



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

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

I love the television sitcom *The Golden Girls*. My favorite character is Sophia, Dorothy's spunky, acid-tongued, octogenarian, Mother who relies heavily upon her Sicilian heritage for some of the best laughs in the history of the show. Her setup line for one of her hilarious stories is always, "Picture this... Sicily... 1942..." Words of "wisdom" will soon follow and a lesson learned. Well, if I might borrow her line....

Picture this.... Sychar, in Samaria 33 years after the birth of Christ.... Jesus on his way to Galilee stops in a rural area at the place known as Jacob's Well which was in a field given to Joseph (Coat of many colors fame) by his father Jacob. In this place Jesus meets a woman from Samaria drawing water from the well around noon. Here's the scene in John 4:7-24. I like to call it "The Samaritan Exchange".

"When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

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

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."

"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?"

Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I 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 so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

"I have no husband," she replied.

Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. 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."

"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

Two great spiritual lessons are learned here. First, the Samaritan woman was just like us. When the heat of the spotlight is upon us, exposing our sin, we often times become very theological. It always amazes me that a totally degenerate soul can sure quote the Bible to shift the spotlight to a point of argument. Jesus had exposed this woman to her own self and she wanted to dodge the bullet by questioning the differences in the "worship" practices of Jews and Samaritans. Don't be surprised when people that you witness to, or confront spiritually pull the same trick. In all actuality, everyone does the same thing when confronted with their "sins". We'll scream, "Get that spotlight off me! Let me tell you what I think about some minor point of debate that will enable me to avoid the pressure of making a right decision, right now!" Does that sound familiar? If you have children, deal with others, or spend any time alone with your own thoughts, this "avoidance program" will inevitably happen. Why? Because, our Heavenly Father is on a constant quest to redeem us so that we can be a "true worshiper" that Christ speaks of in the above passages.

Next week, we will explore the second spiritual lesson as to the dynamics of becoming a true worshiper and becoming one whom the Father seeks. If He is actively seeking true worshipers, then they must be few and far apart.

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