

Another crucial passage that informs our worship comes from John 4. Here we see Jesus fulfill a great moment of ministry in conversing and transforming the life of the Samaritan woman. Over the course of their talk, Jesus diagnoses the exact condition of her heart and performs a casual, “low-key” surgical transplant in her heart without anesthesia; only patience.

After hearing about living water and then asking for some from Jesus, in typical human fashion, she attempts to dodge Jesus’ truth-telling regarding her personal life’s failed marriages. She deflects the conversation towards Jesus’ status as a “prophet” and about worship, and completely away from her skeleton closet that she thought was completely sealed off. Not from Jesus. Still, He follows her train of thought as she talks about the *appropriate location* for worship; whether on that mountain or this mountain. Without realizing her messy closet now swung wide open before Jesus with her back turned to it, in godly fashion, He is able to gently circle back around to His governing point for His visit with this woman: her salvation.

Inside any kind of human relationship, whether a romantic or a spiritual one, there exists our *obvious* selfish disposition in need of repair before an authentic relationship is realized. In terms of our spiritual relationship, our ability to offer true godly worship hinges upon specific conditions inside our nature. Worship in *spirit* and in truth. Upon his deathbed, the thief on the cross exemplified what this meant: in the company of Christ, he experienced a changed nature about him despite his crumbling body pinned to the cross beside Jesus. In his peculiar statement he confessed Jesus’ messianic identity who possesses the saving and liberating power of God.

Both confessions of the woman and thief proved liberating from sin with unafraid enthusiasm to testify about the person of Jesus. Indeed, Jesus taught in John 4 that without supremely confessing ‘He is Lord’ and that our sins prove we are not, we’ll be prone to idolatry whether in our singing or service “to God”. Our personal worship and leadership will sour without worship rooted in humility and informed by the knowledge and focus of the truth. We’ll essentially be held hostage by our captivating self-infatuation, which is the DNA of a failing worship ministry.