



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

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

It's sad to say that the one thing that God desires most is the very thing that is the most divisive subject in the church at large today...WORSHIP. Actually, the only thing that will split a church faster is choosing the color of the carpet to be put in the new sanctuary. Whew! That's a rough one!

There are basically two camps that oppose one another; the "traditionalists" and the "contemporaries".

The "traditionalists" are opposed to any "new" stuff. They don't like those "7-11" songs; songs with seven words that sung eleven times. Their lips of musical snobbery shout, "Bless God! My grand-daddy didn't sing nothing but those same six hymns every week, while he sat in his same spot on the pew he purchased in memory of his Daddy, who sat there too! Hey, there's a plaque with his name on it! If they were good enough for him, bless God, they're good enough for me! It's tradition!"

The "contemporaries" are opposed to any old "stuff". They don't like any of those old "hymns and church" songs". They are so boring. How can you have worship without at least four guitar players, a bass player, drummer, and a "praise team" rocking on the platform. And if at all possible, there should be some little "praise dancers" flitting around with streamers and banners in their little spiritual tutus. Their musical snobbery screams, "I just can't worship without animation! I just can't be a part of the 'chosen frozen' any longer! I can only worship in a contemporary worship setting!"

Well, there is a degree of argument for both sides, and, if you want to chose sides, I'll give you a little scriptural fire power so that you can dig in your heels a little deeper and stand your pious ground.

For the "Traditionalists":

1. **Acts 16:25**
About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing **hymns** to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.
2. **Romans 15:9**
so that the Gentiles may glorify God for his mercy, as it is written: "Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing **hymns** to your name."

For the "Contemporary":

1. **Psalms 96:1**
Sing to the LORD a **new song**; sing to the LORD, all the earth.
2. **Psalms 98:1**
Sing to the LORD a **new song**, for he has done marvelous things; his right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.
3. **Psalms 149:1**
Praise the LORD. Sing to the LORD a **new song**, his praise in the assembly of the saints.

There you go! That's good stuff to maintain your position, right? No! Wrong! Dead wrong! Dead in your trespasses wrong! If this stand-off weren't so sad, it would be funny. Neither attitude honors God. The attitudes are pure "flesh". We are witnessing nothing but fleshly "stylistics"! Anything that separates the body of Christ into opposing camps is pure old sin. And here we have a perfect example of a centuries old battle for "feel good worship".

Okay, here's the clincher. This might hurt. Brace yourself **Music has absolutely nothing to do with "true worship"**. Sure, God implemented forty four hundred musicians, singers, and priests to attend to the music in the temple to "praise" the Lord. Music is obviously very important to God, but "true worship" is not a matter of "art" but a matter of "heart". There is no such thing as "traditional worship" or "contemporary worship". Praise and worship are two separate things. Praise is exposing God's heart to others. Worship exposes your heart to Him. I can tell you how wonderful my wife is and that's "praise" I am giving her. But our relationship is not enhanced until I personally tell her how wonderful she is exposing my heart to her.

When questioned by the Samaritan women at Jacob's well as to whether one should worship in the mountains as the Samaritans did, or worship the temple as the Jews did, Jesus told her in no uncertain terms in John, Chapter 4 that, "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." Hey folks, if God is having to "seek" them, then "true worshipers" must be few and far between!!

What! No physical campus of worship? No million dollar organ? No praise band? No altos? No 2000 watt sound system? No special effects lighting? No proper monitoring system or overhead projection? No \$75,000 grand piano? No little praise dancers. How in the world can we worship without these things? We had better learn to worship without them!

What did Jesus say when questioned by the teachers of Israel as to what is the greatest commandment? His answer is found in Luke, Chapter 10, "He answered: " **'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all of your mind'**; and, **'Love your neighbor as yourself.'** " Nothing said about being a qualifying singer, or a picker, or a horn blower is there?

Worship is a matter of heart not art. Love expressed to the Father, one on one, is the essence of worship no matter what "worship setting" you find you self placed into.

Romans 12:1 sums it up very plainly, "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.** (Emphasis mine).

Sure it's a worship service you are attending, it says so right there in the bulletin... Yeah...right!

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