

TITLE: WORSHIP IN SONG

TEXT: EPH 5:19; COL 3:16

THESIS: To understand the details and significance of the act of singing as a part of our worship to God

INTRO: I once saw a skit done at a youth gathering (non-worship setting), in which there were 5-10 people sitting on a pew singing “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee.” All but one were in beautiful harmony, while the one on the end sounded like a cat being run over by a car (all the others were grimacing & staring)! After one verse, each person sang the same verse again, one by one, singing the same melody, but using different words (the words each was actually *thinking*). “I’m hungry,” “I’m tired,” & “I really like the girl next to me” were some of the “*hymns*” being sung. Then the final person, the “bad” singer, sang – this time in perfect melody, and the *only* one to sing the actual words of the song!

I. BIBLICAL FACTS ABOUT SINGING:

First, it’s **commanded** as part of our worship to God (it is *not* optional)! Here we’ll parallel the two main ‘command’ verses.

Ephesians 5:19

1. **Speaking** (it’s verbal, not instrumental, not clapping, not humming, not whistling, etc.). We can do these other things, if we can find another passage authorizing them (which, of course, we cannot).
2. **To yourselves** (reciprocal)
 - a. No “singer”/“singers” singing to an audience (no praise teams)
 - b. *All* are singing (not *some*; *All* should be singing)
 - c. *Refusal to sing is refusal to worship* (to offer the sacrifice of praise, the fruit of your lips – **Heb 13:15**)
 - d. *Refusal to sing is to tell your brothers & sisters “I don’t care about you enough to teach & admonish you in song!”*
 - e. Most importantly, *refusal to sing is telling God, “I don’t care about worshipping you, & I don’t care about disobeying you.”*
3. **In psalms** (“psalms”-music; a striking), **hymns** (sacred song, of celebration), **and spiritual songs** (ode)– distinctions are uncertain.
4. **Singing** (basic verb -to sing) **and making melody** (“psallo”–to pluck hair, string, vocal cords, etc.; to sing). What are we to pluck (instruments, vocal cords)? Remember **2 Tim 3:17** - the Scripture equips the man of God for *every good work* – this includes worship.
5. **In/with your heart** – Here is where the *real* melody is made.
 - a. This shows us that this command is *not* about playing instruments; it’s about singing (the instrument is the voice).
 - b. This shows us that this command is *not* about quality of your voice (although we **absolutely** should offer our best to God).
 - c. It’s about the focus & attitude of your heart (mind). What are you thinking about while you’re singing?
*It’s not enough to NOT be worshipping with an instrument. We **must** be worshipping in our hearts (minds)!!
 - d. *This may be the reason why members of the church continue to sing songs that are unscriptural in content...we’re not paying enough attention (our hearts/minds are on other things).
6. **To the Lord** – Singing is done to praise God – the object of our worship; the one who decides how He wants to be worshipped!

Colossians 3:16

1. **Teaching and admonishing** (remind, gentle reproof) Our songs should teach us. This means the words **must be scriptural**.
2. **One another** (reciprocal)
 - a. Again, *all* are singing.
 - b. All have the responsibility to give & the blessing to receive.
3. **In psalms, hymns, & spiritual songs**
4. **Singing with grace** (graciousness, favor, good will) – this means we should have a proper attitude in our singing.
5. **In/with your hearts**
6. **To the Lord** – Even when we’re teaching each other in song, our songs are *still* worship to God.

II. PERSONAL APPLICATION: WHY WOULDN’T A CHRISTIAN WANT TO SING?:

- A. Physically unable (probably a rare situation)
- B. I don’t care enough to! I don’t recognize enough that God loves me and sent his Son to die for me. Otherwise, I would sing!
- C. I don’t sing well! Who are you trying to impress? Get your focus right and realize **GOD** is your audience!
 - Others don’t think I sing well. Who has the problem in this scenario...you, or the “others?”
 - What does *God* think? He never commanded perfect harmony. He commanded your heart!
 - Isn’t He worth it? This “sacrifice of praise” from your lips is not much to ask, considering you were lost eternally, but God saved you by his grace (**Eph 2:1-6** – read this, then decide if God is worth it)!

CONCLUSION: Why did God choose singing to be a part of the way we worship Him? Maybe because singing is not culturally limited (i.e., anybody at any time in history can sing – without the need of any other accompaniment). As long as your vocal cords work, you’ve got a musical instrument that goes with you everywhere (which is very important, considering worship is not limited to a physical location). Certainly God knew this and commanded an act of worship that could easily be done anywhere. Let’s make sure we’re doing it, exactly as He commanded.