



74th Year

May 10, 2026

Pamphlet #19 (3806)

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL (John 4:5-42)

The living water

At that time, Jesus came to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and so Jesus, wearied as he was with his journey, sat down beside 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. The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, and his sons, and his cattle?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and he whom you now have is not your husband; this you said truly." The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain; and you say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on 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 the hour is coming,

and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ); when he comes, he will show us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he." Just then his disciples came. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but none said, "What do you wish?" or, "Why are you talking with her?" So the woman left her water jar, and went away into the city and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" They went out of the city and were coming to him. Meanwhile the disciples besought him, saying "Rabbi, eat." But he said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." So the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought him food?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work. Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see how the fields are already white for harvest. He who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor; others have labored, and you have entered into their labor." Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony. "He told me all that I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard ourselves, and we know that this is indeed Christ the Savior of the world."

THE WORSHIP OF GOD IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH

From the richness of meanings found in today's Gospel passage, we will focus on the theme of the worship of God "in spirit and truth," as it is described by the Lord during His conversation with the Samaritan woman.

Christ enters into dialogue with this woman despite the deep-seated hostility that existed between Jews and Samaritans due to historical, religious, and ethnic differences.

Through His presence and His words, the Lord helps people overcome divisions, since He proclaims as a rule of life and a measure

of faith the evangelical love for both enemies and friends, a love that brings reconciliation and peace. When the Samaritan woman, among other things, asked Christ whether it is more proper to worship God on Mount Gerizim, where the Samaritans had built a temple, or in Jerusalem, where the famous Temple of Solomon stood, He replied that God is spirit. And precisely because as spirit He exists beyond every limitation, the one who worships Him is not bound to a specific place. So long as this worship is offered through the power of the spirit, which reveals the truth.

Experiential worship of God

The Lord's answer overturns the prevailing views of that time concerning the worship of God, which is now understood as trust, devotion, and love toward God. Christian worship cannot be linked to lifeless, empty religious forms, to fear of guilt, or to shallow emotionalism that leads to forms of spiritual stagnation. True worship is a relationship of life, an expression of faith and hope, an experiential knowledge of God. It is communion with the Holy Spirit, who reveals the Truth, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, the worship of the living God is manifested as a movement upward, as gratitude toward the Crucified and Risen Word, as a desire to confess in praise both His visible and invisible benefactions, to partake in His grace and life-giving energy, and ultimately to experience the kinship we have with Him as members of His Body and participants in the gift of divine adoption.

The dynamic character of Orthodox worship

Because worship "in spirit and truth" is not confined within the framework of a religious ritual, but together with faith, life, and ethos forms an indivisible body, there is nothing static or isolated in it. Everything lives and moves in harmony within the whole. Indeed, at the heart and center of the Church's worship, which is the Divine Eucharist, the exchange takes place between the limited and temporary human life and the unlimited and eternal life of God. That is, we offer to God a piece of bread and a little wine; and within these Eucharistic gifts are contained all our faith, love, humility, repentance, labor, weakness, expectation – our entire life. And we say to God: "Thine own of Thine own we offer unto Thee, on behalf of all and for all." At all times and for all Your benefactions, we offer You these gifts, which are Your own from those that You Yourself give to us (Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom). And

God accepts the offering of the Church, and He Himself places His life, His Holy Spirit, upon the gifts of the Eucharist, which He transforms into the Body and Blood of Christ. And by partaking of these, the faithful person encounters Christ within himself, converses with Him in prayer, becomes God-bearing and Christ-bearing, and is united in the Holy Spirit with Him and with the whole Church.

Journey toward the Kingdom

By worshiping God, the faithful acquires the awareness that, as a member of the Church, "together with all the Saints," he journeys along the path toward the endless Kingdom of God, which he already tastes in advance from the present, from this very life. And having in his heart the infinite Lord of Glory, he proclaims our sublime liturgical hymn: "We have seen the true Light, we have received the heavenly Spirit, we have found the true faith, worshiping the undivided Trinity; for This has saved us." Let it be!

Archimandrite N. K.

May 10, 2026: 5th Sunday of Pascha
The feast of the Samaritan woman, on which Christ confessed Himself to be the Messiah.

Apostle Simon the Zealot. Venerable Lawrence of Megara.
Translation of the relics of Saint Nicholas, Archbishop of Myra.

4th Tone – Eothinon: 7 – Epistle: Acts 11:19-30
– Gospel: John 4:5-42

NEXT SUNDAY: May 17, Sunday of the Blind Man
Epistle: Acts 16:16-34 – Gospel: John 9:1-38

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