

John 4:20-24 "Worship God in Spirit and in Truth"

JOH 4:19-24 "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. 20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." 21 Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, 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 spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

As we've looked at this portion of God's word over the last few weeks we've seen this Samaritan woman's hesitancy to accept the kindness and mercy of Jesus who has extended living water to her, which is nothing short of eternal life from the hand of God.

She has essentially scoffed at the idea that a Jew would be interested in her well-being let alone her eternal destiny, and she has expressed that attitude in a response to Christ's clear offer of spiritual water when she insists that physical water is what she wants.

JOH 4:15 "The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

But this is where Jesus begins to cut to the heart of the matter as He speaks to her heart and sin problem.

JOH 4:16-19 "He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back." 17 "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. 18 The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true." 19 "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet."

It isn't until the all-knowing God and Savior addresses her sin that she begins to realize that she is hearing a word from God as she responds, "I can see that you are a prophet."

A prophet is one sent from God to give a message or reveal something to men, and she understands that this Jew has been sent

from God to speak to her and now she is apparently ready to hear from God.

But in her admission that Jesus is sent from God she wants to justify herself and in a sense debate the issue the Jews have with the Samaritans which is, who is correct in their true worship of God? And this is where we pick up with our text this morning.

JOH 4:20 "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

Now keep in mind what is happening here. She realizes that she is in the presence of a man sent from God. She no longer denies that. But she then brings up the issue of worshiping God which is something she hasn't been engaged in, probably in years.

This is sort of a defense mechanism people will use to justify their sin. As I've said before I find it fascinating when people whom I've worked with over the years, since the Lord called me to the ministry, find out that I'm a Pastor.

I mean, on the job I'm just an employee like them. I clean toilets, I repair windows, I take care of the buildings and do all the things a maintenance person does. And when a new person comes on board I don't wear a T-shirt with the words, "God's Prophet" on the back.

In fact, I make it a point just to be real with them as any person should be with other people. But eventually we start talking about each other's families and likes and dislikes. And before long they find out that I'm a servant of Jesus Christ. I tell them I'm a Pastor of a local church in town.

And it's amazing, at that moment, the transformation that comes over them. I've had people want to repent of their language when they find out. I've had people all of a sudden want to tell me how they used to go to church, or how they've got a relative who goes to church, all in an effort to make themselves feel less threatened by the truth that they really want nothing to do with God.

It's as though they want me to know that they're really not that bad of a person. And in a sense this is exactly what this Samaritan woman is doing when out of nowhere she wants to talk about spiritual things regarding worship when up to this point she wanted nothing to do with spiritual things.

Look at the text.

JOH 4:20 "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

She is essentially saying that, 'we Samaritans are a worshipping people of the one true God, but you Jews have tried to make us feel guilty as we worship God on Mount Gerizim, so that no matter how spiritual we want to be you would never consider us a holy people.'

With our Lord being a Jew she is very sensitive to the way Jesus would view her spirituality, despite the fact that she is not a worshiper of God either by the standards of the Jews or the Samaritans.

At this point she realizes that Jesus is truly one sent from God and she wants to make her case that if she were to accept the words of this prophet she would have a difficult time in doing so since she would not be allowed to go to Jerusalem as a Samaritan and worship God there.

And since she realizes that this prophet would not accept Gerizim as a legitimate place to worship God, she's between a rock and hard place. But notice that she is using her own reasoning as it relates to worshipping God.

JOH 4:20 "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain..."

The fathers she is referring to are Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They are, after all, carrying on this conversation right there at the well of Jacob, whom she called father in verse 12.

She is making the point that she has a legitimate argument that the Samaritans are well within their rights to worship God at the temple which is on Mount Gerizim, which, by the way, both Jesus and this woman could see from the well.

A little history sheds some light on this. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had no such restrictions when it came to worshipping God. When they came to a place where they wanted to honor the Lord they simply built an altar and worshiped.

GEN 12:6-7 "Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. 7 The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him."

By the way, this raises the issue of God's temple and the different places in history where we see God's temple as the site where God resides with His people and their subsequent worship of God in the context of the temple.

G.K. Beale in his book, "A New Testament Biblical Theology" raises and intriguing biblical premise that the Jewish temple found in Jerusalem was but a mere shadow of the original earthly temple which was located in the Garden of Eden, where man was created to meet with God and worship Him there with the express purpose of extending that Temple of God's presence over the entire world.

As there were three distinct sections to Israel's temple: the outer court, the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, Beale makes the argument throughout his book that "one may be able to perceive an increasing threefold gradation in holiness from outside the garden proceeding inward: the outermost region surrounding the garden is related to God and is "very good" (Gen. 1:31) in that it is God's creation (= the outer court); the garden is a sacred space separate from the outer world (= the holy place), where God's priestly servant worships God by obeying Him, by cultivating and guarding; Eden is where God dwells (= the holy of holies) as the source of both physical and spiritual life (symbolized by the waters)." (Pgs.620-21)

Before the fall the man was commissioned by God to be both priest and king to promote, protect and expand God's holiness throughout the earth as he ruled and reigned with God as both man and woman was to be fruitful, multiply and subdue the earth.

**Genesis 1:28** <sup>28</sup> God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

This was the original temple, if you will, where God dwelled with His people and commissioned them to possess and rule over the land.

Israel's temple in Jerusalem was the focal point of where God met with His people and commissioned them to possess and rule over the land, that which was promised to them in the Garden, but was lost in man's rebellion, only to be restored in the future.

The Temple in Jerusalem was never intended by God to be anything more than a shadow of the original Temple in Eden that

was promised to Adam and Eve after the fall, and even which Abraham longed for, knowing that no structure made with human hands could fulfill this Promised Land.

**Hebrews 11:9-10** <sup>9</sup> By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign *land*, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; <sup>10</sup> for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

Abraham did not live to see his people possess the land of promise and he did not live to personally see this promise fulfilled even though he lived in the land. But Abraham knew something that most Jews either ignored or were ignorant of and that is that when Moses was given the law by God to build a tabernacle in the wilderness it was never meant to be anything more than a copy of the real tabernacle of God which was heavenly in nature.

By heavenly, I don't mean an other-worldly temple, but a temple whose architect and builder is God and whose plan is to build a kingdom on a future earth where He would dwell with His people. The one who would secure this future Kingdom on a new earth is none other than the King/Priest, the last Adam, Jesus Christ, who came to fulfill what the first king/priest, the first Adam, failed to do and which future Jewish priests also failed to accomplish.

**Hebrews 8:3-13** <sup>3</sup> For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; so it is necessary that this *high priest* also have something to offer. <sup>4</sup> Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since *there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law*; <sup>5</sup> *who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "SEE," He says, "THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN."* <sup>6</sup> But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. <sup>7</sup> For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. <sup>8</sup> For finding fault with them, He says, "BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE LORD, WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH; <sup>9</sup> NOT LIKE THE COVENANT WHICH I MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS ON THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT; FOR THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT, AND I DID

NOT CARE FOR THEM, SAYS THE LORD. <sup>10</sup> "FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. <sup>11</sup> "AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,' FOR ALL WILL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM. <sup>12</sup> "FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES, AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE." <sup>13</sup> *When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.*

What has been made obsolete in the first covenant of promise has been fulfilled in Christ. Therefore everything in the future must of necessity promote that future tabernacle that was lost in the garden. And this tabernacle must necessarily be made, not with human hands, but by the hand of God Himself as the ultimate architect and builder.

**Mark 14:58** <sup>58</sup> "We heard Him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.'"

This is a direct fulfillment of the prophecy given to Daniel.

**Daniel 2:44-45** <sup>44</sup> "In the days of those kings *the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed*, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever. <sup>45</sup> *"Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future*; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy."

The eternal Kingdom of God and the Tabernacle of God are one and the same in that the Kingdom of God is the place where God the Son, Jesus Christ, will tabernacle with His people.

**Revelation 21:3-4** <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, *the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them,* <sup>4</sup> and He will wipe away every tear

from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

Jesus Christ is that tabernacle made without hands and He has fulfilled that prophetic word, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.'"

To suggest that the tabernacle associated with the nation of Israel in the city of Jerusalem is to be rebuilt at some future time to fulfill OT prophecy undermines the very nature of what tabernacle the prophets of old and Jesus Christ Himself had in mind.

Speaking to the nation of Israel the prophet Ezekiel makes it clear that what God spoke to the descendants of Abraham went well beyond any aspect of either a physical progeny of Abraham or a temple made with hands in the city of Jerusalem.

**Ezekiel 37:25-28** <sup>25</sup> "They will live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and *they will live on it, they, and their sons and their sons' sons, forever*; and *David My servant will be their prince forever*. <sup>26</sup> "I will make a *covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in their midst forever*. <sup>27</sup> "My dwelling place also will be with them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people. <sup>28</sup> "And the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, *when My sanctuary is in their midst forever.*""

To suggest that an everlasting covenant, (the new covenant in Christ), has anything to do with reestablishing an old covenant temple in a millennial reign with Christ in a sin filled, cursed world, is to miss the eschatological language of the prophets as they pointed to the everlasting kingdom of God that is clearly fulfilled in Christ as He is the new tabernacle that was raised to life three days after His resurrection, just as the disciples realized.

**John 2:19-22** <sup>19</sup> Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." <sup>20</sup> The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" <sup>21</sup> But He was speaking of the temple of His body. <sup>22</sup> So *when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken*.

And this is precisely the point that is raised by Beale that the future tabernacle that is promised to Israel is a tabernacle not made with

human hands, just as the first tabernacle, (that of Eden), was not made with human hands.

Both tabernacles were, and will be, places of worship of the one true God by a people who are called into existence by God for His own glory. And this picture of the tabernacle in Israel, which is a reminder of a Promised Land of milk and honey that Eden provided, but was lost due to man's rebellion.

**Isaiah 51:3** <sup>3</sup> Indeed, the LORD will comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places. *And her wilderness He will make like Eden, And her desert like the garden of the LORD;* Joy and gladness will be found in her, Thanksgiving and sound of a melody.

Isaiah reminds Israel that this future tabernacle where God resides with His people in righteousness will only come after this present world with its sin and curse are destroyed only to be replaced with His everlasting salvation of people called by Him.

**Isaiah 51:6** <sup>6</sup> "Lift up your eyes to the sky, Then look to the earth beneath; *For the sky will vanish like smoke, And the earth will wear out like a garment And its inhabitants will die in like manner; But My salvation will be forever, And My righteousness will not wane.*

This is precisely what Isaiah reports in chapter 65 when he announces the good news of a world that no longer possess the things associated with the curse as God removes the old and replaces all things with the new that He alone can create.

**Isaiah 65:17-19** <sup>17</sup> "For behold, *I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind.* <sup>18</sup> "But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; *For behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing And her people for gladness.* <sup>19</sup> "I will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; And *there will no longer be heard in her The voice of weeping and the sound of crying.*

This is the same new earth or tabernacle that John records for us in the book of Revelation.

**Revelation 21:1** <sup>NAU</sup> Then *I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away,* and there is no longer *any* sea.

The whole point that Jesus is raising in our text this morning, as He speaks to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, is that He is the living water that flows out of the temple and the worship of God takes place wherever the people of God reside who are in Christ.

This is why, for example, when we read of what appears to be the reestablishment of a physical temple that Ezekiel addresses, it must be placed within the context of the more clear passages that have to do with the fulfillment of that temple image.

Ezekiel goes to great lengths to give us a picture of a future temple in the last part of his vision and uses language that every Jew would have understood regarding the temple and its workings among the people of God for the express purpose of coming into the presence of God.

The temple he describes has never been rebuilt and in fact there is no command anywhere in the book of Ezekiel to rebuild what he describes, only that God will establish this temple.

**Ezekiel 47:1** <sup>NAU</sup> Then he brought me back to the door of the house; and behold, water was flowing from under the threshold of the house toward the east, for the house faced east. And the water was flowing down from under, from the right side of the house, from south of the altar.

**Ezekiel 47:5** <sup>5</sup> Again he measured a thousand; *and it was* a river that I could not ford, for the water had risen, *enough* water to swim in, a river that could not be forded.

**Ezekiel 47:12** <sup>12</sup> "By the river on its bank, on one side and on the other, will grow all *kinds of* trees for food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. They will bear every month because their water flows from the sanctuary, and their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing."

This depiction of the temple that Ezekiel describes is a vision of a future temple. This is the very temple that is described in the book of Revelation.

**Revelation 22:1-3** <sup>NAU</sup> Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, <sup>2</sup> in the middle of its street. ***On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*** <sup>3</sup> There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of

God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him;

John is describing what Ezekiel was shown by God and the similarities are uncanny. And we know that John is describing the temple because in Revelation 21 he makes it clear.

**Revelation 21:2-3** <sup>NAU 2</sup> And *I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem*, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, *the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them*,

John makes it clear that the holy city, the New Jerusalem that he mentions in verse 2 of Rev.21, is part of a vision that is not describing an actual physical structure in Jerusalem, but rather is first and foremost describing in symbolic language the actual bride of Christ.

**Revelation 21:9-11** <sup>9</sup> Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, "*Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.*" <sup>10</sup> And *he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God*, <sup>11</sup> having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper.

John is using the same type of symbolic language as Ezekiel to describe a literal reality; that of a physical people known as the children of Abraham, not necessarily physical descendants of Abraham, but all people, both Jew and Gentile who have the faith of Abraham.

**Romans 4:14-18** <sup>14</sup> For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; <sup>15</sup> for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation. <sup>16</sup> For this *reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all*, <sup>17</sup> (as it is written, "A FATHER OF MANY NATIONS HAVE I MADE YOU") in the presence of Him whom he believed, *even* God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist. <sup>18</sup> In hope against hope he believed, so that

he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, "SO SHALL YOUR DESCENDANTS BE."

The true Israel that is to inherit the land and the Israel that is to inherit the blessings of God found in Abraham is the same Israel that is joined with both Jew and Gentile to be formed into what John depicts as the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God.

We who are in Christ are the city, the bride, the wife of the Lamb and this city has no need of anything formed by human hands as Jesus Christ, who has destroyed the first temple, has become our temple and we need no one but Him. And this is exactly what John says.

**Revelation 21:21-24** <sup>21</sup> And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. <sup>22</sup> *I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.* <sup>23</sup> And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. <sup>24</sup> The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.

Again, John is not describing a physical literal temple, but the presence of the Lord among His people who outshines any other man made attempt to approach the living God and Savior who is the light of the world.

I know people in the church want to take a passage like Rev.21:3 and try and make a case that in the new heavens and new earth there will be no moon or sun. This could not be further from the truth. John is not describing a new cosmological paradigm for the future physical world that God will restore, but is using symbolic language that is clearly describing the bride in relationship to the bridegroom who is our light and all in all.

What I find fascinating in our text in John 4 is that Jesus is laying the groundwork for a future temple and a future city where worship will not be limited to any one place on earth, to a Samaritan.

Up to this point Jesus has not shared in the same detail regarding the fate of Jerusalem, as the focal point of worship, with any Jew. He shares it first with a woman whose background is dubious and

whose lineage is less than stellar, as far as the Jews were concerned.

This is not to suggest that the Jews should not have been aware that Jerusalem would be replaced by God in the future as the center of God's presence. The prophet Malachi made it clear to the Jews.

<sup>NAU</sup> **Malachi 1:11** "For from the rising of the sun even to its setting, My name *will be* great among the nations, and in every place incense is going to be offered to My name, and a grain offering *that is* pure; for My name *will be* great among the nations," says the LORD of hosts.

What was to be limited to the temple in Jerusalem regarding the practice of worship with incense and grain offerings is prophesied to be taking place among all the nations in the future. And this is the message that Jesus gives this Samaritan woman.

**John 4:21-24** <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. <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 an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. <sup>24</sup> "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

The entire system of worship that was limited to the Jews in the city of Jerusalem in the one location known as the temple of God was taken out of the way in one fell swoop with these words from Jesus.

The worship of the Father, and by extension, the worship of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, would not and could not be limited to a mountain in Samaria, nor in the city of Jerusalem, but would in fact be acceptable in every corner of the world.

To the extent that the Messiah was prophesied to be born of a virgin in the line of David necessarily means that the Messiah was to come from the Jews as Jesus points out in verse 22, but you'll notice that Jesus then moves from stating that salvation is from the Jews to true worshippers in verse 23 that expands those designated worshippers in Israel to include all peoples in the world like Samaritans.

The time in which this transition begins to take place is during the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ as He says that “an hour is coming *and now is*, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.”

Well, who are the true worshippers?

Those whose worship of the Father will not be limited to this mountain at Gerizim or in the city of Jerusalem. The true worshippers, all the nations whose faith is the same as Abraham’s, must be included.

And the clear implication is that the temple in Jerusalem, which symbolized the entire old covenant with all of its practices, will become obsolete, as it will have served its temporary function, according to the word of God, as the place where God met with His people.

**Hebrews 8:13** <sup>13</sup> When He said, "A new *covenant*," ***He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.***

Jesus is telling this Samaritan woman that people like her will not be limited to worshipping God at Gerizim or Jerusalem because He is the new temple at which all of God’s people will worship as we’ll see in some detail next time.

God transcends any physical place in the universe and therefore there is no place on earth and no law that restricts the people of God from coming into His presence. And this is what Jesus means when he points this out to the woman in verse 24.

**John 4:24** <sup>24</sup> "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Beale, in his “New Testament Biblical Theology” makes a valid point here about this verse in light of the fact that Jesus is making a clear delineation between worshipping according to the Law of Moses and worshipping according to the fulfillment of that law found in Christ, the Son of God.

He says, “to worship in spirit and truth is not a reference to “truly sincere” worshippers or worshippers who are “sincere in their spirit about the truth” (in which there is no capitalization), but is a reference to the Spirit who has come in fulfillment of the OT

promises. Accordingly, the first clause of 4:24 should be rendered “God is the Spirit” rather than “God is spirit.””

This entire discourse on the part of Jesus has to do with what is of the Spirit and what is of ceremony even when that ceremony was instituted by God through Moses. Because the Spirit of God is revealing through the Son that the true tabernacle is here.

Therefore, if we are to worship God as the Spirit we must worship Him as the One who has given the Spirit who testifies to the fulfillment of the truth of God’s word that the Messiah was not just promised according to the truth but has now arrived.

The temple in Jerusalem was a temporary place to announce the coming of the true tabernacle. In this way, Jesus Christ was not simply the fulfillment of what that earthly temple symbolized but is the reason the temple existed at all, as it reveals Him.

Edmund P. Clowney from his article, “The Final Temple” puts it well.

“It is not so much that Christ fulfills what the temple means; rather Christ is the meaning for which the temple existed. As the symbolic language of the temple cultus continues to be used for Christ and for the heavenly temple of his eternal ministry, we know that our understanding is being drawn from earthly things to heavenly, from the creature to the Creator.”

Therefore, from the perspective of this Samaritan woman in our text, everything has changed. But what has not changed is God’s expectation of being worshipped by His people according to that same truth as the Spirit has revealed it.

Worshipping God should involve our minds, our souls and our hearts. Worshipping God should allow our spirits to ascend to the throne of God and by faith know that He is there to receive our worship and that it pleases Him. These are the kinds of worshipers, Jesus says, that the Father seeks, those "with a peaceful heart and a rejoicing spirit." (A.W. Pink)

May our lives demonstrate an attitude of worship, not just on Sunday mornings, but every moment of our lives. In this way, people will see that we are a worshipping people and that our God is worthy of such adoration.

He is after all, Creator, God and Savior. There is none like Him.  
Praise God!