

Sing, Sing, Sing

by Bill Aumack

I was reading a story about a lady who bought a brand new piano for her daughter to take music lessons on. And a few weeks later, she ran in one of her friends and one of the princes, how's it going with the piano in the music lessons? And the lady said, Well, I persuaded her to switch to clarinet. Her friend said, clarinet? Why? Well, when you play the clarinet you can't sing along. Right? And some of us feel that way. Right? I don't, I don't feel I don't sing so well. And when it comes to talking about music here in the church and singing, there's kind of two groups of people, some of us would love to just sing the whole time. We'd like to sing for like 55 minutes and squeeze everything else into five minutes. And others of us, we just rather you gave us a clarinet. Right? Don't care that much for the singing.

But, you know, when we think of worship, and what happens in worship, we often think of worship being related to the singing, right? Because we have worship bands. We have worship teams, and we have worship pastors, and worship leaders, and there's praise and worship music. And so we tend to think of worship being music. But the truth is, worship is much more than that. Worship is anything that you do that's in harmony with God's will and plan. When you are kind to somebody, that's an act of worship, when you are forgiving, that's an act of worship. Right? Anytime you do something in harmony with God's will and plan, that's an act of worship. And so as we think about our worship service, the church service, the things we do are all worship, the greeting and greeting one another and acknowledging us being here in God's presence. That's an act of worship. Certainly the prayers are an act of worship, the singing is worship. The children's story is worship for the little people. listening to a sermon is an act of worship and contemplating on the Scriptures. And how does that apply to my life? That's an act of worship, giving is an act of worship. This is all worship. But if I did a poll of everybody here, and I said, What is the most important part of worship? You know, just the one thing that's most important? What do you think most people would say? The sermon, I would say most people would probably say the sermon. I'm not so sure that's true. I'm the one preaching and I'm telling you that so you know, I, for me, I think the prayers are the most important part of worship service. That's when we're seeking God most earnestly. And for me personally, the second most important part is the singing. Yea well, you're supposed to say that, you know, you're in the band. But it's not just that... most of us don't arrive at church ready to worship. Right? Maybe there's a stress to getting the family ready and loaded in the car or traffic and that goober in front of you that just wouldn't get out of the way. Maybe it's the stress of just life in general, and what we're doing, or something's on us, we feel stressed because somebody we love is sick, you know, life is full of stress. And, and we don't always arrive at church, ready to worship. And the music helps us get ready for worship and helps us get ready for worship. And, you know, it's, oh, I have to cut how much I have a sermon. It's this long. And we have this much time so I'm squeezing here. So if I say things that don't make sense, because I cut something out already

I don't know if you guys remember the movie Wild Hogs from 2007. Right? Guys get a midlife crisis. And they all get Harley's and go on a road trip. And they stop somewhere in this little town, and there's going to be a fair or something going on. And one of the guys has a crush on a local, they're in town, and he wants to ask her to this event that's happening in this local fair, there's going to be a dance. They said,

but the problem is, I can't dance. Because the music moves me, but it moves me ugly. Right, it moves me ugly. And sometimes we feel that way about our singing. I can't sing, or I sing ugly. And we think that exempts us, from God's command to sing, the Bible commands us to sing. It's not just oh, by the way, if you have time, you should sing. It commands us to sing. Open your Bibles with me to Ephesians chapter 5, verse 19, this is the main verse of the day. We're going to spend quite a bit of time in Psalms but this is the main verse of the day Ephesians 5:19.

Everybody there?

it says, speak to one another with songs, hymns, and spiritual songs, sing and make music in your heart to the Lord. speak to one another in psalms, what else? hymns and spiritual songs. Now, we could spend a lot of time trying to identify what's the psalm and what's a hymn and what's a spiritual song, and what bucket do they go in? But I don't think that's what is meant here. I think what he means is all the spiritual songs that you got, whether they're Psalms or hymns, I don't care. See, Paul, Brother Paul had never been to the south. And he hadn't learned all y'all, right? Because there's a difference. You know, sometimes we say y'all, y'all are invited over. And all y'all are invited over and it's different. Okay, you got to learn the difference there. I'm not gonna tell you what the difference is today. That's for another sermon. But Paul hadn't learned the difference of all y'all, all the songs. I don't care whether that's a hymn or a praise song. I don't care whether it's a chorus, I don't care if it's called praise and worship. I don't care if you call it gospel, I don't care what you call it. If it's a spiritual song, that sings about God, use that. Sing those. Who are we supposed to sing them to? each other, speak to each other with the songs. And the first thing that comes to mind is some goofy musical where everybody sings the whole time, right? Hi, honey, I'm home. How are you today? You know, it's goofy. Right? Nobody sings all the time. I don't think that's what it means either. What it means is use the songs to help encourage each other. If somebody is going through something, maybe you can say, hey, this song is powerful. Right, the words to this song mean something. Listen to this. Okay? And then the second part of that is sing and make music in your heart to who? The Lord. Right? So we're supposed to make music to each other with each other, and to the Lord. It's both ways. It's not just us. It's not just vertical. It's both. This is important. Okay. So we should use all types of songs.

So I had about 27 points and I had to cut it down to 3. So here's three and let's see if we get through these.

Number one, we sing for joy. We sing for joy. Turn with me to Psalms 23 I'm sorry Psalms 32:11 Little dyslexic there Psalms 32:11. And we're going to be in Psalms a lot here. It says Rejoice in the Lord and be glad you righteous do what? Sing all you who are upright in heart. Now remember Joy and Happiness aren't the same thing. Happiness is something that happens to us due to external circumstances. I'm happy because Becky brought me a cookie today. Right? Or I'm happy because somebody and Becky didn't bring me a cookie, by the way. So I'm just planting a seed for future Sabbaths. You know, something nice happens to us. And we were happy. Somebody we know and love says hi to us ask us how we're doing. It makes us feel good. We're happy. They acknowledged us. Whatever. Okay. Joy comes from somewhere inside. It comes from God. I can be joyful in dark, troublesome times. I can't be happy in dark troublesome times. Okay, so there's a difference there. So we he's talking about we sing for joy, we have joy.

Probably the most famous singer of the Bible is who? DAVID Right. But he had a harp and he could sing, he could play. He played for the King. Wrote lots of songs that we have here in the Bible. And we all know him and he sang. And he grew up to be a man after God's own heart. Partially, not always, but partially because he had a song.

Donald Husted once wrote "somehow, about 40% of churchgoers seem to have picked up the idea that singing in churches is for singers. The truth is singing is for believers. And the relevant question is not Do you have a voice? But do you have a song?" Do you have a song to sing? Right? If I put a painting up here, from a master, right, a Rembrandt, a Van Gogh? I don't know where I stole this painting from to get it. But wherever, right we got this beautiful painting from a master here. And over here, we had some artwork from a five year old. Which one is worth more? Depends. This one's probably worth more, right, the master might be worth millions. Which one's better?

That might depend, right? What if this like Gustavo said, what if this was your son's painting or your grandson's painting? Now it has a different value, doesn't it? Right, now it has a different value. This one might be objectively better. This one would be subjectively better, right? And so you know, there's a reason that we sing. Because we love God, and the joy that we have, right? And let's be honest, none of us can sing as good as what's in heaven. Right? The best singer on the planet, whoever that is, can't sing as good as they sing in heaven. So whatever we have here on Earth looks like the five year old painting, instead of the masterpiece, God doesn't want us to sing, because somehow he needs our praises. We're not going to unpack this this week. We're gonna leave this for another week. But God doesn't need us to worship for him. Right? God's a perfect God, he's complete. He doesn't need my worship. We must worship for a different reason, besides the fact that God needs it. I'm gonna let you think about that one for a while, okay. And singing is not just a declaration of our joy. But singing can make us joyful. Right? Music affects your mood, right? Your playlist that you listen to when you go to the gym and workout. What kind of music is that? upbeat, right, let's get going. What kind of music is on your playlist when you want to relax and take a nap? It's not that upbeat music right? It makes you jittery. You won't go to sleep. Right? We know that music can affect us. Right? There's some been some studies on that real quick in 1998. They found out that music stimulates the auditory nerves and creates brain messages that ripple through the body, influencing muscle tone and joint flexibility. And as the music changed in tempo and volume, the heart acted as a natural pacemaker and our breathing slowed up and speeds slows down or speeds up along with the music. And a study of Michigan found that 15 minutes of listening to music, increases immune chemicals, vital to fighting disease, and reduces the stress hormones by 25%. In just 15 minutes of listening to music. Another study in 2001 found that burn victims I think burns are probably the worst thing that can happen to people burn victims were encouraged to sing while they changed their bandages. And they experienced less pain. Cancer patients who listened to music or practiced with an instrument got better faster than those who didn't. Music affects us in so many ways.

And it's not just physically, but it can be emotionally too. Right? If you've listened to any popular music here recently, you know that a lot of that music has questionable things in it. Right violence and promotes alcohol and drug use. Immorality. There's all kinds of stuff in some of the music on the radio these days. In all varieties, it's not just right, they all have a country, rock, rap. It's all there. Okay. And we don't need a study to know that. But when we're singing uplifting music, music that is about God, is to God, that praises God. What does that do for our souls? it uplifts us music affects us, it will point us in that direction. Okay. But we need a song. So it's important to be listening to this kind of music whether

it's on the radio, there's two Christian radio stations in LA. If you got an old school car like me that you can't hook your phone up to those two Christian music radio stations there. Of course on your phone, Spotify, lots of Christian music you can listen to that will be uplifting and help you have a song.

Number two, we sing to rejoice in the blessings God has given us. Okay, we sing to rejoice in the blessings God has given us. Let's turn to Psalms 105. Verses 1 to 4. Psalms 105"1-4

It says Give thanks to the Lord call on his name. Make known among the nations what he has done, sing to him, sing praised him, tell of all his wonderful acts, glory in His holy name. Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Look to the Lord and His strength seek His face always. What are we supposed to do? Sing praises seek the Lord. I've heard people argue about music that we sing in church. And should it be ABOUT God? Or should it be TO God? Slight difference there, right? I could sing about somebody or I could sing to somebody, right? We've heard songs like this on the radio, love songs, right? We're singing about the love of their life. They're singing about somebody. Or you'll be singing to somebody. It's a special song. Right? But this tells us we're supposed to do both. Sing to him. Sing praise to Him. Tell of all his wonderful acts. sing about him. Both of them have a place in our songs that we're supposed to do. We sing to God and we sing about God. Remember the story we're not going to turn to right now. But remember the story in Acts chapter 16. Where Paul and Silas get arrested for preaching... horrible crime. And they get beaten and thrown in jail. Remember this story right? What are they doing when they get thrown in jail? Singing I don't know about you. But if I just got beaten and thrown in jail I don't know that I'm going to be singing right? I'm gonna be over in the corner going man that hurt. I don't like that. Complaining. Right. But they're singing. And Acts 16:25 tells us is about midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God and the other prisoners were listening to them. That's kind of funny too, because, you know, who was midnight and somebody was keeping me up, you know, what might you be tempted to say, be quiet, trying to sleep. But they were listening. And then in verse 26, suddenly, there was a such a violent earthquake, that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And all at once the prison doors flew open and everybody's chains came loose. Did that happen because of their song? No, nobody can sing and cause an earthquake. Okay, but their song ascended to heaven, and enabled God to do these things, right. The music doesn't do it. God is the one that does it. Okay. But their faith is kind of like the singing was like a faucet that they were able to turn on and receive a pipeline of God's power. God says to sing, not if you can sing, but sing. We don't know that Paul and Silas were great singers. Right? They might have been really bad singers, especially after getting beaten, right? That could affect your voice. Okay.

Last point number three. We sing his praises. Okay, we sing his praises. Let's go to Psalms 149. 1 to 5. Psalms 149:1-5. Says praise the Lord. Sing to the Lord a new song is praise in the assembly of the saints. Let Israel rejoice in their maker. Let the people of Zion be glad in their king. Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with tambourine and heart. For the Lord takes delight in his people. He crowns the humble with salvation. Let the saints rejoice in this honor, and sing for joy on their beds. There's a lot in here, right? We're supposed to sing in church in the assembly of the saints are supposed to sing in our beds. We're supposed to praise God or dance and tambourines and harps. The Lord takes delight in his people. Okay, there's a lot to unpack there.

But one thing that kind of strikes me about that verse more than any others, and we've talked about these silos of music, we have hymns, we have spiritual songs, and praise songs and worship songs, and we would put all the songs. For those of you who are old like me, you remember going to the music

store, right? Who here remembers going to the music store? Oh, thank goodness aren't the only old one. Right? And all the songs were they were in categories, right? Rhythm and Blues is over here. And, and rock is over there. And country music is over there. It's all categorized somehow in this music store. And sometimes you had that band, where you weren't sure if that was a country band or a folk band. Right? Where are they at? I don't I don't know how to find them. Okay. But we categorize all this music. But there's another way to categorize this music by its style. We can also cut this way. And we can say we have old songs and new songs. Right? We have old songs and new songs. We like old songs and new songs. I remember the first time I was listening to the radio, and the songs that I grew up with and listened to in high school was on the oldies station. It's a horrible day in your life. Okay, all of a sudden, you know, who gave him permission to put my music on the oldies station. But we like old songs. They have value. Turn with me to Psalms 120. And tell me what are the first four words of that song? What are the first four words of Psalm 120? Before that

should say Psalm 120 and have a little text says A Psalm of Ascent. Sometimes it might say I think he James has a song of degrees. You said the psalms of Jerusalem, ascent to Jerusalem. Okay, what does Psalm 121 Say? Same thing 122 123 All the way up to like 134 or 5. There's 15 palms, I think there that all start out with. It's a Psalm of Ascents. And scholars believe that these songs are the songs that the Jews sang when they ascended up to Jerusalem, when it was time to go up to Jerusalem for the Holy Days, the festival days, they would sing the songs. And if you were a Jew, and you were working in the field, and you heard people going by singing the songs, what did you know? It's time to go to Jerusalem. It's like Christmas music for us. Right? What do you know, when you hear Christmas music? It's Christmas time. You know, unless you live with some goofball that plays Christmas music all year round. hate those people. Christmas music's only for Christmas, right? Just kidding. If you if you like Christmas music, it's alright. But you know, they have the songs and these old songs. And these old songs are familiar. They're mile markers for us. They remind us of things. And that's great and wonderful. But sometimes old songs have a problem. They're old. And they stop having the meaning they once did. We just sing them by rote. We don't we don't have a feeling any more of God's power, His grace or whatever we're singing about. Because we sang the song 100 times. Right? You ever had that happen? We're gonna open the hymn or we're gonna sing this song. We're like, Not again please. You're listening to the radio "don't play that song again. I'm changing the channel," right? We get tired of the songs.

And so we also have new songs. And God tells us a lot of places do this. We're not have time to look at all the verses. I put them there in your notes. We're just gonna bang through them real quick here. Psalms 96 cuts off on mine. You can see it. Psalms 96:1 Sing to the Lord a new song Sing to the Lord all the earth. Psalms 144 I will sing a new song to you oh God on the 10 string lyre. I will make music to you. Psalms 149 Sing praise to the Lord Sing to the Lord a what? A new song. His praise is in the assembly of the saints. He put a new song In My Mouth a hymn of praise to our God. And it's not just Psalms here's a Revelation 5:9, and they sang what? A new song you are worthy to take the scroll and to open it seals because you are slain and you and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people in nation. This one's kind of weird. I love time travel movies, because you know, they always mess with your mind. Here's a prophecy that tells us we're going to sing a new song but tells us what the song is. So how's it new? Because nobody has sung it yet. Nobody has sung that song yet in that situation, and is going to be a new song we will sing. What's it going to sound like? Don't know. Don't know. But we look forward to a new song. Okay. And new songs help us why? Because you know

the old songs get old and then we have the new songs. And the new songs make us think about the words. They get us out of our comfort zone. They make us think differently and do something a little different. We go to Lamentations 3:22 and 23 which is a book we are hardly ever go to. Does His compassions never fail. They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness. Recognize that song? Huh? But at one point that was a new song to somebody. Right? That was a new song. Great is your faithfulness.

If God is not doing something new for you, then you can't have a new song. The question is not Do you have a voice? But do you have a song? Do you have a song? We form My collective voice and we make a joyful noise together. There was a lady that was quoted as saying, I don't have a great voice. But it's the voice God gave me. And I think he wants to hear it. Amen. Any church that lets me lead the music should know that you don't have to have a great voice to sing. Because, I'm not a great singer. All the other singers on the platform sing better than I do, and hide my imperfections. Okay, Pilar is up here, grinning at me, but she she's the one that I listened to and follow. So we have these voices that we need, right? We need them all together. It's not just the people on the platform. It's the people in the pews cuz you take the music home to somebody else. Amen.

I love it. When I walk around the house, sometimes I hear Linda. Linda's not a big singer. But she'll have her earbuds in and she's humming along with the music. I can hear her humming along with the music. And I know that she's happy. And she's enjoying that time. It makes me happy because she's happy. And I think when God sees us singing and praising, it makes him happy. The same way. Amen.

Reflections. Something to think about, am I following the Bible's commands to worship together and to sing? That's a question we need to ask ourselves. Are we doing this? I know sometimes we can't always be here. We have travel, we have illnesses, things happen. That's okay. But by and large, are we trying to get together to worship and to sing? Then our challenge for this week, is Sing, hum, listen, whistle, whatever you do, you know, listen to more Christian music this week, and make it a point of being at church during the musical worship time. Amen,

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, thank you so much. For the music that we have, Lord, it makes our lives complete. The world would be just a horrible place without the music. Thank you for the gift of music that you've given us. Thank You that we can sing praises to you and we can honor you and Lord help us to find a song that we can honor you with. That song may change from time to time Lord and that's okay. As you do new things in our lives, we need new songs to keep us moving forward while still remember in the old songs. Thank you for all that you do for us God. Thank you for the music. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to worship You. Jesus name we pray. Amen.