

Sing to One Another
Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19

Intro: Context – God takes our singing seriously!

A. Colossians 3:1-17

1. Context of putting on the new self
2. Look how important this list is:
 - a. Put on a heart of... , bear with one another, forgive one another, put on love, let the peace of Christ rule... , do all in the name of the Lord

B. Ephesians 5:1-21

1. Context of imitating God / walking as children of Light
2. Another important list:
 - a. Walk in love, no immorality, let no one deceive you, walk as children of light, don't participate in darkness, make the most of your time, understand the will of the Lord, don't get drunk—filled with Spirit... , give thanks, be subject to one another

C. Singing is required by God in these lists—it is important to Him!

1. We should approach singing as seriously and joyfully as any task that God blesses us with

I. The Purpose of our Singing (Col 3:23—Eph 5:17)

A. Let the word of Christ dwell richly within you / be filled with the Spirit

1. First and foremost, singing is about our relationship and intimate connection with God Himself!
2. Jesus, the Spirit, and God involved in this activity—letting Them dwell within us
3. Being filled with the Spirit almost always = speaking/prophesying/singing – Luke 1:41, 1:67; Acts 2:4; 4:8
4. Romans 10:17 – our singing / hearing should be aimed at increasing our faith
5. God's word is intimately involved in our singing – it must be Scriptural!

B. Teaching and admonishing / speaking to one another

1. A good hymn / song must *teach!*
 - a. What requirements do we put on teaching? 1 Tim 4:16
 - b. Do we demand the same level of seriousness in our songs?
2. This is a “one another” action—not an audience/performance action

C. Singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God / singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks...

1. God has made music with a special connection to human emotion – Proverbs 25:20; James 5:13

II. The Activity of Singing

A. Singing is a physical activity

1. Sing – “to make musical sounds with the voice, especially with a set tune.”
2. Music requires:
 1. Tone / melody – Psalm 98:5
 2. Time / meter – “one another” - together
 3. Words / content – “word of Christ”
3. Just as other commands, some have more ability, but all should seek to develop effective singing skills with what talent the Lord has given them. Ex. Preaching

B. Singing is a mental activity

1. Teaching and admonishing requires the mind to be engaged and growing – Philippians 4:8
2. Some helpful teaching tools:
 - a. Truth! – James 3:1; Matt 18:6
 - b. Continuity / flow of thought / focus – Psalm 86:11
 - c. Thoughtful presentation – Col 4:5-6
 - d. Repetition – Hebrew poetry – Psalm 136
3. Some not-so-helpful teaching tools:
 - a. Error!
 - b. Random / unorganized thought
 - c. Cliché / thoughtless singing
 - d. Excessive repetition
4. Singing is a powerful memory tool for the mind – book of Psalms – N. Terrace

C. Singing is foremost a spiritual activity!

1. The heart of worship is not in any technical aspect of singing!
2. The technical aspects are required, as with any of God's commands, but the goal is to make them transparent through practice and mental focus
3. The *heart* is God's chosen instrument – Deut 6:5; Psalm 9:1; 86:12; 111:1
 - a. Focus on your heart when you sing – it's not just a feeling, it's a choice
 - b. Ex. "O Thou Fount of every blessing, Tune my heart to sing Thy grace"
 - c. We can have everything else right, but if the heart isn't there—singing is pointless!
4. When done correctly, look at the commands we fulfill!
 - a. Singing – Col 3:16; Eph 5:19
 - b. Teaching / admonishing – Col 1:28; 1 Thess 5:14
 - c. Encouraging one another – Heb 3:13
 - d. Seeking the Lord with all our heart! – Matt 22:37; Psalm 28:7

III. "Make His praise glorious!" –Psalm 66:2

A. What can we do on a practical level to worship God more effectively and encourage one another in song?

1. Prepare!
 - a. We can't just haphazardly worship God. – Ex. Tabernacle – Heb 9:6
 - b. Spend time in meditation before engaging in thoughtful worship. Psalm 46:10 – "Tune" your heart
2. Select appropriate songs.
 - a. There are many kinds of songs, hymns, and spiritual songs – "camp" songs, hymns, "chorus" songs, traditional songs, songs with a more contemporary feel, etc. – Encourage thoughtful song selection.
 - b. Remember the goal of our singing: To God and to one another. If a song detracts from that, even depending on the group, it's not effective worship.
3. Develop good worship habits
 - a. Every time we worship, we set a precedent for ourselves and others!

Conclusion: Our God is worthy of our very best!

A. Give God the first fruits of your worship in song—with your heart, then your lips

B. When worship is effective, we help one another grow and glorify our God! James 1:17