

Worship in Song

(Psalm 147:1)

- Introduction:
1. “Oh come, let us sing to the LORD! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms. Oh, sing to the LORD a new song! Sing to the LORD, all the earth. Sing to the LORD, bless His name; Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing. Praise the LORD! For it is good to sing praises to our God; For it is pleasant, and praise is beautiful.” (Psalm 95:1-2; 98:1; 96:1-2; 98:4; 101:1; 147:1)
 2. The last sentence concisely gives the reason for our singing — “It is good to sing praises unto our God, for it is pleasant, and praise is beautiful.”
 3. From Old Testament Israel to the New Testament church, singing has had a prominent place in expressing praise and adoration to God.
 - a. Moses and the Red Sea (Exodus 15).
 - b. Exhortations to sing (Colossians 3:16).
 - c. To songs expressed in heaven itself (Revelation 5:9).
 4. Singing may be the most popular element of worship because it unites the whole assembly in active participation to a degree that is hardly true of any other component of worship.

I. Discussion of Instrumental Music

- A. Due to the present state of the religious world, any discussion of singing in Christian worship needs to address the use of mechanical instruments of worship.
- B. Probably, one of the things most noted about the church of Christ is our form of music.
 1. I am not ashamed to be noted for worshipping God as he dictated.
 2. (Psalms 89:7) “God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints...”
 3. (Colossians 3:16-17) Principle of authority.

II. The Purpose of Singing

- A. Singing puts us in the right frame of mind.
 1. From supermarkets, movies, and elevators, music sets the stage.
- B. Singing allows us to express our thoughts and emotions.
 1. Congregational singing is the perfect vehicle to carry unleashed emotions into the presence of God.
 2. Chills — “Our God He Is Alive,” “The New Song.”
 3. Tears – “Be With Me Lord,” “Lazarus’ Song.”
- C. Singing provides us an avenue to express our convictions.
 1. “Up From The Grave He Arose.”
 2. “It Is Well With My Soul.”

- D. Singing allows everyone to actively participate.
 - 1. (James 1:21).
 - 2. Some would object to a choir and instrumental music, but don't lift up their voices in praise through song.
 - 3. Some say they can't sing well enough — It's not a question of "Can you sing?" but "Do you have a song?"
 - 4. There is too much emphasis on beauty today that would exclude many from participation.
- E. Singing teaches, admonishes, and edifies.
 - 1. (Colossians 3:16)
 - a. Antiphonal singing.
 - 1) "What Can Wash Away My Sins"
 - 2) "Why Did My Savior Come to Earth?"
 - 3) "No, Not One."
 - 2. Much of what I know today, I know because of repetition.
 - 3. Think of all the biblical themes expressed through singing.
 - 4. Invitation song — not a ritual (Revelation 22:17).

III. The Standards of Our Singing

- A. The songs we sing should be doctrinally true and faithful to God's word.
 - 1. Songs that teach erroneous theology or doctrine have no place in our worship.
 - 2. Distinction should be made between personal preference and doctrinal error.
 - a. "Showers of Blessing."
 - b. "A Mansion Over the Hilltop."
 - 3. "Jesus Is Coming Soon" — "Love of so many cold, losing their home of gold, this in God's word is told, evils abound, when these signs come to pass, nearing the end at last, it shall come very fast, trumpets will sound."
 - 4. "Break Thou the Bread of Life" — "Beyond the sacred page, I seek thee Lord."
 - 5. "Just a Little Talk with Jesus" — "I once was lost in sin but Jesus took me in and then a little light from heaven filled my soul it bathed my heart in love and wrote my name above and just a little talk with Jesus made me whole."
- B. The songs we sing need to be clear and understandable (1 Corinthians 14:15).
 - 1. Sometimes we sing words and concepts that we do not understand.
 - 2. Cold, mechanical formalism is not worship — apart from heart or understanding, God is not pleased (Isaiah 1:12-15; Amos 5:21-23).
 - 3. What do the following phrases mean? (ebon pinion brooding o'er the vale, bowers, ether plains, raising ebenezers, our suits disdained, panoply of God, supernal, zephyrs, lower lights be burning, bulwarks, come thou incarnate word...).

- C. The songs should have a balance between vertical praise and horizontal edification.
 - 1. Songs with horizontal edification.
 - a. “I Want to be a Worker for the Lord.”
 - b. “Are You Sowing the Seed of the Kingdom Brother.”
 - c. “To Christ be Loyal and be True.”
 - 2. Songs with vertical praise.
 - a. “Christ We Do All Adore Thee.”
 - b. “How Great Thou Art.”
 - c. “Hallelujah Praise Jehovah.”
 - D. The selection of songs should be appropriate to each segment of worship.
 - 1. Morning Worship — “Oh, Why Not Tonight.”
 - 2. Lord’s Supper — “Break Thou the Bread Of Life.”
 - E. Songs should be relatively easy to sing.
 - 1. Songs with elaborate arrangements may detract from the purpose of worship.
- Conclusion:
- 1. Let’s be sure to make singing a vibrant part of our worship and sacrifice of praise to God.
 - 2. And be careful not to approach it mechanically devoid of feeling and emotion.
 - 3. “...Is anyone cheerful, let him sing psalms.” (James 5:13).