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ARE YOU A SINGER OR A WORSHIPER?

Dear Friends,

One of the greatest revelations I have ever received from God concerns worship. In fact, several years ago He began teaching me about the power of worship and has continued to add more and more to my understanding. Not long ago, it was as though He gave me a brief, momentary glimpse into a room filled with life-changing truth about worship that I have yet to fully comprehend. Some of the things He showed me in that instant I have never heard taught by anyone. It was incredibly exciting and I look forward to the day when I will be able to not only grasp, but teach what He revealed.

Worship is one of the most vital components of a Christian's spiritual development. It is one of the most critical aspects of our relationship with God. Think about what is recorded in the Bible by the various prophets as they were privileged to capture a glimpse into Heaven: over and over, the central theme concerns the worship taking place before the throne of God. In fact, the book of Revelation paints the image of worship taking place non-stop before the presence of God.

I do not consider myself to be an expert on worship. But based on what I have learned to this point, I realize that the majority of Christians honestly do not understand the value of worship. We would all agree that singing to the Lord is a good thing. But then, anyone can go to church and sing songs, including lost people and even atheists. The kind of worship that changes a person is that which radiates from a heart and mind focused on Jesus.

Not only that, but there is a much deeper level of worship that can take a person into a place of God's glory that is beyond description. It is also the most difficult kind of worship, presenting most Christians with a tremendous challenge. The worship I'm speaking of is that which comes from the heart and does not need pre-written words and melodies. This type of worship is sung or spoken, with the focus being directed more *to* the Lord ("I love you and I worship you.") than declarations *about* Him ("You are the King of kings and the Lord of lords.").

For years I would join with the congregation in singing the old hymns or the newer songs with words projected on a screen. But as soon as the pre-written songs ended and the people began entering into "free worship," declaring their love and adoration for Jesus, I would immediately shut down. My self-consciousness esteemed itself to be greater than the worship my born-again spirit wanted to release.

But when the day came that I decided to rise above pride and my religious comfort zone to "sing a new song" unto the Lord, my life was changed forever. I suddenly realized that there is so much more of God to be experienced through worship; an experience that can take place no other way than in and through worship. No longer was I concerned that

people around me might hear me or that I might sing a flat note. Instead, I looked forward to such times of worship because it meant I would be touching Divine Glory.

Since that time, my worship has continued to take me to greater and deeper levels with God. I now follow the Apostle Paul's admonition about singing both with the understanding and in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:15). Although I am a pastor, I have come to realize that people in a congregation can get more out of the worship I am describing than they can out of a sermon: a sermon is information *about* God; worship is an experience *with* God. Sermons can teach about change; worship brings change.

The beauty of the worship I am portraying is that it can take place during a church service or when a person is all alone. It can be accompanied by musicians playing new melodies unto the Lord or with no instruments at all. In fact, there are times when the musicians may stop playing and the voices of the people will sound like a divinely orchestrated symphony from Heaven.

The worship I'm writing about is not just an experience; it is a way of living. It is an ongoing journey that takes the worshiper down a golden path of eternal glory where the atmosphere is increasingly charged with the absolute, pure love of our Heavenly Father. This kind of worship opens the door of a Christian's spirit to a flowing river of God's life that replaces despair and depression with joy and peace that is utterly supernatural. It will usher a person into the throne room of Jesus for personal, one-on-one time with the Savior of humanity; a place where He wraps His arms around you and it's as though you can feel His heart beating with His never-ending love.

It is always so sad when I see Christians hold back in their worship, especially when they have been taught about the value of free worship. When a church service moves into a time of free worship, it is the perfect opportunity to receive a life-changing touch from God. But all too often, once the pre-written songs are over, many Christians seem to think that the time of worship is over...when actually, it has just begun! You see, the pre-written songs are good and vitally important; but they should serve to facilitate a congregation's flow into free worship instead of being the means to an end.

I no longer want to be a singer. Instead, I want to be a worshiper. It is my hope that this letter will lead you to think more about why and how you worship, and encourage you if you are already a worshiper.

For the remainder of this letter I am sharing a prophetic word about worship the Holy Spirit gave me a few months ago. I truly hope it will bless your life.

May you know His presence like never before!

Jim

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WORSHIP INTO YOUR INHERITANCE

(NOTE: The prophecy below was the basis for a sermon of the same name. You may order a CD of this sermon by using the form at the end of this letter.)

Worship takes you to a place in God where your confidence in Him cannot be shaken. It is in this place that you know He will meet all your needs and answer your prayers. It is in this place that you can sleep in the midst of the most severe of life's storms. Preachers who live in this place accessible only through the door of worship will never resort to begging for money.

Worship conditions your spirit to receive from God in a way praying in tongues cannot. If you feed yourself a diet of ungodly music, you are conditioning your spirit to be influenced by devils.

Negative emotions will impact your worship almost before anything else, causing you to not feel like worshipping. All the while, worship is a critical – and in some cases, exclusive – element of conquering the emotions.

There is no resistance to worship in Heaven. It is on earth that you battle all kinds of resistance to worship. This is why worship on earth is, in it's own way, more valuable than the worship in Heaven. In Heaven, the perfect atmosphere of God's unhindered glory and presence is immeasurably conducive to worship. But the corrupted atmosphere of this fallen world is anything but conducive to worship. Emotions, physical tiredness, daily responsibilities, jobs, doubt about the effectiveness of worship, attacks of lying devils and much more all join together as relentless foes to beat you down, steal your time and silence your lips of worship. It is a never-ending battle for you to endure this corrupted atmosphere and press into worship like a soldier braving the exploding bombs and barrage of bullets coming from the enemy forces as he charges uphill in order to take possession of the high place of victory.

[But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. John 4:23-24] You know your soul is controlling most of your praise and worship if you find it difficult to worship the Lord without the prompting of music and pre-written songs. This is a stronghold most Christians do not identify in themselves. Anyone can sing along to pre-written songs; even atheists can do this. But only a Christian has the ability to worship the Father the way He desires: in spirit and in truth. There is a place in the heart of a Believer that is a sanctuary reserved for the glory of worship. It is rarely visited by the majority of all Christians. Its boundaries are without limit and its capacity for God's presence is immeasurable. When a Believer visits that sanctuary, he is also joined by a visitation from God. The resulting fellowship produces a change that cannot be described, for it is divine in origin and holy in nature.

Seed will always and without fail bring forth what it contains. What you sow into your life is what you will bear, reap and experience. Worshipping God according to the standard of John 4:23-24 will result in you sowing into your life all of what worship can produce.

Since God is seeking John 4:23-24 worshipers, then Adam was created to be a John 4:23-24 worshiper. The ability to speak was designed in humanity by God from the Genesis 1 moment of creation. The ability to sing was likewise created in humanity. The ability to worship was included in the makeup of humanity. The inclination to respond to music is a part of the human genetic code. God put it there for a reason. He has designed singing praise and worship to Him to be a key factor in our ability to fellowship with Him.

[Heb 11:6, But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.] Do you honestly think that if you give Him what He seeks He will not reward you? There are no tithes or offerings required for these rewards. You talk about God showing up in some services as though He picks and chooses what service He wants to bless with His presence. If He is seeking people to worship Him in spirit and truth, then what makes you think He will not respond when He finds what He is seeking? Your worship is a pearl of great price to Him. He desires to move in every service when His children meet together. There is no such thing as a Baptist move of God, a Catholic move of God, a Pentecostal move of God or a Charismatic move of God. The only variable is how you approach Him with your heart.

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***** SPRING PRAYER AND POWER CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT *****

It's official! Our 2013 Spring Prayer and Power Conference will be held Sunday, April 21 through Friday, April 26. Sunday services will be 10:30 AM and 6:00 PM; Monday through Friday services will be 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM. We'll have special pre-service worship 45 minutes before every service. Pastor Dave Roberson, Gary Carpenter and Janet Inman will again be ministering.

We have made special arrangements at the following two hotels:

COUNTRY INN AND SUITES

3971 Colonel Glenn Highway, Fairborn, OH, 45324

Direct line: (937) 429-2222 www.countryinns.com/fairbornoh

Special conference rate - \$89 per night

10 minutes from church * all rooms are non-smoking * exercise room * indoor pool * free WiFi * hot breakfast every day * hot dinner Wednesday evening * microwave, refrigerator and coffee maker in each room * discounts available to area restaurants * very close to many restaurants, stores and a mall.

(Note: regular internet advertised rate is \$111.86 with an early booking discount rate of \$95.08; our conference rate will save you a minimum of \$6 per night)

As of October 22, this hotel only had 45 rooms available for check-in on Saturday, April 20; 60 rooms available the remainder of the week with a check-out of Saturday, April 27. We have blocked off 20 rooms from Saturday night through Friday night. (Included in the block are five Kings Suites which have a small living room, sofa that pulls out into a queen bed, TV, and separate bedroom with a king bed and another TV. Please note that

these King Suites are \$99 per night, normally from \$112 - \$131). Reservations need to be made no later than March 20, 2013.

RAMADA LIMITED

2540 University Drive, Fairborn, OH 45324

Direct line: (937) 490-2000

Special conference rate - \$79.99 per night

10 minutes from church * mostly non-smoking (only 4 smoking rooms in the hotel, located on the 3rd floor) * exercise room * indoor pool * free WiFi * very close to many restaurants, stores and a mall * breakfast every day * NOTE: As of October 22, there were only 18 rooms left for Saturday, April 20; many more available starting Sunday, April 21.

IMPORTANT: A list of additional hotels is posted at our web site, www.jmmgrace.com. There are several events taking place in Dayton during the month of April. As a result, hotel rooms in the region will not be as plentiful the closer it gets to April. The sooner you book your room, the better, even if you need to cancel later.

SPECIAL NOTE TO OUR INTERNATIONAL GUESTS Our ministry does not have residential facilities. You will need to make your own hotel reservations. It is extremely important that you begin now finding out the passport and visa requirements for travel from your country to the United States. Do not put this off as it can sometimes take months to obtain a visa. If you have any questions or need a letter of invitation please let us know by sending an email to jmmgmi@gmail.com.

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_____ Please send me a CD of the sermon "Worship Into Your Inheritance."

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My love gift for this month is: \$ _____
Make checks or money orders payable to "Jim Martin Ministries."

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