

## “Worship...in Spirit & Truth”

The Ministry of the Word (pt. 1)

January 5, 2025

2025 Series Intro ...The first week of a 52-week quest ...at the end we hope every member of LCC will have a more vital, meaningful, and daily relationship with the Word of God...

**John 4:7-25** ...[Look for The “Chapters” in This Story: (1) Routines ... (2) Thirst ... (3) Living Water ... (4) Husbands ... (5) Worship]

### (1) ROUTINES

...Jan 5<sup>th</sup> ...Back to normal routines

...The routines of the woman at the well...

***“The Woman at the Well”*** could also be titled: ***“THE SEEKER”*** ( v. 27 ) ...his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, ‘What do you seek?’” – ***But That IS the Question That Jesus is Talking w/ her about***

— Basic to Human Nature and our “Routines” is This—We’re All “SEEKING SOMETHING”! ...

“...how to gain, how to keep, how to recover happiness, is in fact for most men at all times the secret motive of all they do, and of all they are willing to endure.” (American philosopher William James – from “Happiness, a History”)

...This “INNER-SEEKING” is Biblically Described as “THIRST

### (2) THIRST

...John 4 is an artful Narrative [Genre Elements] about “THIRSTY HUMANITY”—

BUT... Her “Thirsty-Life-Routine” is about to be Interrupted by an ENCOUNTER with the Ministry of the Word!

## ENCOUNTERING the Ministry of the WORD

...Remember, how John Introduces us to Jesus!!

### Jn 1:1-18

...v. 1-2, 14 ...He is the “Living Word” ...This encounter with Jesus is an encounter with “The Word of God”!!

...v. 3-5, 9-10 ...The ministry of the Word is a ministry of "giving light"!! To encounter the Word of God is to have an experience that is "enlightening" and impacts our "thinking" & "understanding"!!

v. 3-5 ... **"all things were made through him" ... "in him was life and the life was the light" ... "the light shines in the darkness"** [When you're the Creator of All Things, you have insights & ability to uniquely interact with the 'powers that be' in your creation!]

v. 10 ...there exists a predominant condition in the world of men—Men pervasively FAIL to PERCEIVE the Light (which is The WORD)! —Eph. 4:17-19

...Remember, Jesus IS the Ministry of the Word!—and this ministry is about to CHANGE the Conversation by Zeroing In on a Particular Aspect of Her Life ...Men!

...**Jn 1:14 —Meet— Jn 4:7** (Jn 1:14 "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.") ... (Jn 4:7 "A woman from Samaria came to draw. Jesus said to her ["The WORD started a conversation with her"])

...Insights on The Ministry of the Word:

- 1) The Ministry of the Word wants to interact with Our "BIG STUFF" ...the weighty matters of our hearts! ...it wants to have a conversation with our "obsessions", our "passions", our "dreams", our "fears", [ie, our "seeking"]
- 2) The Ministry of the Word wants to find our pain, our wounds, our fallen world disruption & disappointments!

**Ps 107:1-20** <sup>1</sup> Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!

<sup>2</sup> Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble

<sup>3</sup> and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

<sup>4</sup> Some wandered in desert wastes, finding no way to a city to dwell in;

<sup>5</sup> hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them.

...<sup>8</sup> Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of man!

<sup>9</sup> For he satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul he fills with good things.

<sup>10</sup> Some sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, prisoners in affliction and in irons,

<sup>11</sup> for they had rebelled against the words of God, and spurned the counsel of the Most High.

...<sup>19</sup> Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress.

<sup>20</sup> He sent out his word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction.

- 3) The Ministry of the Word speaks with precision and specifics and can be "painfully accurate"!! ("...you have said correctly, you have no husband—you've had 5 husbands and the one you have now is not your husband")

"Nearly all the wisdom which we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves. But, while joined by many bonds, which one precedes and brings forth the other is not easy to discern." ~ **John Calvin**

...Don't Underestimate the Needed Impact that the Ministry of the Word brings to this area of our lives! ...Listen to what this woman says after encountering "the Word of God" —**Jn 4:28-29**  
*"So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, <sup>29</sup> 'Come see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?'*

- 4) There is "Dwelling" and "Proximity" that is a Vital Aspect to the Ministry of the Word!

- Our Souls (inner person that ponders, reflects, emotes, feels, processes) NEEDS to have a Living Exchange with the Word of God!! ...Somehow, our "Routine Lives" Need Points/Moments of Invasion/Encounter!

**Jn 8:31-32** So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, <sup>32</sup> and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

**Jn 15:4** Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.

- 5) There is "Conversation" that is a Vital Aspect to the Ministry of the Word! ...this "Conversation" involves 'meditation', 'consideration', 'response'...

**Lk 6:46** "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?"

**James 1:21-22** "...receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.  
<sup>22</sup> But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."

- 6) There is "Divine Insight" in the Ministry of the Word—Perspective/Understanding from the Creator about Him, Us, & Life!

**Jn 4:13-14** <sup>13</sup> Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

## (5) WORSHIP

**John 4:23-24** <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 is seeking such people to worship him. <sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

...This is the Story of a Human "SEEKER"!

...We are Living Our Own Story of "SEEKING"

—**How Does This Story Help Us?** ...Well in this story, She's Not the Only One "Seeking" something!  
God—Her CREATOR—is Also Seeking something! ...MIGHT THESE 'Seekings' BE RELATED??

***The Soul of Man is Designed for WORSHIP!! ...it is an experience and expression we "THIRST" for!!***

#### THE SCIENCE OF AWE

"Evidence is also mounting that the same alchemy that we feel in a dark sky sanctuary—a sense of wonder as we contemplate the vastness of the cosmos—is associated with better mental health and happiness.

It has long been clear that spending time in nature is good for your mental health—and a 2024 study published in the Journal of Environmental Psychology suggests that these benefits hold true at night as well as during the day.

"Experiencing natural darkness triggers a sense of awe and wonder in people which may be protective of human health," says Ruskin Hartley, the executive director of Dark Sky International,...

U.C. Berkeley professor Dacher Keltner captured this feeling in his 2023 book *Awe: The New Science of Everyday Wonder and How It Can Transform Your Life*. He argued that "awe is about our relation to the vast mysteries of life." It is an emotion that has real biological implications: It can help lower the body's inflammatory cytokine response—its response to attacking pathogens—as well as calm our nervous systems and trigger the release of oxytocin, a hormone that promotes positive feelings and is sometimes called the "love drug." **Julia Lynn Siler**, "It's getting dark out again. Here's why it's actually good for your health.", National Geographic, Nov. 1, 2024

#### ***What Are You Seeking?***

...Maybe you've set up your "Life-Routines" for 2025...

- You've Got a number of "WELLS" to visit
- You've Got Some Manner of Religion

#### ***What is GOD Seeking? ...WORSHIPERS!***

...But Not Just any kind of unbounded, personally defined, or culturally popular religious activity

**v. 24** ... "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."