

## **Renting or Owning**

n/a

### **Ready:**

"Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, 'He told me everything I ever did.' So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, 'We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.'" -John 4:39-42 (NIV)

### **Set**

When I first moved to North Carolina a number of years ago, I was blessed with a fine home. It sat on a beautiful river and was surrounded by mountains. It was idyllic in many ways, but I didn't own it. I enjoyed its many amenities, but it wasn't mine. And that made a big difference.

Prior to moving to Boone, I had owned my own home for many years. Renting is much different. Instead of spending a lot of time working on home improvements, as I had before, the closest thing I did to home improvement was mowing the lawn. Why? Because I wasn't going to invest in something that was not mine. Look at any rental district, and you will see I am not alone. Rental properties are well known for the lack of care shown to them by their tenants.

Owning is far different than renting. When you own something, it is yours. You want to take care of it because it costs you something. And on many things, there is an increasing value if they are taken care of. Renters, on the other hand, give no thought to investment. They are just paying to use someone else's stuff.

The Samaritans heard the woman's testimony of what Jesus said and believed. Though it was second-hand information, they chose to believe it. But notice the distinction they make between having believed what they heard from the woman and hearing it straight from the mouth of the Lord. "We have heard for ourselves!" They own it! No longer did they just believe because someone else believed; they believed because of their own experience with the Lord.

Many Christians in the sports world today don't own their faith; they rent it. From parents. From coaches. From teammates. Even from high-profile Christian coaches and athletes. They are living off what they've heard rather than on what they have experienced for themselves. The Samaritans first encountered the woman; then they encountered Jesus. It was the latter that solidified their faith. To truly own our faith, we need a personal encounter with Jesus. Stories of others' experiences with Him will only take us so far.

Where are you today? Do you truly own your faith, or are you renting it from others? Are you investing in your relationship with Jesus, or are you leaving that to someone else? As did the Samaritans, you will find it is much more exciting and meaningful to own rather than rent.

## **Go**

1. Answer the questions from the last paragraph.
2. What do you need to do in order to truly begin to own your faith and your relationship with Christ?

## **Workout**

Mark 1:15

Mark 9:14-24

John 14:6

## **Bible Reference:**

John 14



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