

Importance of Singing

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;
Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;
Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;
Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.
Ephesians 5:18-21

Introduction:

1. A Spirit-filled church, which we crave by expositional preaching in John and Acts 2, sings as above.
2. We are presently studying John 15, and one way of abiding in Christ is to embrace singing of Christ.
3. We recently had a mirth feast in a new venue with great acoustics, and the singing had a terrific sound.
4. Our annual, week-long singing camp for children and youth starts Monday with near 100 participants.
5. We want our singing to be soul convicting, as Paul required at Corinth (I Cor 14:7,11,16,23-25,33,40).
6. Though we reject the use of musical instruments in worship by N.T. mandate, we truly love singing.
7. N.T. rejection of musical instruments ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/instrumental-music-powerpoint.pdf>.

God Created It

- A. **Sing.** To articulate or utter words or sounds in succession with musical inflections or modulations of the voice, so as to produce an effect entirely different from that of ordinary speech; *spec.* to do so in a skilled manner, as the result of training and practice.
- B. God created vocal cords, tongue, and lips for speaking or singing, not evolution or Fate.
- C. God created singing as much as languages (Gen 11:5-9) and farming (Isaiah 28:23-29).
 1. The world uses music heavily, for Satan apes God; it is found in most sinful venues.
 2. Like most things, they corrupt the original intent of music for sinful ends (Eccl 7:29).
 3. If God created it, faithful creatures will seek God's will for music and submit to it.
 4. Singing extends beyond the worship of God, as the Song of Solomon clearly shows.

God Ordained It

- A. Singing is a New Testament ordinance as much as water baptism or the Lord's Supper.
 1. An ordinance is anything God has commanded (Eph 2:10; I Cor 9:14; Ac 16:4; etc.).
 2. It is RCC sacramental heresy that causes Baptists to limit thinking to two ordinances.
 3. Paul instructed churches in two epistles to sing congregationally (Ep 5:19; Col 3:16).
- B. God as Creator, Father, and Judge has all insight and authority to dictate use of music.
 1. He ordained it; we obey written rules – no adding, subtracting, turning left or right.
 2. If God ordained it, we do not neglect it, resent it, or minimize it as a “necessary evil.”
 3. If God ordained it, then it serves a very useful purpose to Him in heaven and to men.
- C. Proper singing is a matter of revelation, which can only be known by reading the Bible.
 1. The first song in the Bible is that of Moses (Ex 15:1-19) and Miriam (Ex 15:20-21).
 2. The last song in the Bible is the song of Moses with some alterations (Rev 15:3-4).

God Likes It

- A. God would not have created singing and then ordained it unless it brings Him delight.
- B. God liked David, as he put it (I Chr 28:4); He must have liked David's great passion.

- C. Since God likes singing, we want to do it as He has defined it ... and do so with passion.
 - 1. Think Ark of the Covenant – Saul ignored it; David went above and beyond for it.
 - 2. How will you sing? How will you assist and encourage passionate singing for God?
- D. God filled the temple with His presence when the music reached max (II Chr 5:11-14).
- E. If you dislike singing and/or despise godly singers, you are like Michal (I Chron 15:29).
- F. Like all godliness, we make spiritual choices to rule our hearts against habits or training.

David Sang

- A. Though supremely gifted in many ways, the man after God's own heart was a musician.
 - 1. He liked David, as he put it (I Chr 28:4); He must have liked David's great passion.
 - 2. If you want to be like David, you will love singing, because David was a musician.
 - 3. There was nothing effeminate about David – killing a lion, bear, giant, and others.
 - 4. David exalted congregational worship, so we should embrace any church singing.
- B. We meet David with a harp, and he died as Israel's psalmist (I Sam 16:18; II Sam 23:1).
 - 1. From his beginning to his end, and certainly as part of worship, David loved singing.
 - 2. Hezekiah copied him 340 years later (II Chr 29:25-30) and Josiah 440 (II Chr 35:15).
- C. He wrote lyrics, staffed choirs, made instruments (Am 6:5; I Ch 23:5; II Ch 29:26; etc.).
- D. Read just a few of David's references to singing (Ps 47:6-7; 92:1; 104:33; 146:2; 147:1).
- E. We Gentiles fulfill David in his great Psalm 18 by Paul's use (Psalm 18:49; Rom 15:9).
- F. For much more about David as a musician ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/david-the-musician.pdf>.

Jesus Sang

- A. He is the Son of David, which inspired name and title God gave Him from the musician.
 - 1. The man after God's heart rejoiced in God by praise, psalm, dance, instruments, etc.
 - 2. God promised David a house (a dynasty) for trying to build Him a house (a temple).
- B. Jesus fulfilled prophecy by singing (Psalm 22:22; Heb 2:12; Matt 26:30; Mark 14:26).

Testamental Differences

- A. The N.T. clearly teaches *singing*, thus precluding *playing*; the O.T. clearly taught both.
 - 1. So we reject O.T. *playing* verses as only for God's church in a state of carnal infancy.
 - 2. We no sooner use musical instruments than burn rams and goats on altars (Ps 66:15).
 - 3. So we sing. We do not chant, rap, beat drums or pews, slap legs, dance, mime, etc.
- B. However, with a N.T. mandate to sing, we may use the O.T. to illustrate how to sing.
 - 1. The N.T. teaches child training (Ep 6:4), but details for it are found only in Proverbs.
 - 2. The N.T. teaches financial goals (Eph 4:28), but money management is in Proverbs.
 - 3. The N.T. teaches marital bed (Heb 13:4), but romance is detailed in Solomon's Song.
 - 4. The N.T. teaches giving (Rom 12:8), but the tithe before and under Moses is in O.T.

The N.T. Description

- A. Paul gave singing ordinances in his general epistles (Eph 5:19; Col 3:16; I Cor 14:15).
 - 1. Singing follows being *filled with the Holy Spirit* and in opposition to *drunkenness*.
 - 2. It is congregational for we speak *to ourselves* – we *teach and admonish one another*.

3. It is *speaking* by way of singing, for we communicate revealed doctrine to ourselves.
 4. We do three kinds of singing – David’s *psalms*, *hymns* of worship, *spiritual songs*.
 5. Singing has a melody or tune made vocally, but we also have a *melody in our hearts*.
 6. Therefore we must choose to excite and move our hearts *to produce a melody there*.
 7. Singing requires a choice to *let the word of Christ dwell in us* richly in all wisdom.
 8. We choose to exalt *God’s grace in our hearts* to move us to worship Him this way.
 9. Singing, among other things as well, we do in the name of the Lord Jesus to Jehovah.
 10. Singing must include understanding for our internal religion (I Cor 14:15; Jn 4:24).
- B. Therefore, while singing is a skill to be trained, we emphasize lyrics and heart melody.
1. Singing is a learned skill as much or more than talking, for it is specialized speech.
 2. Be thankful for even elementary school classes for scales, rhythm, harmony, etc.
- C. Most N.T. references describe congregational singing by a church in an assembly of it.
1. Yet James instructed converted Jews to sing psalms when they were merry (Ja 5:13).
 2. Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises in a prison dungeon in Philippi (Acts 16:25)
- D. We ourselves are sanctified and superior sons of Levi (Mal 3:3-4; Heb 13:15; I Pet 2:5).
1. David had many trained singers and musicians for full-time service, but we have us.
 2. We are our own praise band; we do not need to be entertained by wannabee rockers.

The O.T. Illustration

- A. David listed three aspects of music in one verse – *creativity*, *skill*, *volume* (Psalm 33:3).
1. He loved *new songs*; they are creative worship (Ps 33:3; 96:1; 98:1; 144:9; 149:1).
 2. David wanted *skillful* singing (I Chron 15:22,27; 25:7; 28:21; II Chron 5:13; 34:12).
 3. David wanted *loud* singing (Ps 81:1; 98:4; I Chron 15:16; II Chron 5:13; Neh 12:43).
- B. David also ordered singing with *understanding*, like Paul (Psalm 47:7; I Cor 14:14-15).
1. Pagan idolaters sing, chant, mumble, rap, roar, and other forms of nonsensical noise.
 2. Jehovah’s religion was always intelligent, but much more in the New (Jn 4:20-24).
- C. David frequently ordered singing to be with *joy* (Psalm 9:2; 67:4; 68:3; 81:1; 95:1-2).
- D. He had constant singing in the house of God, which was a place rather than assembly.
1. He had courses of performers (I Chr 6:31-38; 9:33; 16:36-43; Ps 134:1-2; 135:1-3).
 2. David gave a great example to Solomon when moving the ark (I Chron 13:8; 15:16).
- E. God filled the temple when the music was skillful in unity and loud (II Chron 5:11-14).

Perilous Times

- A. Paul warned of pleasure lovers rejecting sound doctrine for entertainment and fables.
1. Changing church music of the last 50 years is part of general heretical compromise.
 2. Most churches today invest effort, money, time to enhance or amplify instruments.
 3. The ordinance of singing is reduced by amplified instruments and performing artists.
 4. Today the growing churches – mega churches – are more night club act than church.
 5. They feature scantily clad and sensual women as the lead singers for their worship.
 6. Part of CCM is rejection of sound doctrine by rejection of sound lyrics of doctrine.
 7. Acceptable worship is reverence with godly fear, which they reject (Heb 12:28-29).
 8. Pastors must lead churches to distinguish between holy and profane (Eze 44:23-24).

9. For more *Perilous Times* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/exposition/perilous-times/sermon.php>.
- B. Rick Warren of Saddleback Community makes loud, worldly music crucial for growth.
 1. He cannot stand our combination of sober, doctrinal lyrics and old-fashioned style.
 2. His style of music must be contemporary – what the unsaved already listen to daily.
 3. Rick calls for painful music volume – by amplified noise – not singing (97-105 db).
 4. He has explained to over 100,000 pastors that this generation needs to *feel the music*.
 5. He has experienced and basically promises that rock and roll will bring great growth.
 6. We do not want those pursued by Saddleback, so we sing acapella, spiritual songs.
 7. For volume comparisons ... <https://www.chem.purdue.edu/chemsafety/Training/PPETrain/dblevels.htm>.
 8. We may even hit 100 decibels at times, but we cannot sustain it like amplifiers can.
 9. Old German Baptist Brethren sing slowly by design to avoid bodily reactions ([here](#)).

Practical Value

- A. Music has been called the language of the soul; it can affect a person below the mind.
 1. It can lead to emotional reactions very quickly without mental processing to do so.
 2. It can quickly make a melancholy even more melancholy by stroking certain nerves.
 3. Introverted persons with melancholy tendencies must carefully guard such music.
- B. Music has the ability to affect the body very quickly without conscious thought of it.
 1. Its rhythm will get the body moving without any conscious thought of doing so.
 2. Little children exposed to rock and roll will begin to dance and shake immediately.
 3. Different kinds of music fit funerals, celebrations, marches, praise, prayer, sex, etc.
- C. Consider how David used this powerful means to heal Saul from devils (I Sa 16:14-22).
 1. The world uses music almost constantly now to feed its anarchic and lascivious lusts.
 2. Those in this church with sinful pasts will testify that rock and roll played a big part.
 3. Instead of healing persons from devils, rock and roll brings the devils for destruction.
- D. It is one of the five inputs that we warn especially our youth about to keep their hearts.
 1. If you neglect singing, you will slowly starve your heart and mind of spiritual zeal.
 2. If you allow worldly music, you will no longer abide in Christ and will self-destruct.
 3. Godly singing and music will lift your spirits by coming in your ear holes like Saul.
 4. Godly singing will lift your spirits when coming out of your mouth like David often.
- E. Think scripturally about the real effect of congregational singing to visitors among us.
 1. We expect our doctrine and practice of baptism and the Lord's Supper to affect them.
 2. We expect our preaching to affect them the most, for it is designed for edification.
 3. Singing also preaches – teaching and admonishing – the gospel (Col 3:16; Eph 5:19).
 4. We should expect visitors to appreciate God's musical ordinance, so let us sing well.
 5. Jesus taught visible works (Matt 5:16) and love (Jn 13:34-35) for convicting visitors.
 6. Paul taught rules for assemblies to convict visitors (I Cor 14:7,11,16,23-25,33,40).
 7. David also taught public praise for its effect (Ps 34:1-3; 40:3; Heb 13:15; Gal 1:24).
 8. Philip Mauro's testimony is not entirely unique – Christians singing got his attention.
 9. The author remembers the impact of acapella singing of *When Thou My Righteous Judge* (Selina Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon) by the Cincinnati Primitive Baptist Church on WCKY late on Sunday nights though living at the time in Ann Arbor.

- F. Therefore we should make efforts, unlike most, to improve our congregational singing.
1. It is a copout to describe your singing as a joyful noise, when you could sing better.
 2. Joyful noise verses in the Bible either intend playing or good singing, not mere noise.
 3. Anything God has ordained should be done zealously while keeping the due order.
 4. God rejects instruments as *additions*, but we will use any *aid* for singing we can find.
 5. So we reject drums, while using three hymnals and holding an annual singing camp.
- G. Therefore, while singing is a skill to be trained, we emphasize lyrics and heart melody.
1. Singing is a learned skill as much or more than talking, for it is specialized speech.
 2. Singing is not mumbling, humming, chanting, rapping; learn definitions for singing.
 3. Be thankful for even elementary school classes for scales, rhythm, harmony, etc.
 4. Past creative, skill, and volume, we want to be Spirit-filled with grace in our hearts.

Conclusion:

1. Why do we have singing camp? Because it is a learned skill requiring training and practice to be good.
2. We want our singing to be soul convicting, as Paul required at Corinth (I Cor 14:7,11,16,23-25,33,40).
3. A missionary friend to the indigenous people of an Asian country reported better, louder, and stronger singing after preaching through Hebrews, reading Messianic psalms, and learning to sing Psalm 45!

For Further Study:

1. For more about David as a musician in leading the worship of God ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/david-the-musician.pdf>.
2. For a few miscellaneous Bible points regarding acceptable singing ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/singing-biblically.pdf>.
3. For some songs of Zion that exalt doctrine and truth ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/songs-for-worship.pdf>.
4. For N.T. rejection of musical instruments in church worship ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/instrumental-music-powerpoint.pdf>.
5. For correction of *Exclusive Psalmody* by a few Presbyterians ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/psalmody-exclusive-refutation.pdf>.