

**Introduction:**

This lesson is about Jesus before he died. This lesson is a story about Jesus and what he was all about before he was crucified. This lesson is the story of what Jesus is all about, was all about, and will forever be all about. This lesson is about Jesus and his task while he was on earth – this is about his mission – for you, and for me.

Listed below are some different versions of what Jesus said to the woman at the well in John 4; indeed, you may have a different version but they all say the same thing. Pick one out. Note what it says, better, how it says what it says about Jesus, us, and his mission.

Note: this is an eschatological story – means it could have happened then and could happen now as there is no difference between the woman and Jesus, then at the well, or now between you and me, and Jesus speaking to us at our well - with the same words.

**THE Bible Story:** (of course a couple versions would add but I like hearing the story.)

**New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)**

<sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup> You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. <sup>23</sup> But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. <sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” <sup>25</sup> The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.” <sup>26</sup> Jesus said to her, “I am he, the one who is speaking to you.”

**King James Version (KJV)**

<sup>21</sup> Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

<sup>22</sup> Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

<sup>23</sup> But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

<sup>24</sup> God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

<sup>25</sup> The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

<sup>26</sup> Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

### **J.B. Phillips NT (PHILLIPS)**

<sup>21-24</sup> “Believe me,” returned Jesus, “the time is coming when worshipping the Father will not be a matter of ‘on this hill-side’ or ‘in Jerusalem’. Nowadays you are worshipping with your eyes shut. We Jews are worshipping with our eyes open, for the salvation of mankind is to come from our race. Yet the time is coming, yes, and has already come, when true worshippers will worship in spirit and in reality. Indeed, the Father looks for men who will worship him like that. God is spirit, and those who worship him can only worship in spirit and in reality.”

<sup>25</sup> “Of course I know that Messiah is coming,” returned the woman, “you know, the one who is called Christ. When he comes he will make everything plain to us.”

<sup>26</sup> “I am Christ speaking to you now,” said Jesus.

### **Living Bible (TLB)**

<sup>21-24</sup> Jesus replied, “The time is coming, ma’am, when we will no longer be concerned about whether to worship the Father here or in Jerusalem. For it’s not *where* we worship that counts, but *how* we worship—is our worship spiritual and real? Do we have the Holy Spirit’s help? For God is Spirit, and we must have his help to worship as we should. The Father wants this kind of worship from us. But you Samaritans know so little about him, worshipping blindly, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes to the world through the Jews.”

<sup>25</sup> The woman said, “Well, at least I know that the Messiah will come—the one they call Christ—and when he does, he will explain everything to us.”

<sup>26</sup> Then Jesus told her, “I am the Messiah!”

### **The Message (MSG)**

<sup>21-23</sup> “Believe me, woman, the time is coming when you Samaritans will worship the Father neither here at this mountain nor there in Jerusalem. You worship guessing in the dark; we Jews worship in the clear light of day. God’s way of salvation is made available through the Jews. But the time is coming—it has, in fact, come—when what you’re called will not matter and where you go to worship will not matter.

<sup>23-24</sup> “It’s who you are and the way you live that count before God. Your worship must engage your spirit in the pursuit of truth. That’s the kind of people the Father is out looking for: those who are simply and honestly *themselves* before him in their worship. God is sheer being itself—Spirit. Those who worship him must do it out of their very being, their spirits, their true selves, in adoration.” <sup>25</sup> The woman said, “I don’t know about that. I do know that the Messiah is coming. When he arrives, we’ll get the whole story.”

<sup>26</sup> “I am he,” said Jesus. “You don’t have to wait any longer or look any further.”

### **Contemporary English Version (CEV)**

<sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her:

Believe me, the time is coming when you won't worship the Father either on this mountain or in Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup> You Samaritans don't really know the one you worship. But we Jews do know the God we worship, and by using us, God will save the world. <sup>23</sup> But a time is coming, and it is already here! Even now the true worshipers are being led by the Spirit to worship the Father according to the truth. These are the ones the Father is seeking to worship him. <sup>24</sup> God is Spirit, and those who worship God must be led by the Spirit to worship him according to the truth.

<sup>25</sup> The woman said, "I know that the Messiah will come. He is the one we call Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

<sup>26</sup> "I am that one," Jesus told her, "and I am speaking to you now."

### **Common English Bible (CEB)**

<sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the time is coming when you and your people will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup> You and your people worship what you don't know; we worship what we know because salvation is from the Jews. <sup>23</sup> But the time is coming—and is here!—when true worshippers will worship in spirit and truth. The Father looks for those who worship him this way. <sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and it is necessary to worship God in spirit and truth."

<sup>25</sup> The woman said, "I know that the Messiah is coming, the one who is called the Christ. When he comes, he will teach everything to us."

<sup>26</sup> Jesus said to her, "I Am—the one who speaks with you."

### **Living Bible (TLB)**

<sup>21-24</sup> Jesus replied, "The time is coming, ma'am, when we will no longer be concerned about whether to worship the Father here or in Jerusalem. For it's not *where* we worship that counts, but *how* we worship—is our worship spiritual and real? Do we have the Holy Spirit's help? For God is Spirit, and we must have his help to worship as we should. The Father wants this kind of worship from us. But you Samaritans know so little about him, worshiping blindly, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes to the world through the Jews."

<sup>25</sup> The woman said, "Well, at least I know that the Messiah will come—the one they call Christ—and when he does, he will explain everything to us."

<sup>26</sup> Then Jesus told her, "I am the Messiah!"

## International Children's Bible (ICB)

<sup>21</sup> Jesus said, "Believe me, woman. **The time is coming** when you will not have to be in Jerusalem or on this mountain to worship the Father. <sup>22</sup> You Samaritans worship what you don't understand. We Jews understand what we worship. Salvation comes from the Jews. <sup>23</sup> **The time is coming when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. That time is now here.** And these are the kinds of worshipers the Father wants. <sup>24</sup> **God is spirit. Those who worship God must worship in spirit and truth.**"

<sup>25</sup> The woman said, "I know that the Messiah is coming." (Messiah is the One called Christ.) "When the Messiah comes, he will explain everything to us."

<sup>26</sup> Then Jesus said, **"He is talking to you now. I am he."**

### **Background of this Bible Story**

Have said for about fifty years this is my most favorite story in the Bible. Have commented more than once "I would give anything to be that woman and look into Jesus' eyes and have Him say **'I am the one.'**"

Why?

Because this is all that is needed. When Jesus says "I am the one you are looking for" there is nothing else left to do but get up and live your life. Actually this is what he says to the woman **"He is talking to you now, I am he."** – This is the content of the Christian faith in the Fourth Gospel – and so in 20:31 "these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ."

This is what he says to us now. Same words.

**"The time is coming and is here now."**

**"Lead by the Spirit to worship the Father."**

**"The time is here! Worship in spirit and truth."**

**"God is spirit, and it is necessary to worship God in spirit and truth."**

Jesus, in doing his job/task/work tells us our job/task/work is to worship God in spirit and truth. Pretty simple. Go back and break down your favorite version and see how Jesus says:

\* The time is now.

\* God will save the world by using us.

\* True worshipers are being led by the Spirit to worship the Father.

\* God is Spirit.

The woman said “When he comes, we’ll get the whole story.”

The key words are “When he comes.”

The answer is now **“I THAT SPEAK UNTO THEE, AM HE!”**

### **Prologue**

The story of the woman at the well, for some of us the greatest story in the Bible, is a story. Add me to the list “generations of believers have been deeply religiously moved by this story and drawn to this woman.”

This story is as true today as it was when Jesus made his first great revelatory in John 4:26.

Jesus said in this story all that needs to be said to the true believers of God, Jesus, the Spirit, and the truth.

Nothing else is required. We do not have to wait for compelling and ecclesiastical persuasion, social creeds, the second coming, 1,000 years, the rapture, the Kingdom of God, or anything else. This story is it.

Oh wait. There is something. I forgot to include the ending of the most compelling and telling story in the Bible – the story that tells it all – and this is the woman’s response. You remember, she left! She even forgot her water pot! She left and went straight back to her village!

What did she do?

We are now talking about the first real convert, the first real disciple, the first real apostle. What did she do?

She acted just like Jesus did. She spread the Word, the Message, the Truth, the Spirit.

Course, being a woman she was a bit coyish about her discovery of the “now”ness of Jesus’ and she moved into her new recruits with a coy smile and the bated question “Could this be the Messiah?”

### **Easter**

This is my story.

What is yours?