

Missions Emphasis Weekend

Understanding "us" and "them" Better
A Key to More Effective Missions

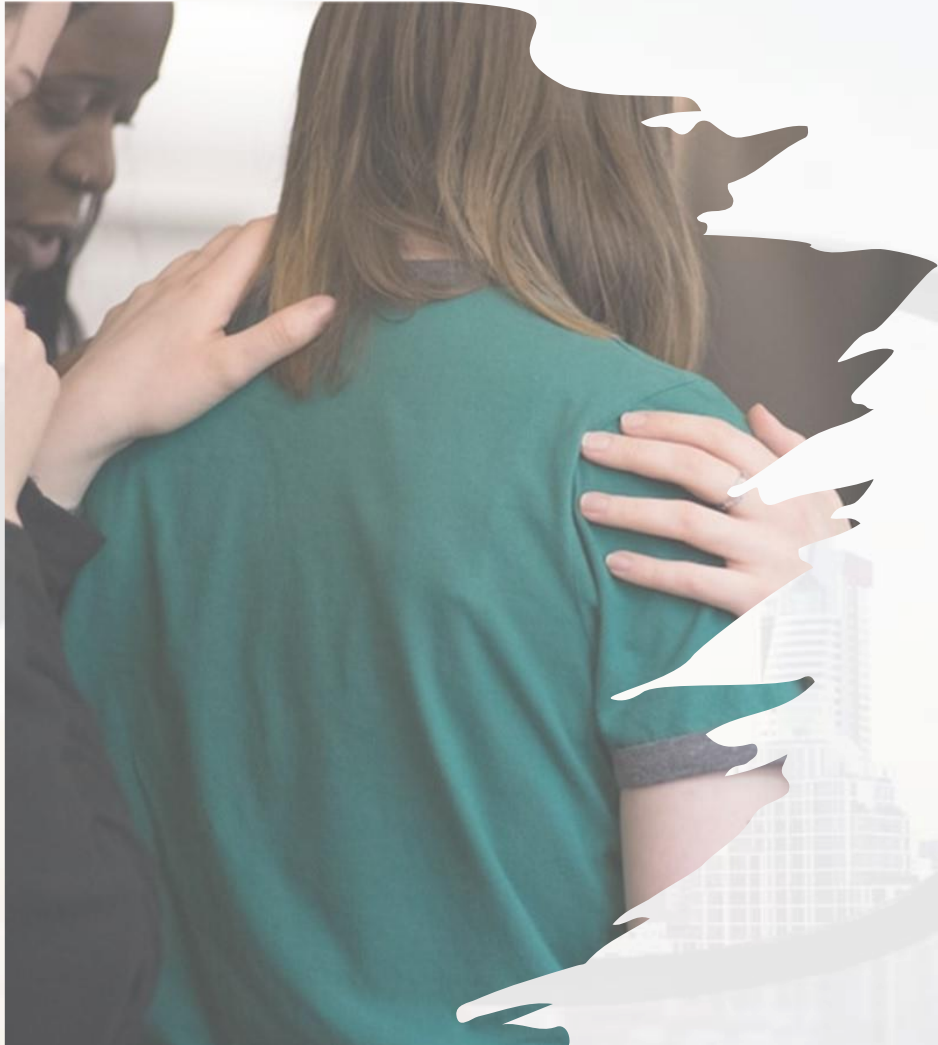


Reading my Culture INTO the Bible

(making me “see” things in the text that aren’t there)

My culture subconsciously says:
If a verse is talking about women
and the verse talks about modesty,
then it must mean “sexual modesty.”

What does Paul say about how a woman should dress?



1 Tim 2:9 - I also want the women to dress *modestly*

Randy Richards



What does Paul say about how a woman should dress?

1 Tim 2:9 - I also want the women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, adorning themselves, **not with elaborate hairstyles or gold or pearls or expensive clothes**

Does the Bible care about sexual modesty?

Of course, but Paul was talking about a different problem.

Some women were dressing in ways that flaunted wealth, making those with less money feel awkward or even unwelcomed.

Today, it probably isn't gold or pearls. Can we do it with automobiles or designer handbags? Can we make flaunt wealth in other ways now?



In any event,



my culture encouraged me to “see” something
that wasn’t in the text.

I even ignored what was.

Let's look at another misreading in my culture

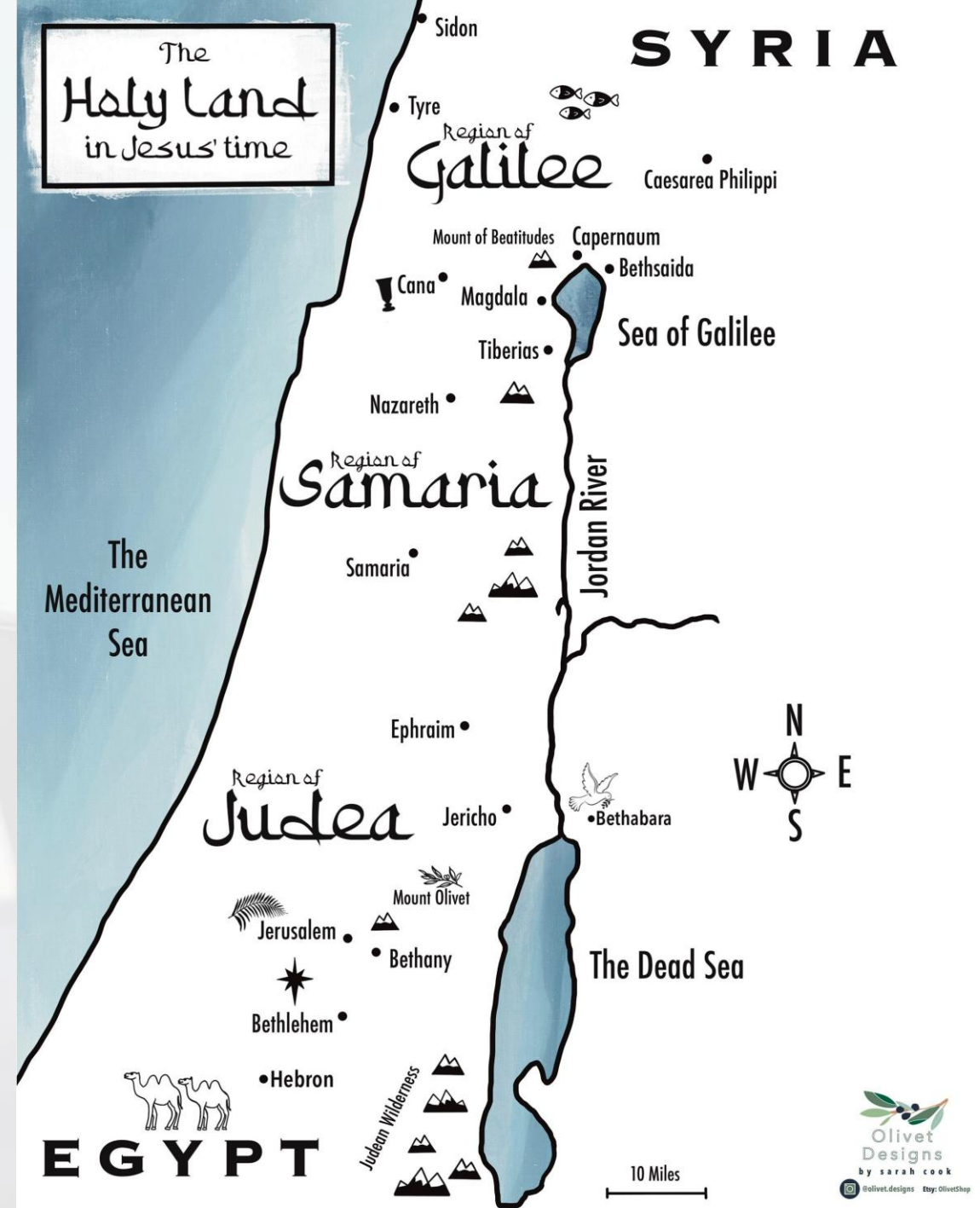
sinful + woman = sexual sin

Luke 7

But let's look at another famous story of a woman, where we might be "seeing" things in the text that aren't there

John 4:3 So [Jesus] left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

4 Now he had to go through Samaria.



John 4:5 So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

John 4:7 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give me a drink?” ⁸ (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

John 4:9 The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew (Judean) and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

Israelites

- Galileans
- Samaritans
- Judeans
- Idumeans

North
to
South

John 4:10 Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.” ¹¹ “Sir,” the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?”

John 4:12 Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?”

John 4:3 Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again,
14 but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” 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.”

John 4:16 He told her, “Go, call your husband and come back.”

17 “I have no husband,” she replied.

John 4:17 ... 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.”

Origins of Samaria since 731 BC

2 Kgs 17:24 The king of Assyria brought people from **Babylon**, **Kuthah**, **Avva**, **Hamath** and **Sepharvaim** and settled them in the towns of Samaria to replace the Israelites. They took over Samaria and lived in its towns. ²⁵ When they first lived there, they did not worship the LORD... ²⁸ So one of the priests who had been exiled from Samaria came to live in Bethel and taught them how to worship the LORD.

Origins of Samaria since 731 BC

2 Kgs 17:29 Nevertheless, each national group made its own gods ... ³⁰ The people from Babylon made Sukkoth Benoth, those from Kuthah made Nergal, and those from Hamath made Ashima; ³¹ the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites ... to Adrammelek and Anammelek.

John 4:19 “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”

John 4:21 “Woman,” Jesus replied,
“believe me, 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.

John 4:23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”

John 4:25 The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

26 Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you—I am he.”



Nicodemus

vs.

the Woman

- Named
- Jewish man
- Pharisee
- Leader of the Jews
- Teacher
- Confused

- Unnamed
- Samaritan Woman
- No social status
- Understands
- Believes

John 4:27 Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, “What do you want?” or “Why are you talking with her?”

John 4:28 Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, ²⁹ “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?”
³⁰ They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

John 4:31 Meanwhile his disciples urged him, “Rabbi, eat something.”

32 But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.”

33 Then his disciples said to each other, “Could someone have brought him food?”

John 4:34 “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. ³⁵ Don’t you have a saying, ‘It’s still four months until harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.

The Samaritan Woman

- Unlike Nicodemus, she figures out who Jesus is.
- Unlike the other disciples, she recruits new believers.
- Unlike either group, we are NOT told her name.



So what?

How does this
story apply to
us?