



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

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

Here we are two weeks into 2007 and I'm wondering how well you have stuck to those resolutions you initiated at the turn of New Year's Day? I took a poll on Sunday at the Smoky Mountain Cowboy Church and only a handful of folks even made any plans for improving their life at all. I was amazed!

One of my resolutions is to deepen my relationship with my heavenly Father through intimate worship. So far, so good! In all honesty, that resolution is pretty easy for me to keep simply because worship is my passion. I have studied and sought a constant higher level of intimacy in worship now for twenty five years. Oh yes, I can have the heart of a true worshiper and not float three inches off the ground while constantly spouting spiritual clichés. Desiring to be a true worshiper will put your feet on the ground.

If there is any goal that I would have for this weekly article, it would be to touch people's hearts and minds and steer them toward true worship, dispelling traditional myths and liturgical habits. How can one develop such a passion for worshiping the Lord? The first thing you need to understand is that true worship is not necessarily found in a church or congregational setting. Oh I know, you are sure you go to a worship service every Sunday because the bulletin says it's a "Worship Service" and the sign out front says "Sunday Worship- 11:00AM". Sadly, in most cases it's really not "true worship". One reason is that the very term "worship service" is redundant and misused. It's like saying "sugar diabetes" or "yellow jaundice". The term "worship" means "worth-ship", and the act of "serving" the Lord with the expression of it. Worship occurs when we ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name on a one to one basis. Corporate worship can happen if all attending are synergistically moving toward the same goal. We cannot, or should not, depend on any person, group, or corporate entity to usher us into "true worship". It is impossible. Nothing can create or cause true worship in our lives except the unction of the Holy Spirit and our response to it. True worship comes from "within" not from "without". Worship is not "motivated" it is "inspired". Churches provide an "atmosphere" of worship but they cannot foster an "attitude" of worship.

There are three sections of scripture that will have an enormous impact upon your understanding what God's desires are concerning His relationship with you through worship. If you never mark anything in your Bible but these three scriptural sections, mark these. You will not be sorry. I guarantee it!

The first is John: Chapter 4. This is the story of Christ's encounter with the Samaritan woman at Jacobs well. Here is how the encounter went down:

"The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John, lthough in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. When the Lord learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

Now he had to go through Samaria. So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

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."

The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he."

Absolutely typical!! When a person involved in sin is confronted with the truth of The Word, they get theological and become religious scholars all of a sudden. It always amazes me how people who have no regard for the God of the universe suddenly and amazingly have "Deep Thoughts"!!

The Samaritan woman was living in sin and so as to get the heat of the spotlight off of her throws up a theological question concern "where" worship happens. Christ gave her the bottom line and diffused the entire question with the statement that the hours had come that God the Father was actively seeking those who would worship Him in spirit and in truth. He told her that it doesn't matter "where" a person worships but "who" a person worships.

Now remember, this was an encounter that occurred before Christ's death and resurrection. The first century church had yet to even begin. The Father's desires concerning worship were already active before the first "organized" group of believers ever existed. The "church", before Christ's death and resurrection, was comprised of individuals that had accepted Christ as the Messiah. He was Messiah to them before He was Savior.

So, if we are to worship the Father fully and develop such a high level of intimacy with Him, we must first learn to worship Him in "spirit" and in "truth". How do we do that? How do we attain such a level of worship? How do we accept the responsibility of being a true worshiper and no longer be duped into believing someone or some entity can take you there? Do I depend on my church to do that? Does true worship happen at all in my church? Am I just following a religious process every Sunday and believing that I have actually experienced worship? Have I ever really worshiped at all? Scary thought, huh?

You may have been a Christian virtually all of you life and only gone through the motions and never once truly worshiped God. How can that be?

Check in with this article next week for the second scriptural sequence that will instruct you how to worship in "spirit" and in "truth" as God desires it.

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Your comments or questions are always welcome. Email them to: [patcorn@maizeone.com](mailto:patcorn@maizeone.com)

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