

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. **Enjoy discovering more about Him!**

"THE CHURCH MUST SING" | COLOSSIANS 3:16 | ROMULO COSTA

WARM-UP QUESTION:

- **What does singing communicate that is different than simply talking?**

"History of Music in the Bible" Psalm 47:6

From Genesis to Revelation there is a constant practice of singing and making music to God. God invented music and expects it.

- **How does seeing in scripture that God's people, His angels and even He himself sings impact your view of worship?**

"What We Sing" Colossians 3:16

Christ followers are to sing songs from God's word and based on its truth.

- **Is ok for Christ followers to enjoy singing secular songs but not enjoy worship songs? Why or why not?**

"How We Sing" John 4:23

When Jesus says His followers will worship in spirit and truth, He is saying the heart and mind should both be engaged in worship.

- **What can help believers to keep both their hearts and minds aligned when they praise God?**

"Why We Sing" Zephaniah 3: 14-17

Singing imprints God's Truth to memory and is part of facing life's battles. Jesus shows this as He sings before He faces the cross.

- **How can you make singing to God a consistent part of your lifestyle as you face challenges?**

REFLECTION AND APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

God sings and expects His people to sing His truth. Singing worship with our hearts and minds centers us on Jesus and enables us to face life's battles like Jesus faced the cross.

- **What keeps you from singing praises to God?**
- **When has God used worship songs to impact your mind and heart?**
- **Ask God to lead you into a life of singing songs centered on Him.**

The Church Must Sing

I want to talk today about something strange that we humans do. It's kinda like talking but not really. It's more beautiful than talking. You don't really need to use words at all to do it, but I believe in its higher form it combines language.

I'm talking about **singing**.

It's a subject that is totally ordinary to us. After all, you hear of it throughout history and all over the world.

But it's not ordinary at all. In fact, I believe singing is at the center of who God is.

Why do we sing? Why would the infinitely creative, infinitely powerful God alter our brains and vocal cords to give us the capacity to make melodies and harmonies?

I think because somethings in life are too good to be simply said, or spoken of.

History Of Music In The Bible

The Bible contains over 600 references to music.

Music existed before the creation of the universe. Music has its origin in God.

Possibility 1: God created music as He created other things, before the universe.
(e.g., Angelic realm, Angelic beings)

Possibility 2: As we'll see later, the scripture says that God Himself sings, and if that's the case, music has always existed as an expression of the eternal mind of God.

Either way, we know that music, more specifically singing, was the reaction of those powerful, intelligent angelic beings when they witnessed God creating.

In Job 38:1-7

God questions Job.

“Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said:
“Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?
Dress for action like a man; I will question you, and you make it known to me.
Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth...**when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?**”

It wasn't long until music invaded human history.

Genesis

In Genesis 4:2: Jubal was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. In other words, he was the father of those who play musical instruments.

Exodus

In the time of Moses, singing begins to play an important role in the corporate worship of God's people. In Exodus 15 we have the song of Moses commemorating God's deliverance.

Exodus to Judges

From Moses to the time of Judges - it was a very difficult period. But we still see songs being raised to God.

Monarchy

At the time of the Monarchy, specifically David And Solomon, we see the nation of Israel becoming culturally rich with an entire collection of songs written by the will and inspiration of God.

- David - 74 of the Psalms.
- Solomon - 1000 songs according to 1 Kings 4
- The Levites - King David identified 4000 to be in charge of music at the tabernacle and later at the Temple.

Learn it, sing it, remember it.

New Testament

In the New Testament, Jesus sings with His disciples. They were accustomed to singing.

- There's music at the temple
- At the synagogue every Saturday, where Jesus attended.

The early church is taught to sing:

“...be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord...”

Ephesians 5:18-19

Later In History

Matin Luther said this in 1538, commending the value of Music in the life of the Church:

“The riches of music are so excellent and so precious that words fail me whenever I attempt to describe them. In suma (or in summary), next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world. This precious gift has been given to man alone, that he might thereby remind himself that God has created man for the **express purpose of praising and extolling God.**”

Ever since, the church has written thousands of hymns and spiritual songs to this day.

A glimpse into our future.

In Revelation 5 we have heavenly beings and the 24 elders, who represent the church, before the throne of God, with instruments, singing:

“And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll (the title deed of the earth) and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”
Revelation 5:9-10

Music here is at the center of God’s throne.

Out of the hundreds of references to music in Scripture, **around 50 are direct commands telling God’s people to sing.**

- * Psalm 96:1 – “Sing to the Lord a new song...”
- * Psalm 47:6 – “Sing praises to God, sing praises!” (repeated command)
- * Psalm 105 - “Sing to Him, sing praises to Him. (repeated command)
- * Isaiah 42:10 – “Sing to the Lord a new song...”

Do we really think singing is just ordinary?

MAIN VERSE

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness (by Grace) in your hearts to God.”
Colossians 3:16

This verse teaches us what we sing and how we sing as God’s people.

What We Sing

1 - *Word Of Christ*

Word, truth. Songs must be sung in the Word and from the Word.

2 -

Psalms - Better Is One Day (Psalm 84)

Hymns - Come Thou Fount

Spiritual songs - What A Beautiful Name

How We Sing

1 - *Mind & Heart*

We use our minds and our heart. Never one without the other.

“Word Of Christ” - in your mind (dwelling in you, making a home in you)

“In Your Hearts”

Jesus said to the Samaritan woman in John 4:23

“But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in **spirit (in your heart) and **truth** (in your mind)”**

John Piper in his book *Desiring God* says:

“Worship must be heart and head. Worship must engage emotions and thought. Truth without emotion produces dead orthodoxy and a church full of artificial admirers. On the other hand, emotion without truth produces empty frenzy and cultivates shallow people who refuse the discipline of rigorous thought. True worship comes from people who are deeply emotional and who love deep and sound doctrine.”

If we only choose truth, we’ll go through the motions with a cold heart. If it’s all emotion without knowing God through his Word, we’ll be passionate, but perhaps in the wrong direction.

God wants both: *Mind’s Attention, Heart’s Affection, Spirit and Truth.*

Worship definition:

Worship is **VALUING** God **FULLY** when I **KNOW** God **RIGHTLY**.

2 - *In All Wisdom*

What to say, when to say it, how to say. Same applies to our music.

I don't take lightly the fact that I'm deciding week after week what hundreds of people are singing, and drilling into their brain about:

- The nature of Christ,
- The nature of sin,
- The nature of redemption,
- How to live the Christian life.

And that's an example of the "teaching and admonishing" part of the verse.

We can discuss methods, old styles, new styles all we want.

But here's the question: are we singing as an outpouring of praise, and longing, and gratitude, and love, for who He is, and what He's done?

3 - *Vertically and Horizontally.*

"One another" - horizontally.

"To God" - vertically.

Never either/or. Corporate singing is always both.

We sing songs to one another, the Lord is listening. We sing songs to the Lord, we're "teaching and admonishing" one another.

4 - *With Thankfulness* (in grace or by grace)

The greek phrase ἐν χάριτι (en chariti) is always translated "in grace" or "by grace" in the New Testament, except here. Maybe because contextually, Paul talks about being thankful in the verse before and the verse after.

So maybe the idea is:

We can only do this by grace, and grace produces gratitude, so sing with thankfulness in your hearts, because that's how our awesome gracious God is pleased!

Why We Sing

1 - It's Part Of Our Battle Strategy

In 2 Chronicles chapter 20, the Assyrians had come against Israel and Jehoshaphat was desperate for God's help. The way he defeated them was with a choir or with song.

"And they rose early in the morning and went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. And when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem! Believe in the Lord your God, and you will be established; believe his prophets, and you will succeed." And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed those who were to sing to the Lord and praise him in holy attire, as they went before the army, and say,

"Give thanks to the Lord, for his steadfast love endures forever."

And when they began to sing and praise, the Lord set an ambush against the men of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah, so that they were routed."

2 Chronicles 20:20-22

Singing defeats enemies!

There's power on a Sunday morning, when the people of God are praising corporately. Demons are trembling, chains of sin are breaking, the power of darkness is being defeated. This is major power! Satan hates it.

How many times God has melted my heart with a song.

"I want to fester in this hate, anger, worry, fear, lust, envy, hypocrisy, lie."

Then a song enters my mind...

The hardness softens. With His worth. With His song.

Songs are powerful. **Use it in the battle.**

2 - It Imprints God's Word and Truth to Memory

Deuteronomy 31:19-22

"Write this song and teach it to the people of Israel; put it in their mouths..."

Psalm 78:4

"...we will tell the next generation... the glorious deeds of the Lord..."

Learn it, sing it, remember it. **Pass it on.**

3 - *It Raises Our Affections.*

Jonathan Edwards said this in his book *Religious affections* published in 1746
 “I consider it my duty to raise the affections of my hearers as high as I possibly can, provided I raise them with nothing but the truth and emotions that are consistent with the truth.”

Singing engages the heart in a way spoken words alone do not.
 Singing is to awaken the affections of the people for God for His truth.
 Truth is the key, but empowered by music, more specifically singing, it can have a booster effect on the truth.

John Calvin

“We know by experience that song has great force and vigor to move and inflame the hearts of men to call upon and praise God...we are certain that God puts the words in our mouths, **as if He Himself were singing in us to exalt His glory.**”

4 - *God Sings.*

Did you know that our God is a singing God?

Speaking of Israel's joy and restoration

“Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! The Lord has taken away the judgments against you; he has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: “Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak. The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; **he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.”**”

Zephaniah 3:14-17

Not just singing, but loud singing!

You and I were made in the image of that God! We were made to worship and to glorify His name, to rejoice in Him as He rejoices over us. We must treasure him with our hearts, and our singing is an outpouring of that.

Jesus Sings

(The author of Hebrews is quoting Jesus quoting Psalm 22)

‘I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.’”

Hebrews 2:10

And then He actually sings.

On the night of the Lord's supper, after partaking the wine and the bread, after he had given His last words to His disciples, how did they end the night together?

“And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.”
Matthew 26:30

Why is this verse so important for us today?

On the night that He was betrayed, before he went out to the garden of Gethsemane to do battle with the devil, knowing the suffering that was to come, the separation from the Father, the pain of the cross, hours before He bore the sins of world, in His deepest darkest moment... Jesus sang.

These events were preceded by a song!

I wonder if His eyes were full of tears when He sang. I wonder if it was more of a lament type of singing, or maybe it was joyful.

“looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, **who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross...”**
Hebrews 12:2

In the midst of all of the suffering there was **joy in His heart** for He knew what he was about to do:

- Conquer death
- Bring redemption to the world.
- Set the captives free
- Reconcile the lost.
- Give eternal life
- Be glorified in His resurrection...

So He endured the cross. In all of that, a song was found in Jesus' heart and lips.

Why do we gather as a church?

- To **see** Him in His Word,
- To **savor** Him together, and
- To **sing our hearts out** as an outpouring of that **seeing** and **savoring**.

God gave us singing because there's a joy greater than words.
 And all of the singing in the world is an echo of the song at the heart of creation.

He is our song! The song of songs!