

## SINGING WITH JESUS

**Text:** Colossians 3.12–17

**Theme:** Christians worship in song the way they do because of Jesus Christ

### **Introduction — Revelation 4 & 5 are filled with remarkable scenes of worship**

- it is intended that we see God as He is: sovereignly ruling over everything
- and then, see Christ as He is: crucified, risen, and glorified
- when we see this, then we'll be able to worship God as He is
- this is what holds us; secures us, prepares us for the onslaught

### **So, Rev. 4 & 5 hold us; they are like a great hinge upon which Revelation swings**

- and if that is so with the worship there, what must we do to get ready for it here
- what we do on each Lord's Day morning is practice, rehearse, and get ready
- oh, don't you just want to join that heavenly chorus, singing praises to God & Jesus Christ?
- I know I do
- because of Jesus Christ, Christians worship

### **But how can we best do that?**

- we've seen that God doesn't want us to just worship any ol' way we see fit
- we should never just "follow our heart" or feelings when it comes to worship God
- instead, He cares enough about this great task to give us commands & principles to follow
- He wants us to worship in spirit — with our whole heart — and in truth — according to Word
- so much does He care about our worship, He's given us an entire day to do just that
- if we abuse that or abandon that, we harm ourselves and dishonor the Lord

*But there's one more way we can get ready for that eternal heavenly worship*

#### **I. LET THE WORD OF CHRIST DWELL IN YOU RICHLY**

- Colossians 3.16
- **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 in your hearts to God.**
- when we sing as a church, we minister to one another, even as we worship God

#### **1. Christians sing differently**

- as believers, we are created to sing & worship God, our Creator
- but we sing differently than the world sings, don't we?
- the teen who seeks to try to rap the latest hip-hop beat sings
- the would-be opera singer in the shower attempting Nessun Dorma sings
- even you 70-year old baby boomers still hum the occasional Beatles or Beach Boys tune
- but Christians sing differently because the world can only sing horizontally
- yes, Christians sing horizontally too

#### **2. Singing horizontally**

- what do I mean by that?
- I mean we we sing about me, or about you, or about them or about it
- we can sing the Psalms like this, can't we?
- **Bless the Lord, O my soul and all that is within me, bless His holy name**
- we're talking first about ourselves
- or consider "*Come, Christians, Join to Sing*" — a call to worship hymn

- we are calling out to one another to come worship Christ, but it's about us doing that
- it's not wrong, but it is different than the world singing horizontally
- "How?" you may ask: because we don't stay there

### 3. Singing vertically

- you and I, as Christians, are to live *coram Deo* — before the face of God
- and so we sing vertically: to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit
- and when we are singing, He's listening to us sing to Him, for Him, in His presence

### 4. Singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs

- when we see this phrase in v. 16, we think we know what it means
- psalms, usually today, come in a Psalter (hold one up)
- regrettably, we don't use something like this enough, to our detriment
- hymns, we're quite familiar with
- many of us grew up with them
- spiritual songs, normally get equated with praise & worship choruses
- that's not quite what Paul meant, but we'll leave it for now
- the kind of song, the style in which we sing it even, isn't what's important here

### 5. The word of Christ

- more than anything else, whether horizontally to one another...and that's what the verse says
- or vertically... **"in your hearts to God"** right?
- all our singing—all our worship, in fact—is to be directed & informed by the word of Christ
- Christ teaches us in this book
- after all, **all Scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness** equipping us for every good work
- when you listen to preaching, this is happening
- but after the Word preached, music is probably the second most powerful teaching tool
- and that's why it matters greatly what we sing

### 6. Let it rule

- first thing we should ask when we read a song is: does it conform to Scripture?
- notice I said "when we read a song" not sing a song
- we should be reading the lyrics of our songs before we sing them
- then we'll all know if what we're doing is letting Christ's words rule in our hearts & voices
- brothers & sisters, if we would do this, v. 17 gets fulfilled easily
- **And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.**

*Secondly...did you know that we are...*

## II. SINGING WITH THE SON OF GOD

- singing is part of our ministry of the Word
- it's a ministry we exercise to one another
- but He also joins with us in this great work

### 1. Pray as you sing

- when we sing, we're really meant to be thinking and praying:
- "Lord, help us to learn what this hymn is saying, what it is teaching us"
- "Help us to teach one another as we sing"

- “But most of all, Lord, help us to sing to the Father’s glory with You”
- Jesus is actually our worship leader
- **saying, “I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.”**

(Hebrews 2:12 ESV)

- He does the same even now, leading us in worship
- so, whether you’re listening to the sermon or singing, remember this:
- Jesus is telling us about the Father through His Word
- He is saying in the midst of us all: “I will praise You, O God”
- that should energize our singing, should it not?

## 2. Know that He is singing with you & over you

- Zephaniah 3.17 says:

**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.**

- did you catch that: **He will exult over you with loud singing**
- the Triune God loves to sing the song of redemption over us
- the glory goes to them, of course, for they did the work of salvation
- but it’s not just us who sing...God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit sing too
- and if that doesn’t energize our singing, well, I’m not sure I have much else for you!

*Thirdly...Christians worship the way we do because of Jesus Christ, so...*

### III. ABOVE ALL PEOPLES, CHRISTIANS SING

- we do, and we should love to sing
- but why is that?

#### 1. A new creation

- before I came to saving faith in Jesus Christ, I liked music a lot
- my mother sang beautifully...still does, even at 90 years of age
- she played both piano and organ as well
- I remember falling asleep as young lad with her playing and singing in living room
- I learned all sorts of Sunday school choruses, Bible School songs, and of course, hymns
- but when I came to realize my sinful state before a holy God...
- when I knew that my sins kept me from Him...forever...
- when I turned from myself to seek Christ’s forgiveness and life in me...
- well, it put new life into my singing and love for music

#### 2. Do you sing now that you’re in Christ?

- if you, like me, have trusted Christ, then you are a new creation
- behold, the old has passed, the new has come
- no matter what your taste in music or even ability with music was; it’s now different
- when you become a Christian you want to sing
- now I know some of you have told me: “Can’t carry a tune in a bucket”
- doesn’t matter: do you still sing because of Jesus Christ & difference He has made in you?
- you should; don’t let others stop you
- oh, I know, you may sound awful...but too bad for those who think so

- they should each one look to you and say, “Praise God, brother, sister; we’re singing to Jesus!”
- and, according to our text this morning, we are indeed to sing to one another
- you’re not singing to the musicians on the platform
- you’re definitely not singing to me
- no, we are all singing to Jesus and to one another
- so sing! You don’t have to sing loudly, but you should sing

*Fourth...Christians worship the way we do because of Jesus Christ, so therefore...*

#### **IV. YOU SHOULD HAVE A HYMNBOOK**

- when we sing together, we’re reminded that we’re not singing alone
- now, I don’t just mean that there are others around you, like we have here this morning
- that is obvious; what I also mean is that we sing with those who’ve come before us
- there has been a vast company of believers through the centuries worshiping as well
- which means, we need hymnals

##### **1. Do you have one at home?**

- of course we have them here in our pew racks
- and we use them regularly, don’t we?
- but I believe every home with a Christian under its roof should have a hymnal
- I think that, next to a Bible, every home should have a good hymnbook: it’s just that important
- but I suspect that the majority of you do not

##### **2. Students of Scripture**

- the great hymn writers were students of the Bible
- some were not only gifted poets, but most excellent theologians
- they could take an idea from the pages of God’s Word & illuminate it
- using rhyme and, if they also could write the tunes, help us sing great truths
- and if we use hymnals, we’ll become better students of the Bible
- first off, we’ll recognize, perhaps, where some truth from a Scripture in a hymn is found
- second of all, when we stumble across some badly worded line, we’ll spot it as such
- just a quick example of both from the same hymn
- *And can it be that I should gain an int’reast in the Savior’s blood?  
Died He for me, who caused His pain? For me, who Him to death pursued?*
- this can be found in such passages as Isaiah 53 or Romans 5 or 1 Peter 2
- but sadly, Charles Wesley went a bit astray in the second stanza
- *He left His father’s throne above; so free, so infinite His grace — fine so far  
Emptied Himself of all but love...* there it is, the biblical conundrum
- Christ emptied Himself of the prerogative of remaining God in spirit
- by taking on flesh however, He was still fully God...
- He simply chose to not operate in that fullest of glorified capacities here on earth
- Wesley limits Christ and in one simple phrase, makes Him less than He truly was & is
- things such as this ought to force us to study Scripture
- be Bereans and see if these things are true according to God’s Word

##### **3. Students of church history**

- use a hymnbook at home & here at church & you’ll be a better historian
- with a hymnal, you get close to twenty centuries of hymns, not just the past 30–40 years
- you realize that you’re so much closer to that great cloud of witnesses
- it makes you aware that the church is so much bigger than you’d ever imagined

- and if ever there was a time we needed to be rooted to the past, it is today

#### **4. So get a good hymnbook**

- maybe this would be the way we update ours to something newer and better
- our hymnal has served us well but there are new hymns, such as we sang earlier
- there are also accompanying psalters we could use to sing even more biblically: the psalms
- so pray with us and seek out a good hymnbook

#### **Conclusion – Cleansing & Renewal Through Worship**

- I know we don't exactly follow a formal liturgy, but perhaps we should, in part
- perhaps we should open each service singing some version of "Holy, Holy, Holy"
- then we'd be greatly reminded of our need of cleansing by the blood of Christ
- when we come together each week, we are confronted with our sin
- and we are cleansed by our Savior
- like Isaiah, in the temple, seeing the glorious radiance of the holiness of God
- we'd be nearly undone for we'd see that we are not holy
- but then, the Spirit would remind us that He has touched us
- not our lips, as the seraph did with Isaiah, but our hearts
- and then we are cleansed, made whole, washed in the blood of the Lamb that was slain

Oh, don't we love to sing about the gospel?

- don't we love to sing of our Christ?
- don't we love to sing to our loving heavenly Father?
- don't we love to sing

Let us worship God!