

**[Justin and the band play “I Can’t Get No Satisfaction” by the Rolling Stones]**

Well, today is the Super Bowl.

I’ve heard that sponsors pay like \$2.5 million per 30-second spot. And you know we’ve been concerned about the budget. So now, we’ll pause for a word from our commercial sponsors.

**[#1 – Bud Light Commercial]**

**[#2 – Calvin Klein Obsession Commercial]**

**[#3 – Levi’s “O Pioneers” Commercial]**

What are they selling?

Well, first – “Endless refreshment” ... like you’ll never thirst again.

Second – Something about the mind of God, and the incarnation of Love through a kiss, as a heart unfolds like a flower before Thee.

Third – Pioneers marching into a new world ... a new creation, clothed in freedom, law, and Love.

That’s what it **seems** like they’re selling.

But what are they really selling?

Beer

Smelly Water

and Blue Jeans.

We all say, “That’s crazy!” And yet, it **works**. We buy the stuff.

It works, or Budweiser wouldn’t pay \$2.5 million for that 30-second spot.

It works by **not working**, yet **promising to work** ... keeping you thirsty.

So, we quench our thirst with Bud Light, and in the morning, we’re even more thirsty... no satisfaction.

We anoint ourselves with *Obsession*, but in a few hours, we need to take a shower. Then, we buy more.

We clothe ourselves in “*Levitical*” blue jeans ... but the world stays the same.

Now listen, I've got nothing against beer, perfume, or pants. It's just that all you can really say about those things is: "tastes good, smells good, looks good." But that's not really enough to boost sales. You have to find a way to tap into deeper longings.

So, corporate America has learned to say: "Not only does this taste good, smell good, and look good ... but with this knowledge of good ... with the produce from our tree ... you can make yourself in an image:

-The image of the satisfied and happy man who not only gets dates, but breathes fire

-The image of the great Lover, whose kiss is the incarnation of Love

-The image of the Pioneer, whose very presence is the eternal seed of The New Creation.

They're selling an image that you purchase with your treasure, and "where your treasure is, there is your heart also," said Jesus! And there is your worship.

Instinctively, we all know that we are what we worship. We may not say it that way, but we are what we magnify and glorify. It's how we name ourselves and try to make ourselves. We even put the names – Budweiser, Calvin Klein, & Levis – on our t-shirts, and say stuff like, "I'm a Bud Man."

Now, please understand I'm not saying that you should **reject** beer, perfume, and blue jeans. Actually, you're commanded to thank God for beer, perfume, and blue jeans. However, if you worship beer, perfume, or blue jeans; if you bow down to any altar named Budweiser, Calvin Klein, or Levi; if you give your treasure in order to make yourself in an image ... well, that's called Idolatry – worshiping and serving the creature rather than the Creator.

And this world is constantly tempting you to idolatry.

It's not just big business, it's the entire world.

It's not only how corporations seek to control you, it's how the principalities and powers – the world rulers of this present darkness – seek to control you ... Idolatry.

So, in Romans 12, Paul writes, "*Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual (logical, reasonable) worship ... but do not be conformed (shaped) by this world.*"

That is, don't worship the things of this world. That's how the world conforms us in its image. And that's why we're so thirsty, so stinky, and still feel so naked.

As Paul puts it, "*We exchanged the glory of the immortal God ... and worshiped and served the creature rather than the creator.*" Idolatry.

We live in a sea of idolatry. It's not just big business... it's the entire world. For if we don't worship God, we will worship something, for we were made to worship.

If you say, "I don't worship... what's worship?" Well, watch the Super Bowl. That's worship: singing, yelling, cheering, praising, even consuming. Hoping to make yourself in the image of a winner, living vicariously through the one that conquers.

The commercials are worship in the midst of even **more** worship. Cause we need to worship, and we are what we worship:

-Worship the Indianapolis Colts, and you'll start to look like this: **[picture of face-painted Colts fan]**

-Worship the New Orleans Saints, and you'll start to look like this: **[picture of face-painted Saints fan]**

-Worship the Oakland Raiders, and you'll start to look like this: **[picture of costumed Raiders fan]** ... that's just scary.

What would you have to worship to look like this? **[picture of Mother Teresa]** Or this? **[picture of a soldier]** Or this? **[picture of relief worker in Haiti]**

But now, if you want to look like this: **[picture of face-painted Bronco fan]** ... Blue and orange hair, with a Bronco logo on your cap... I completely understand. We're only a few blocks from Mile High Stadium.

Because of my chaplain friend, Bill Rader, I've done a chapel service for the Broncos on several occasions. The first was the season immediately following their 1<sup>st</sup> Super Bowl victory, and immediately preceding their 2<sup>nd</sup>. I got to meet Elway, I ate breakfast with the team, and then I remember this sense of **panic**.

I wanted to run and tell everybody, "Hey! They're just guys! Twenty-one, twenty-two-year-old guys! I've worshiped them for years, but they're not gods, not machines... they're just some guys! They could have a bad day, get diarrhea, and fail! Watch the game, but don't give them your heart. They cannot tell you who you are."

In 1986, I was insecure, homesick, and living in LA. The Broncos beat the Raiders twice that year. Everywhere I went, I wore blue and orange. I was obnoxious. On October 20<sup>th</sup>, they played the New York Jets on Monday Night Football. They were 6-0, but that night they lost. Some guys I didn't even know lost a **game**. They lost ... and I didn't sleep a wink all night. They lost, and my heart thought **I** lost. WHY? Because I had spent so much time and energy worshipping, and we **are** what we worship.

Now please hear me. I love football, and it's great to dress like your team and stand up and scream as long as you remember it's just some guys, and it's just a game. And I hope you understand I've been picking silly examples to highlight some not-so-silly realities. Beer,

perfume, blue jeans, and football are not the most dangerous of idols. Most people realize that beer can't quench your deepest thirst, perfume can't produce the incarnation, blue jeans will not usher in the New World Order, and just dressing like Peyton Manning doesn't ensure your victory over all things.

You see, the most dangerous of idols are not the worst things, but the best things:

Not light beer, but the best wine, because the Spirit of God intoxicates like wine.

Not perfume, but sexual communion, because that's a picture of spiritual communion.

Not blue jeans, but ideals and *isms*, with which we try to clothe ourselves in our own righteousness.

The most dangerous idols are **persons**, for God is a person... **husbands**, for Jesus is our husband ... **ourselves**, for we are like the next greatest thing to God ... even the image of God!

Those are all very good things that become very bad things when we worship them, when we place them where only God should be.

As Blaise Pascal wrote: "There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every man, which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only God."

The rock band, Extreme, sang: "There's a hole in my heart that can only be filled by you."

Like Mick Jagger sang, "I can't get no satisfaction" :

I use the right detergent, smoke the right brand, and I'm still thirsty. I'm thirsty, and the more I drink, the thirstier I get. I'm thirsty.

#### **[John chapter 4]**

*Now, when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples), he left Judea and departed again for Galilee. And he had to pass through Samaria. So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.*

It's the 6<sup>th</sup> hour, and Jesus is thirsty. Jesus is thirsty. He's in a town named "Sychar," which means "drunk." It's by Jacob's (Israel's) well in Samaria. Samaritans were half-breed Israelites, descended from the stock of the Northern Kingdom and Assyrian Invaders. They were utterly despised by the Jews who went to great lengths to avoid them.

Scripture says Jesus "had to go through Samaria," yet many Jews avoided Samaria by traveling east of the Jordan River. Perhaps Jesus "had to go through Samaria," because he was thirsty, and he had an appointment by a deep well at the 6<sup>th</sup> hour. Song of Solomon 4:15 says that the Bride is "A garden fountain, a well of living water."

#### **[verse 7]**

*There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) [literally, "do not use anything together" ... especially drinking cups]*

They have no dealings with Samaritans, and no dealings with women in public ... **especially** estranged Samaritan Women. This woman is alone. She's an outcast among outcasts. She comes with a water pot, most likely an earthen vessel. You know, a person is an earthen vessel – clay and spirit – according to the Bible. Clay, and about 60% water, according to biologists.

Well, Jesus is thirsty, and she's thirsty.

**[verse 10]**

*Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock." Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty forever. [Literally, "will not thirst into the age."] The water that I will give him will become in him a spring [a fountain] of water welling up to eternal life." [Literally, "the life of the age."] The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water." Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."*

"Go call your husband" ... ouch. Jesus knows she has no husband. Jesus asks her to do what she cannot do, but has trouble admitting she cannot do.

People say, "God will never tell you to do what he knows you can't do." That's silly. He tells you:

"Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect ... fulfill the whole law in the image of God."

You can't do that, but you have trouble admitting you can't do that... trouble admitting you're desperately thirsty.

That same weekend I did chapel for the Broncos, I preached for a graduation service at the Denver Rescue Mission. In both places, I gave the same message, and it was Gospel. The Bronco guys smiled and said, "Nice message, Pastor." The guys at the mission drank the Word like fish. Both groups needed Living Water, but the guys at the mission **really knew** it. They were thirsty.

"Blessed are the hungry and thirsty for righteousness," said Jesus. Thirsty for what they themselves cannot provide – thirsty and know it. "Go call your husband," says Jesus. In other words, "Let's talk about what you've been drinking that has left you so thirsty."

**[verse 17]**

*The woman answered him, "I have no husband." (no "helper," no "anayr," no "man") Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."*

Truth hurts sometimes. Yet Jesus doesn't condemn her. He just wants her to see the Truth, and he is the Truth, and she's thirsty for a better man ... the New Man. He just wants her to see the Truth.

I wonder if she could've seen the Truth after just the first husband? Maybe that's why Jesus didn't show up earlier at her well.

Do you ever wonder why he doesn't show up earlier?

Well, after 5 husbands, and a 6<sup>th</sup>, she knew she was thirsty – “Blessed are the thirsty.”

Ever feel like you're dying of thirst? Perhaps you're “Blessed.”

Perhaps the guys at the mission were more blessed than the Broncos drinking champagne their Super Bowl year. Perhaps this Samaritan woman is closer to the Promised Blessing than any in all of Judah.

In 2 Kings 17, we read that the Samaritans worshiped the gods of 5 other countries. They wed themselves to 5 other husbands, and yet they still claimed to worship *Yahweh*, as if he was their husband. But they worshiped him like they worshiped idols, and it wasn't really worship... not in “spirit and in truth” ... not in the Covenant.

Well, this woman had 5 husbands, and was living with the 6<sup>th</sup> (outside the Covenant). She's been drinking men.

Now, she's thirsty. It's the 6<sup>th</sup> hour... she's on her 6<sup>th</sup> man... but she's talking to the **7<sup>th</sup> Man...** the Perfect Man, The *Eschatos* Adam, the “Helper made fit for her,” the Great Bridegroom, the Promised Blessing.

#### [verse 19]

*The woman said to him, “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.”*

Perhaps she is trying to evade the topic. But this truly is the topic: worship. <sup>1</sup>

#### [verse 21]

*Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming [in John, “the hour” is the hour of his crucifixion] when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews [literally, “From Judah.” Jesus is the Lion of Judah, and now he's offering her a drink ... offering to turn her into a fountain.] But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.” The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things.” Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am he.”*

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<sup>1</sup> Or perhaps she's asking where to sacrifice, because now she thinks she really NEEDS to worship. We think worship is paying for goodness, with which we make ourselves in God's image. But Jesus said He'd give her this Life for free.

Transliterated from the Greek, it reads like this:  
*Jesus said to her, "I AM, the one speaking to you."*

I AM is God! This is God in flesh, and this is the Messiah. Jesus hasn't even revealed this to his disciples yet, and when he reveals it to Jews, he asks them to stay quiet. But to this woman (who knows her poverty and thirst), he reveals himself, and turns her into the First Evangelist.

God in flesh comes to her lonely well and asks to drink from her cup. Even as he offers her a drink from his cup, it's a communion. Then she leaves her old earthen vessel, proclaiming the Gospel.

**[verse 27]**

*Just then, his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you seek?" or, "Why are you talking with her?" So the woman left her water jar [She left that old earthen vessel, she left her thirst... like she forgot her thirst... like she came for a drink, and now she's drunk.] and went away into town and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?"*

Well, he didn't tell her all that she ever did, so much as the **reason** for all she ever did: that thirst. That thirst for endless refreshment. That obsession: to blossom under a man's kiss like a fragrant offering. That hope: that she would be clothed in righteousness and a new world.

That thirst was the reason for all she ever did. But no longer the reason for what she was doing: She was preaching Good News ... Not out of emptiness, but fullness.

In verse 42, because of her testimony, and the presence of Jesus, the Samaritans say, "This indeed is the Savior of the world." See? Jesus is Endless Refreshment, the Fragrant Offering, the Pioneer of our Faith, who conquers everything, and everyone.

That's better than ... **PEYTON MANNING!**

Pretty amazing story. But you gotta wonder: did Jesus ever get His drink in the town named "drunk?" Whatever the case, like a surgeon, Jesus engineers the dialogue from 1) thirst to 2) promiscuity to 3) worship. Jesus points out a thirst we're all born with, and then that we're earthen vessels longing to be filled with life ... eternal life. Yet, in the absence, we all try to fill ourselves, complete ourselves with something.

This woman was trying to satisfy that eternal thirst with men. They'd fill her for a moment, then leave her more thirsty. Like an addict who quenches his thirst with beer or wine, which only leaves him more thirsty. Like a consumer who tries to quench that thirst with the things of this world, and only grows more thirsty. Like all of us sinners that seek to goods of this world to complete ourselves in the image of God, but only make ourselves more desperate, and more thirsty.

And yet, God even uses that (misdirected worship, idolatry, and sin) to reveal our thirst for his drink. His drink is his life, and he is Mercy. We are made to worship, and to worship

Him. In his absence, we do not worship “no thing,” we worship anything and everything: Beer, perfume, jeans, football, alcohol, men, women, nations, and ideals.

In his absence, we do not worship nothing, we worship everything.

So, the answer to that problem is not to outlaw everything, but to worship God in the midst of everything. For then everything becomes holy.

A few years ago, I was walking out of a Bronco game, and this preacher was yelling at the crowd, “Repent!” ... “I bet they had football in Sodom and Gomorrah!” he screamed. One guy yelled back, “John Elway is my savior!”

See? I don’t think the preaching was working. But maybe if he preached the Gospel ... Maybe if he preached “Jesus is the Savior” ... maybe folks wouldn’t make John Elway the savior. And then maybe it would be safe to watch football, and even dress like Peyton Manning.

See? Maybe it’s safe to drink beer if your heart knows that Jesus is “endless refreshment.” Maybe it’s safe to wear perfume once you’ve smelled the fragrance of Christ. Maybe it’s safe to buy blue jeans once you’re clothed in the righteousness of Jesus. Maybe it’s safe to get married to a guy once you realize you’re already married to Jesus.

But if we don’t worship God, we’ll worship something, and we’ll destroy that something even as it destroys us.

The Samaritan woman was on her 6<sup>th</sup> husband. It’s rather likely that she was not an easy woman to live with, and that’s because she expected each man to quench her thirst. So she devoured them as they devoured her.

Expecting each man to be Jesus – she **hated** men, but was addicted to men.

Expecting my wife to be Jesus – I devour my wife, even as I’m addicted to my wife.

Expecting alcohol to be Jesus – you’ll become its slave... hating your master, but serving your master. You’ll drink ‘till drunk by an unworthy master.

But when you worship Jesus, that old idol becomes a sacrament. You drink in remembrance of Jesus. You drink to be drunk by a worthy Master. When I worship Jesus, my wife is no longer an idol... she’s a temple, and I serve Jesus at that temple.

When I worship Jesus, beer reminds me of God’s grace; perfume reminds me of the fragrant offering that is Christ; blue jeans remind me that I’m clothed in his righteousness. Even football reminds me that I’m more than a conqueror in Him. When I worship in Jesus’ name, I exchange the worship of the “creature for the Creator.” All my idols become temples and sacraments, for all creation is in its place.

When I worship, my thirst is quenched. When I worship. But how do I worship?

Actually, we have one more commercial:



**[McPassion Meal video clip]: “McPassion Meals” from McDonald’s are advertised.**

That was painful. Painful, ‘cause it looks a lot like religion in this commercialized society of ours. Well, was that worship? I don’t know. But I do know that when I worship idols ... beer, jeans, sex, power, people ... I’m not really worshipping **them**... I’m worshipping **me**. I’m the idol. I’m consuming the good to make myself good. I’m consuming the image of God to make myself in the image of God. Jesus is the image of God.

2000 years ago, religious folks worshipping themselves and trying to make themselves in God’s image took the life of God’s image by nailing him to a tree. Is that worship? I mean, if I drink to satisfy my own thirst, is that worship? If you worship to fix your marriage, control your addictions, to make yourself in God’s image... maybe you’re not worshipping Jesus. Maybe you’re just using Jesus to worship you.

If you really worship Jesus, you’ll forget you (and your satisfaction). You’ll forget the water pot, you’ll lose the old earthen vessel called “you.” Remember? The problem is you... that old you.

Alcohol makes you forget you for a time. Then there’s more you.  
Sex makes you forget you for a moment.  
But what’s great enough to make you forget you for good?  
How can you lose you, in order to find you, in something better than you?

See, the problem with idols is that they aren’t worthy of our worship, and thus can never quench our thirst. Neither beer, perfume, blue jeans, nor any mortal man was worthy of the worship of that lonely woman at the well. For she was made to worship God, and only he could quench that thirst.

**BUT HOW DO YOU WORSHIP GOD?** Is it the same way we worship idols? In order to satisfy our thirst?

You know, this story really isn’t about our thirst, or her thirst. I think it’s about **Jesus’ thirst**. He was thirsty first. He came looking for a drink, just as his Father is looking for worshippers. The point is that Jesus is thirsty. He said he’d give her water that would turn into a fountain. Who drinks from that fountain ... that is ... her?

Did Jesus ever get his drink? Toward the end of John’s Gospel, on the 6<sup>th</sup> day, at the 6<sup>th</sup> hour, Jesus is crucified. Just before he dies, he lifts his head and cries, “I thirst.”

“God thirsts.”

“I AM thirsts.”

They give him sour wine on a sponge. Israel was the Vineyard, and her wine was sour. Her worship was sour. She used him to worship herself. SHE (who is WE) took his life, worshipping ourselves. WE took His life, yet he gave his life ... He ambushed us with Love. He **is** Love. He cried, “It is finished!” bowed his head, and gave up his spirit. The TRUTH gave up his SPIRIT... like a fountain.

See, it’s there we begin to worship in spirit and truth, like a fountain.

For it's there we meet the One worthy of all worship.  
It's there we see God sitting by our empty well.  
It's there we see God broken and bleeding for us, like a fountain.  
So, it's there we give him our drink called worship ... praise like a fountain.  
So, it's there we lose ourselves (that old dry earthen vessel) ... lose ourselves, for we are flooded with him.

It's there that a fountain is opened – the river of life... “Endless Refreshment.”

It's there that we blossom under our Creator's kiss – the incarnation of Love ... “The fragrant offering.”

It's there that we're clothed with Righteousness – His Righteousness ... the Pioneer of our Salvation – Jesus, Firstborn of the New Creation.

It's there that we are made in God's image. WE cannot purchase that image, for it's the image of Grace. Our God is Grace. He is Love. See, it's there at the cross that the Lord drinks his Love through a fountain that is You, and is satisfied. “It is finished.”

So, Jesus took bread and broke it, saying, “Take, eat. This is my body” And in the same way, he took the cup, saying, “This is the New Covenant in my blood. Drink of it, all of you.”

“I was hungry,” said Jesus. So eat in such a way that you **are eaten** ... like a living sacrifice.

“I was thirsty,” said Jesus. So drink in such a way that you **are drunk** ... by Love.

“It is finished” – An eternal reality. But it's only just begun in us ... in time. So, we must come to His table and drink.

Song of Solomon 5:1 – “Drink and be drunk with Love.” Drink and be drunk by God.

You can only quench your thirst by seeking to quench your Lord's thirst. Drink him to be drunk by him. That's communion. Drink him to satisfy his thirst. That's worship. We are most satisfied when he is most glorified in us. And we are made to worship HIM.