

Title: Spirit-Filled Singing

Passage: Ephesians 5:19-20

Introduction:

There is no other faith than Christianity that sings.

- God created song and sings.

Zephaniah 3:17

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.

- God wants His people to sing

Acts 16:25

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them,

Context of Passage: Ephesians 5:15-18

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,

Summary:

A call to be Careful (v. 15-16)

A call to be Purposeful (v. 17)

A call to be Spirit-Full (v. 18)

Distinction:

- Baptism is one-time upon faith
- Spirit-filled: continuous action. Now that the Spirit lives in you, allow God to have more of you
 - more of your heart, mind, soul under His submission

Passage: Ephesians 5:18b-20

...be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

The Church was born out of song

John Piper:

- The realities of Christ are simply too great for mere speaking. They must also be sung.
- The reality of God and His work is to not only to think but also to feel duly about it. Think and feel with intensity of emotion.

John 4:24

God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

- If we think duly but not feel duly, then we give God far less glory and worship that He desires
- Music and singing are necessary are crucial to Christian faith.
- The realities of God are so great that when they are known truly and felt duly, they demand music and song as well.
- Affirming and speaking truths alone will not suffice. There must be Spirit-filled singing.

Overview: Singing in Corporate Worship

1. Singing is to be an expression of the fullness of the Holy Spirit.
2. Singing is to be to the Lord.
3. Singing is to be from the heart.
4. Singing is to be to each other.
5. Singing needs to be rooted and grounded in deep Biblical theology in God's sovereign goodness, mercy, and grace.

I. Singing is to be an expression (and overflow) of the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

...be filled with the Spirit

- We do not truly worship the Lord except if we are controlled by the Holy Spirit.

John 4:23-24

But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

- Followers of Jesus become worshippers

Amos 5:23

Take away from me the noise of your songs;
to the melody of your harps I will not listen.

- singing about Christian things is not necessarily pleasing to the Lord.
- Anything apart from the Spirit is not pleasing but offensive to God.

II. Singing is to be to the Lord.

singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord,

- must be God-centered.
- Everything about worship is to be toward God for Him to receive it.
- be conscious that God is the audience (we are not performers).

1 Corinthians 10:31

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

- Illustration: A too-beautiful frame can draw attention to itself away from the picture. But in reality, it should be the picture.
 - Likewise, worship is about God. Not about your voice or being a performance.

Psalms 51:10 (confession of heart)

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Revelation 5:12 (picture of worship in heaven)

saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!"

III. Singing is to be from the heart.

singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord,

- Not just our minds but also our hearts.
- Contrasting example of Pharisees:

Matthew 15:7-8

You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me”

- Singing from the heart doesn’t mean when you are “red hot” for God.
 - It also involves longing for God.
 - It also involves remorse to God
- Heart can be real even if not enflamed with zeal.

Luke 18:13-14

But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

- Worship doesn’t have to be all-or-none. Simply come as you are even when emotionally down.

IV. Singing is to be to each other

...be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

- God intended for us to gather together corporate with others in worship.

Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

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.

- singing helps build up the body of Christ as encouraging one another.
- Sing at home as well. Sing songs and hymns with good theology about Christ.
 - Resource: Songs from “Together for the Gospel 3” conference

V. Singing needs to be rooted and grounded in deep Biblical theology in God’s sovereign goodness, mercy, and grace.

giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

- How can we give thanks for everything?
- Proper understanding and theology grounded in God’s character.

Romans 8:28

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Romans 5:3-4

Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,

Charles Spurgeon: “Some of the rarest pearls have been found in the deepest waters, and some of the choicest utterances of believers have come when God’s waves and billows have been made to fill over them”