worship God in Spirit and in Truth!*

We have to come to the Word of God so; "...but that we may receive a full reward" (v 8).

Verse 9: "**Anyone who transgresses and does not continue in the doctrine of Christ...** [as we read, listen to my words for I give you good doctrine] ...**does not have God.** *But* the one who continues in the doctrine of Christ **has both the Father and the Son.**"

This is very, very important. When we look at the other two main religions that are based on the Bible or part of the Bible, in the case of the Jews, they don't have either. ***They do not have God, because the God that they profess to know and worship is the One Who came and they rejected!***

And when it comes to Christianity, the God that they say they worship is the One Who spoke all the things in the Old Testament, and ***they reject that, they reject that God!*** They don't even know the Father. They only know Jesus. and *he's a false Jesus* if they're not teaching what Jesus taught, that doctrine of Christ, that good doctrine the God is giving us, that's what he says.

Verse 10: "If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine—the doctrine of Christ, all the words of God that match perfectly the Old Testament—do not receive him into *your* house, and do not say to him, 'Welcome!'"

Sometimes we say 'welcome' through the screen, or to giving them time of our day to listen to some of their doctrines.

Sometimes it's okay to sharpen ourselves and see if we can actually distinguish what's Truth from what's error. But it takes spiritual maternity, and it takes personal responsibility. We have to worship God in Spirit ***and*** in Truth.

Verse 11: "For anyone who says, 'Welcome!' to him is partaking in his evil works."

We have to be careful of this! That's why we have to believe what God said. We are to worship God in Spirit ***and*** in Truth.

Luke 12:42: And the Lord said, 'Who then is the wise and faithful steward...'

True pastors are stewards; overseers, they don't Lord over with top-down authority; a steward is an overseer.

"...whom the lord shall put in charge of his household, to give *to each one* the portion of food in season? Blessed *is* that servant whom the lord, when he comes, shall find so doing. Of a truth, I tell you, he will set him over all his possessions. But if that servant shall say in his heart, 'My lord delays *his* coming,' and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidservants, and to be gluttonous and become drunk" (vs 42-45).

It sounds a lot like Laodicea! You are rice and increased with goods!

Verse 46: "The lord of that servant will come in a day that he does not expect, and in an hour that he does not know, and will cut him asunder, and will appoint his portion with the unbelievers. And that servant who knew the will of his lord, but did not prepare, nor did according to his will..." (vs 46-47).

What did we read today? To do according to His Word. In order to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth in the Holy Spirit of God.

"...shall be beaten with many *stripes*" (v 47). *The one who didn't know the will of his Lord!* But we do know the will of our Lord!

Verse 48: "But the one who did not know, and did *things* worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For to whomever much has been given, from him shall much be required; and to whom much has been committed, from him they will demand the more."

This is us! We have been given so much. We have been given the whole Bible, the whole Truth of God, but we have to focus on worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth; we have to do this.

We need to do this because we, we, we live in a very, very dangerous time in all kinds of ways. It's not only how degenerate the society is how perverted it is and how the entire society is really ***walking away from God completely*** and going after their own devices where there's very little of moral law left in this country, and honestly, around the world.

We have to focus on the Word of God, pay attention to His words, and keep His Law in the midst of our heart, and we have to do this.

Ephesians 6:16: “Besides all *these*, take up **the shield of the faith**... [we need that more than ever] ...with which you will have the power to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one... [we need that shield more than ever] ...and put on the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God” (vs 16-17). *We have to be ready!*

Verse 18: “Praying at all times with all prayer and supplication in *the Spirit*...”—*because we have the Spirit of God!*

It’s together with the spirit of in men and on us, that we can really, really worship God in Spirit and in Truth.

“...and in this very thing being watchful with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints” (v 18). *That’s what we have to be doing!*

Verse 19: “And for me, that boldness of speech may be given to me so that I may open my mouth to make known the mystery of the Gospel...”

Because we cannot know it’s a mystery **unless God reveals it to us** through His Word. Pray for all the elders and teachers that they be given boldness of speech. To proclaim these things so that those who are truly seeking God and Spirit and Truth really come to His true servants that are preaching the Truth and not to the deceivers that the Apostle John talked about.

This is really what we have before us. We have this decision to make whether we’re going to worship God in Spirit and in Truth, or whether we are just going to have a cafeteria of our beliefs and our morals and like the world does. ‘I’m not religious, but I’m spiritual,’ that kind of thing. But we have to be wholehearted in worshiping God in Spirit and in Truth.

Joshua 24:14—*Joshua is telling the people of Israel*: “Now, therefore, fear the LORD, and serve Him in sincerity and Truth...” *That’s another thing, sincerity!*

In Spirit and in Truth, but here it says, “...in sincerity and Truth...”

“...And put away the gods, which your fathers served on the other side of the River, and in Egypt, and serve the LORD” (v 14). *Stop doing that! Cut it all off!*

Verse 15: “And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served

beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you live. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

Brethren, let’s all make that ***decision that each one of us will worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 4:23-27
- 2) 1 John 4:1-6
- 3) Proverbs 4:1-2, 4-8, 11-14, 18-27
- 4) Acts 5:14-32
- 5) Isaiah 8:11-20
- 6) 2 John 1:5-11
- 7) Luke 12:42-48
- 8) Ephesians 6:16-19
- 9) Joshua 24:14-15

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 15
- Psalm 19
- Psalm 1

EE:bo
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