**Our Worship in Song**

*Psalm 104:33*

**Introduction**

1. Song worship is perhaps the most popular aspect of worship among Christians.
   1. This is stated as a personal observation.
      1. More excitement over singings than bible studies.
      2. More excitement over congregational singing nights than gospel meetings.
      3. Congregations are trending toward shorter sermons and more songs for the worship period.
   2. This is not necessarily a good thing.
      1. Not wrong to enjoy singing songs to the Lord – this is something He wants us to be passionate about! (**cf. Psalm 95:1** – come, let us sing!)
      2. However, must ask the question: why is song worship often the most popular?
         1. The melodic aspect?
         2. The emotional effects brought on by the music?
         3. Are we enthusiastic about song worship because we get to show off our own ability in song?
      3. Think: is there as much joy in singing with a group of 15 than there is with a group of 500? (If not, why not?)
2. What does the Bible say about our worship in song? How is that supposed to look? What does God expect of us? What should be the focus of our song worship? How should we view our worship in song?
3. We Must be Focused on God
4. God is the object of all worship.
   1. **Psalm 104:33** – Sing to the Lord, to God.
      1. **(v. 34)** – the meditation involved in song worship is not simply to benefit ourselves and each other, but to please God.
   2. We must not forget Who this is for:
      1. Not overly focused on the melody that we water down or block out the message.
      2. Not choosing songs that appeal to us, but THAT REPRESENT WHAT GOD WANTS.
      3. Not singing to impress others with our talent, or holding back lest we be embarrassed with a lack of talent, but bursting forth in praise to HIM.
   3. **Hebrews 13:15** – our song worship is a sacrifice to God!
      1. Must not abuse the sacrifices as corrupt priests (**cf. 1 Peter 2:5** – priests offering spiritual sacrifices) – **1 Samuel 2:12-17** – Hophni and Phinehas taking more than their allotted portions, and abusing the sacrifice, thus tainting it.
      2. ARE WE TAKING MORE THAN OUR ALLOTTED PORTION IN SONG WORSHIP BY MAKING IT ABOUT OURSELVES?
5. The aspects of song worship must reflect this.
   1. Focused on God – **Psalm 66:1-4**
   2. About God, and His will – **Ephesians 5:17-21** – will of the Lord, filled with the Spirit, to God the Father. (**cf. Colossians 3:16** – word of Christ)
6. We Must be Engaged
7. God is not pleased with rote.
   1. This seems to be obvious, but some do not participate in the song worship.
      1. They sit in silence, perhaps because they don’t like singing.
      2. They get distracted with various things.
      3. Etc.
   2. Some who participate do so without any thought. They know the songs by heart, and tend to just go through the motions.
      1. If you asked them what the song was about immediately after it was finished they might not even remember what song they sang.
   3. **Cf. Matthew 6:7** – concerning prayer.
      1. Vain repetitions – “meaningless repetition”
      2. Not condemning using the same words and phrases, but a formulary prayer repeated verbatim successively and excessively for the sake of volume. (Mindless because of repetition – lost meaning, if it ever had any meaning.)
      3. DO WE MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE WITH SINGING? ARE WE ENGAGED IN THE SONG, OR IS IT MEANINGLESS REPETITION?
8. This is an individual responsibility.
   1. **Ephesians 5:19** – speaking to one another. (**cf. Ephesians 4:16** – every joint supplies, every part does its share.)
      1. While we are singing together, it starts with individual effort.
      2. Parts make the whole. Are you doing your part?
   2. **Colossians 3:16** – does the word dwell in us RICHLY when we sing?
      1. “let it inhabit you as if you were the house and home of this Word, let it do this in a rich way by filling every nook and corner of your being with its blessed, spiritual wisdom.” (Lenski)
      2. Such requires an engaged mind.
9. We Must be Fervent in Spirit
10. Our singing must be with fervency.
    1. **Romans 12:11** – fervent in spirit.
       1. Fervent – *zeō*; a primary verb; to be hot (boil, of liquids; or glow, of solids), i.e. (figuratively) be fervid (earnest). (Strong)
       2. **Cf. Revelation 2:1-5** – left first love. Doing good things, but without fervor. Not fully engaged in mind and zeal.
          1. Are our minds churning with the sentiment of the songs?
       3. **Cf. Revelation 3:14-16** – God is not pleased with lukewarm worship!
    2. **Cf. James 5:13** – a practical look:
       1. Those who are cheerful are told to sing, and often do so without any such instruction.
       2. THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY AND NATURALLY ENGAGED.
    3. We should look forward to singing, and take joy in such – **Psalm 95:1-7**
11. We must be sincerely moved by the songs we sing. (Not melodically, but spiritually)
    1. NOT A CALL TO FABRICATED FERVENCY – SINCERITY.
    2. Not moved by the melody merely, but more importantly by the sentiment of the song.
       1. **Cf. John 4:24** – worship in spirit and truth.
          1. “A pure, a holy, a spiritual worship, therefore, is such as he seeks - the offering of the soul rather than the formal offering of the body - the homage of the heart rather than that of the lips.” (Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Bible, John 4:24)
       2. Spirit and truth go hand in hand – SINCERELY INVOLVED AND MOVED BY SONG WORSHIP ACCORDING TO THE TRUTH PROCLAIMED.
    3. NOT EMOTIONALISM – one who isn’t very emotional can be moved spiritually by the songs we sing.
    4. EXAMPLE:
       1. Are we affected by the truth of Christ’s death? – “When my love to Christ grows weak, when for deeper faith I seek, then in thought I go to Thee, garden of Gethsemane. There I walk amid the shades, while the lingering twilight fades, see that suffering, friendless One, weeping, praying there alone…There behold His agony, suffered on the bitter tree; see His anguish, see His faith, love triumphant still in death.” (When My Love To Christ Grows Weak, J.R. Wreford, Mrs. Jos. F. Knapp) (**cf. Revelation 2:4** – left first love?)
       2. Are we affected by the description of heaven? – “We read of a place that’s called heaven, it’s made for the pure and the free; these truths in God’s word He has given, how beautiful heaven must be. In heaven, no drooping nor pining, no wishing for elsewhere to be; God’s light is forever there shining, how beautiful heaven must be. The angels so sweetly are singing, up there by the beautiful sea; the song of redemption is ringing, how beautiful heaven must be. How beautiful heaven must be, sweet home of the happy and free; fair haven of rest for the weary, how beautiful heaven must be.” (How Beautiful Heaven Must Be, A. S. Bridgewater, A. P. Bland)
12. We Must Understand the Songs We Sing
13. Sing with the understanding.
    1. **1 Corinthians 14:15** – singing with the understanding.
       1. Context – spiritual gifts; tongue speaking. (In prayer and song.)
       2. With THE spirit – HS – Spiritual gift – inspired speaking.
       3. Without an interpreter – **1 Corinthians 14:1-5, 15-17** – need for understanding of what is spoken for edification.
    2. **Ephesians 5:17-19** – understand the will of the Lord. HOW? Speaking in psalms, hymns, spiritual songs.
    3. **Colossians 3:16** – word of Christ dwell in you – “TEACHING AND ADMONISHING”
    4. To miss the teaching nature of singing is to miss it all!
    5. Our songs must be FILLED WITH SCRIPTURE. We must understand what we are singing to get anything out of it, and for it to be pleasing to God.
14. Do we own the lyrics with full intent of doing what we claim in song, and what we encourage and command each other to do?
    1. **Colossians 3:16** – teaching and admonishing; **Ephesians 5:19-21** – submitting to one another (as we teach each other the truth through song)
       1. God expects our singing to have meaning.
       2. As the songs are to be scriptural, so our thoughts should be as they are when we study the scripture – **cf. James 1:22-25** – be doers of the word!
    2. Do we sing with the understanding, and sing with the intention of practicing what we teach each other in song?
       1. “As the deer pants for the water so my soul longs after You. You alone are my heart’s desire and I long to worship You.” (As The Deer) – DO WE LONG FOR THE LORD LIKE THIS?
       2. “Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way! Thou art the Potter; I am the clay. Mold me and make me after Thy will, while I am waiting , yielded and still.” (Have Thine Own Way, Lord) – ARE WE ALLOWING THE LORD TO MOLD US LIKE THIS?
       3. “Living for Jesus a life that is true, striving to please Him in all that I do; yielding allegiance, glad hearted and free, this is the pathway of blessing for me. O Jesus, Lord and Savior, I give myself to Thee, for Thou in Thy atonement, didst give Thyself for me; I own no other Master, my heart shall be Thy throne; my life I give, henceforth to live, O Christ, for Thee alone.” (Living For Jesus) – ARE OUR LIVES THIS DEVOTED TO JESUS?
       4. “Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee; E’en tho’ it be a cross that raiseth me, still all my song shall be, nearer, my God, to Thee! Tho’ like a wanderer, the sun gone down, darkness be over me, my rest a stone, yet in my dreams I’d be, nearer, my God, to Thee!” (Nearer My God To Thee) – DO WE TRULY WANT TO BE NEARER TO GOD KNOWING WHAT IT WILL COST US?

**Conclusion**

1. We are incredibly blessed by God’s design in song worship.
2. We need to examine ourselves to know we are fully invested in song worship, and are consistent with what scripture teaches about such.