



and that's...
The Gospel Truth!!
with Pat Corn

a brief message of encouragement to make your day just a little bit brighter

A young minister was asked by a local funeral director to hold a grave-side service for a homeless man. He had no family or friends. He had died while traveling through the area. The funeral was to be held at a cemetery way back in the country, and this man would be the very first to be laid to rest there.

Since he was not familiar with the backwoods area, the young preacher became lost, and being a typical man, did not stop to ask for directions.

He finally arrived an hour late. He saw the backhoe and the crew, who were eating their lunch, but the hearse was nowhere in sight. The young preacher apologized to the workers for his tardiness, and stepped to the side of the open grave, where he saw the vault lid already been put in place.

He assured the workers that he would not hold them long, but this was the proper thing to do.

The workers all gathered around, still eating their lunch! He poured out his heart and soul. As he preached the workers began to say "Amen" "Praise the Lord," and "Glory," He preached, and he preached, like he'd never preached before: from Genesis all the way to Revelations.

He closed the lengthy service with a prayer and walked to his car. He felt that he had done his duty for the homeless man, and that the crew would leave with a renewed sense of purpose and dedication, in spite of his tardiness.

As he was opening the car door and taking off his coat, he overheard one of the workers saying to another, "I ain't never seen anything like this before...and I've been putting in septic tanks for over twenty years!"

Now, I know that we men are regularly accused of not asking for directions. Didn't God give an innate ability to find our way? Obviously not! I often wonder if Moses had stopped and asked for directions, if the Hebrews would have wandered in the desert for forty years?

We all, men and women alike, think we know the way most of the time. It's not really a pride thing for most folks. We just believe we have a bead on where we are to go and what we are to do. This attitude is generally based on the experiences we have had in the past and we are either "bitter" or "better" for those experiences. Either way the past can cloud our judgment when trying to discern God's will, that is, if we are really interested in His will. All too often, we ask God to "bless what we are doing" in stead of "doing what God blesses".

No wonder the Word tells us that at His judgment many will hear "Go away, I never knew you". But!...But!...But!...I did all these "things" in Your name! We are told that our "works are as filthy rags". We can do all sorts of things in the name of the Lord and, although the Word never returns void, our actions can if they are not fully sanctioned by the Holy Spirit.

Last week my article was concerning opportunities and the work they require. An opportunity that is not ensconced in the will of the Father is generally “opportunistic”. How do we guard our actions and insure that we are operating in God’s will? Here is the scriptural basis for insuring we are on target. It’s found in Romans 12:1-2;

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Sometimes we have to “think outside the box” That’s a common phrase today, and it’s implication is that we must think outside of our past experiences and the knowledge that we have amassed by renewing our minds. God calls us to operate in His instruction which is inspired by the Holy Spirit and is permeated with His wisdom. He sees the greater picture and asks us to stretch our capacities to accomplish what He wants done. Do you think that Mary and Joseph were thinking outside the box? Oh yeah!!! Immaculate conception!! That takes some thinking WAY outside of their past experience and knowledge. Moses had to think outside the box too. He argued with God that he was not the man for the job when God instructed him to deliver the Hebrews out of Egypt. Confront Pharaoh? Oh yes, definitely out side the box!!

All of these folks sought God’s “good, pleasing, and perfect will” and they were transformed by allowing God to take them beyond their experience by renewing their minds. They were “holy” – set aside for His use, and “pleasing” – full of faith in His leading of their lives. They took directions very well. How is your “sense of direction”? Do you know the direction God wants you to go in?

A young boy told his Dad that he knew what the BIBLE stands for. Eager to hear his son’s ideas he asked what the Bible stands for. His son replied, “**B**asic **I**nstructions **B**efore **L**eaving **E**arth”.

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