

**1115 Testimony, living water, worship the Father with spirit and truth – Book of John (4)  
(Verses refer to those in NASB95 unless otherwise specified, and by Whirlwind.)**

First, let's look at the testimony and opinions of John the Baptist when he was not in prison. He knew very clearly that Jesus came from heaven, and that "He must increase, but I must decrease." Second, we discussed that Jesus had to talk to the Samaritan woman and was led by the Holy Spirit. In this matter, we saw that God often uses coincidences to guide people, but not all coincidences are God's guidance. Third, let's see what kind of living water Jesus was going to give her. The scripture clearly says that the living water is the Holy Spirit. Finally, we discussed that those who truly worship the Father must worship Him in spirit and truth, rather than worshipping Him in spirit and truth as the Chinese Union Version translation says. We use the example in Exodus where the Israelites honestly believed that the golden calf was Jehovah. We also discuss details regarding the corresponding original text and conclude very clearly that its corresponding word in original text really cannot be translated as honesty like in the Union Version. Such a wrong translation will really kill many people. Don't stay in the wrong honesty, be discerning, and repent! However, one advantage of such an error is that you will realize that it is inconsistent with the Bible, and you will read the relevant scriptures carefully to find out where the error is. At the end of this paragraph, we use the quoted verses in this section to discuss in detail what a Christian often says, "My view of the Bible is different from yours." What does it mean, and where is the error?

**1. John the Baptist's testimony and opinions when he was not in prison**

"After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He was spending time with them and baptizing. John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and people were coming and were being baptized—for John had not yet been thrown into prison. Therefore there arose a discussion on the part of John's disciples with a Jew about purification. And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified, behold, He is baptizing and all are coming to Him." John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven. You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent ahead of Him.' He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made full. He must increase, but I must decrease. "He who comes from above is above all, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all. What He has seen and heard, of that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. He who has received His testimony has set his seal to this, that God is true. For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:22-36)

First of all, we saw the place where John the Baptist baptized. His disciples thought that Jesus also baptized Himself, "(although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples

were)"(John 4:2) John the Baptist knew that he was just the forerunner of Christ Jesus. He knew that he was just a friend of the bridegroom, with the very best attitude, "He must increase, but I must decrease."(John 3:30) In fact, it is the same for us now in order to put the old self to death. He must increase and we must decrease. Only in this way can we be conformed to the image of Jesus (see Romans 8:29).

John the Baptist was very sure that Jesus came from heaven, because "John testified saying, "I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him. I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.' I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God.""(John 1: 32-34) He knew that what came from heaven was above all things, and he foresaw that basically no one believed in Him although He witnessed what He saw and heard in heaven. You see, when He became flesh, He performed many miracles on earth, how many people truly believed in Him, and were eventually crucified, so this was foreknowledge. And "He who has received His testimony has set his seal to this (sealed, G4972, twice, in Greek to emphasize the tone), that God is true."(John 3:33) We also see that during the time when Jesus became flesh, "...God ...gives the Spirit without measure."(John 3:34) And Jesus also said, "...I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. ..." (John 14:31) It is true that "The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand."

The last mentioned John 3:36 is consistent with John 3:18. We also see that during the time when Jesus became flesh, God guided Him through the Holy Spirit. This is very clear, because He was a perfect man during those days, and the Lord said to Moses: "...You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!"(Exodus 33:20) Therefore, He could not see the face of God during that period, otherwise He would not be a perfect man. Jesus said, "I and the Father are one." This is just a fact.

Because He is one of the Trinity, He is born as God. Just like a prince living the life of a beggar, it is wrong to say that he is not a prince. So during the time when Jesus was incarnated, Jesus was still fully God.

## **2. Must talk to the Samaritan woman**

"Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were), He left Judea and went away again into Galilee. And He had to pass through Samaria. So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph; and Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food."(John 4:1-8)

Let us first look at it from a human perspective. There are at least two ways to go from Judah to Galilee. One is the short straight road through Samaria, and the other is the

detour that first crosses the Jordan River and then goes north. At that time, "...Jews have no dealings with Samaritans."(John 4:9) Therefore, Jews were usually willing to take a detour and spend more time. It was not necessary to go through Samaria, but it is said that it was necessary. Why is it necessary? We know that Jesus obeyed God's leading throughout his life, as He Himself said, "...I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. ..." (John 14:31) And "For He (Jesus in the flesh) whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure."(John 3:34) We see here that God led the incarnate Jesus through the Holy Spirit, one of the Trinity, so it was the Holy Spirit who clearly made Him see that He "must" at that time pass through Samaria, and He had to talk to the Samaritan woman.

Some people say that things seemed to happen by coincidence. Jesus happened to meet the Samaritan woman who came to draw water at noon. But if we read the Book of Ruth, we will know that God often uses coincidences to guide people. On this point we won't go into details. Please go back and read the Book of Ruth yourself. Please note that this does not mean that all coincidences are God's guidance. They must be distinguished and cannot be equated.

During the time "...His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food," (John 4:8) Jesus and the woman talked about the topic of living water. Thus the disciples were not present at the time when the topic was talked. When the disciples came back from buying food, they "...were urging Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." But He said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." So the disciples were saying to one another, "No one brought Him anything to eat, did he?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work." (John 4:31-34) Here we see again that He 'must' go through Samaria in order to accomplish the work of God.

Finally, let's take a look at why she came to fetch water in the heat about noon. That should be the time when she should stay at home to cool off. She chose that time period so she could have a chance to escape the others successfully. This is why she was the only one there. Let us see why from verses, "He said to her, "Go, call your husband and come here." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have correctly said, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly.""

(John 4:16-18) Such a person would not be accepted by most people at that time. No wonder she would choose to avoid people as much as possible to fetch water!

### **3. What does living water mean?**

"Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." She said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water? You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us

the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?" Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life." The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw." He said to her, "Go, call your husband and come here." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have correctly said, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly." The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." (John 4:9-20)

We saw from the beginning that Jesus was ready to give her living water and had to go through Samaria to complete God's work. We also saw her answer, which was absolutely correct from a human perspective, and then Jesus answered her that He was talking about living water that you will never thirst for, and "the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life." (John 4:14) This is about spiritual things. We saw that from a human perspective, when she heard that there was such a good thing, of course she wanted it, so she "said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw." (John 4:15) We see that she lives quite far away. When the sun is shining when she chooses to fetch water about noon, she will be exposed to the sun for a long time, which is quite difficult. Because it was their first meeting, when Jesus told her about "all the things that I have done; ..." (John 4:29), she knew that He was a prophet, so she asked Him about an existing controversy. We'll look at Jesus' answer in the next paragraph.

Before looking at Jesus' answer, let's look at what the living water is from the scriptures. "Now on the last day (of the Feast of Booths), the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7:37-39)

We see Him standing and speaking loudly. It is obvious that He wants others to hear His words. It is true that the Holy Spirit had not been given at that time. It was not until Pentecost after Jesus died and was resurrected that the Holy Spirit was given! Come down, as these verses say, "When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance." (Acts 2:1-4) So the living water refers to the given Holy Spirit.

#### **4. True worshipers must worship the Father in spirit and truth**

**"Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 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. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He.""(John 4:21-26)**

**First, we see that Jesus directly admitted that He was the Messiah, unlike in the later stages of His ministry, when He asked others to first say that He was the Christ. For example, when Jesus was being questioned by the high priest, "But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, "I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus said to him, "You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.""(Matthew 26:63- 64)**

**From these verses, we see that she did believe Him, "From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all the things that I have done." So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. Many more believed because of His word; and they were saying to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world.""(John 4:39-42)**

**Apparently, at least some believed her, and they begged Him to stay and hear more. We see that people have free will, and although there are more people who believe, there are still people who do not believe. We also see that "personally know" is very important. Don't be a second-hand Christian who only listens to others or what the Bible says. You must experience it yourself. We see that as soon as the woman was saved, she didn't wait and immediately went to tell others, which led to a successful preaching.**

**Let's now look at Jesus' answer. He said, "...we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews."(John 4:22) This is consistent with what Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."(Romans 1:16) In the Old Testament, we can clearly see that only the Israelites are God's chosen people. For example, Moses made it very clear on this point, "For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is the LORD our God whenever we call on Him? Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today?"(Deuteronomy 4:7-8)**

**He also said, "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth (G225); for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers."(John 4:23) Let's look at the word G225. According to the Strong's**

Concordance, it appears 110 times in total, and it appears 25 times in the Book of John. If we look at those 25 times, we can see that its meaning is the same as in the typical scripture, that is, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth (G225)." (John 1:14) So I really can't understand that the word G225 here in the Chinese Union Version is translated as honesty, rather than "truth" as in the original text.

Some people may say that the word G225 can have two meanings! If we look at an example of honesty from the Old Testament, it will become clearer that this is really impossible. If we look at Exodus 32:1-8, we see that a golden calf was made at that time, and they "...offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play." (Exodus 32:6) They said, "...This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt." (Exodus 32:4) They honestly believed that the golden calf was Jehovah. But "Then the LORD spoke to Moses, "Go down (from the mountain) at once, for your people, whom you brought up from the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves. They have quickly turned aside from the way which I commanded them. They have made for themselves a molten calf, and have worshiped it and have sacrificed to it and said, 'This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!'" (Exodus 32:7-8) Do you think God wants such honest people to worship Him who are not in the truth? Therefore, this word G225 really cannot be translated as honesty. Such wrong translation will really kill many people. Don't stay in the wrong honesty, be discerning, and repent! However, one advantage of such an error is that you will realize that it is inconsistent with the Bible, and you will read the relevant scriptures carefully to find out where the error is.

We'll conclude this section by discussing a question that I knew to be true but didn't know how to answer before. Christians often say in reality that we don't think the same way, but Paul clearly said, "make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose." (Philippians 2:2) Doesn't it seem like there is a contradiction between Paul's words and reality? How to explain this phenomenon?

We have said that God is infinite and man is limited. It is impossible for us to fully understand the Bible, because the Triune God can open our eyes at any time and see things we did not know before, just like the eyes of Elisha's servant were opened, "Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." And the LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha." (2 Kings 6:17) Now we will use John 4:21-26 to illustrate this phenomenon.

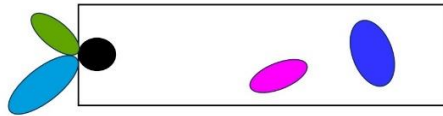
First, we assume that all the messages God gives us in these verses can be represented by a rectangular block, and we can use the black solid circle in Fig. 1 to represent some of the messages God shows us on the road to sanctification. The problem is that we have added some of our own opinions on the same thing, which is represented by an ellipse connected to the black circle outside the rectangular square, but everyone has their own different opinions, and thus they are represented by also different colors. Although the black circle are the same, the shape of the final connection is different for different people. This is why

Christians often say that our views are different! We can see that we need to "read out" the true meaning of the Bible represented by black corcle, rather than reading in our own thoughts to forcefully interpret the Bible, which are represented by different color ellipsis.



**Fig. 1: Schematic diagram of our different views**

Even if you have not read in your own thoughts, because different people will have different progress on the road to sanctification, they are represented by ovals of different colors in the rectangle. Because they are in the same rectangle, they are compatible although they are in different position. Of course, if we must define that these are also different views, so be it! At least you have to distinguish the difference between these two kinds. If at least one of the two inside the rectangular has ears which can hear, it is possible for him to receive revelation from the words of the other.



**Fig. 2: Schematic diagram showing the different stages of the path to sanctification**

I would also like to mention the last question here, how can we be sure that our ellipse must be inside the rectangular? Because on every topic, just like John 4:21-26, we use biblical concepts based on biblical words to read out the concepts the Bible has on this topic. How come this is not what the Bible wants to give in its message!