

'The Prayer 20/20 Impact'

July 12th, 2020

Dear Praying Friends, and Partners In Prayer Team, and whole Church Family,

"For we live by faith, not by sight."

2 Corinthians 5:7-9 (NIV)

*"He put a new song in my mouth,
a hymn of praise to our God.*

*Many will see and fear the LORD
and put their trust in Him."*

Psalm 40:3 (NIV)

*"Arise, shine; for your light has come,
And the glory of the LORD has risen upon you."*

Isaiah 60:1 (NASB)



The question I can't help but ask is: "How can I keep from singing?" Why am I even thinking about this wonderful little line from praise artist Chris Tomlin's well-known song that says:

"How can I keep from singing Your praise?

How can I ever say enough,

How amazing is Your love!

How can I keep from shouting Your name?

I know I am loved by the King,

And it makes my heart want to sing!" *(Chris Tomlin, 2006)

Why? Because I'm more and more convinced that songs of praise are a result of our salvation and redemption from Jesus. Even David proclaimed these words in describing how God drew him out of a pit these words, "He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay, and He set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm. He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God" (Psalm 40:2-3 NASB). Our salvation causes us to sing!

I don't know if you have seen the headlines from the California governor that have really shown nothing but prejudice and a hateful agenda towards churches and houses of faith. Here are the headlines: "Outrage after California bans singing in churches amid coronavirus pandemic!" Faith leaders are speaking out after California Gov. Gavin Newsom banned singing and chanting in houses of worship last week due to a surge in coronavirus cases following weeks of protests. This is what was said: "Places of worship must, therefore, discontinue singing and chanting activities and limit indoor attendance to 25 percent of building capacity or a maximum of 100 attendees, whichever is lower." The new guidelines read that as state health officials recommend churches have members sing online from their homes. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention officials point to singing as a proven way to spread a

virus as the Golden State recorded more than 11,700 new COVID-19 cases Sunday, the highest single-day count of any state. With over 271,000 confirmed cases and at least 6,366 deaths, California now has the second-highest number of cases behind New York. The big inconsistency has been as to why the governor allowed tens of thousands to march in protest rallies without masks, and why the governor isn't shutting down all "performances" and public expressions of song and concerts as a whole? Why just the churches? Why not shut down soccer and basketball and baseball which are reopening? Why not prohibit "cheering, chanting, and shouting" at sporting events?



Yes, unfortunately there were some examples of choirs that spread the coronavirus at the beginning of this pandemic. But, didn't we correct those errors? Didn't we pull back, shut down, and go virtual in our faith? Certainly, does this ban make churches the most responsible culprits for causing the rise in the virus? And we just started to reopen? Again, I don't advocate being unsafe, but how can we legislate a "virtue" and expression? Does anyone see the problem?

So this week I want to begin a two-week series through my Partners in Prayer to address the importance of singing and worship to the experiences of faith. I am not advocating being unsafe, but I am trying to prove that the expression of singing is an important part of our faith. I would hope that we are not persecuted and attacked extraordinarily as people of faith in a subtle way through this time of Covid-19 pandemic and I pray we are not unjustly pointed at and find that people are trying to shut churches down. We can hold back the singing and songs if it becomes necessary, but can we stop singing altogether? Should we be allowed not to "sing?"

Some people are really great singers and even if we aren't—that doesn't keep us from belting out a song of joy when we are in love or filled with the Spirit of God. The Lord provided us songs to express our feelings whether of sadness or pain.

This week I want to share with you ten Bible verses about singing and how they tie into the expression of our faith. Next week I want to share with you guiding principles for what we choose to sing and how to decide what are good church songs for worship.

How can we not ...

#1) Sing of freedom - Psalm 68:6?

"God sets the lonely in families, he leads out the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land" (Psalm 68:6).

Many of us know what it's like to be bound by Satan, the world, or the desires of our flesh. Being imprisoned by the deceit of the devil can take away our song. Yet because of our newfound freedom in Christ, we find great joy in singing with all our hearts to the Lord.

How can we not ...

#2) Sing of God's love - Psalm 89:1?

"I will sing of the Lord's great love forever; with my mouth I will make Your faithfulness known through all generations" (Psalm 89:1).

We are saved because of God's great love for us even when we were most unlovable. His unconditional love gives us a reason to sing of His goodness and grace on our lives. God expressed His love through the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for every person on this earth.

How can we not ...

#3) Sing of what God has done - Psalm 132:9?

"Sing to Him, sing praise to Him; tell of all His wonderful acts" (Psalm 105:2).

God has done and will continue to do great things in the lives of those who love Him. Our immediate response to Him is lifting up grateful hands and singing a song of praise. Singing allows us the opportunity to speak out about what He has done: broken chains of darkness, forgiven sin, and restored strength to those who are weak.

How can we not ...

#4) Sing for joy - Psalm 132:9?

"May Your priests be clothed with Your righteousness; may Your faithful people sing for joy" (Psalm 132:9).

Singing is a great expression of joy for the Lord and His wonderful works for us. Joy from the Lord can't be restrained when we know and sense His presence in our lives. The world can only offer temporary happiness, but the joy of God lasts now through eternity.

How can we not ...

#5) Sing for your whole life - Psalm 104:33?

"I will sing to the Lord all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live" (Psalm 104:33).

The beauty of knowing Christ is that the song of deliverance can last our entire lives. We can never outgrow the wonder of God or His miraculous hand over our lives. Even in our last breathing hours on this earth, we can sing about the hope of heaven before we even arrive. I want to add another reference as I was reading this week in Psalm 42:8. David is thirsting for God. He likens his thirst as a deer pants for the waters of a brook. David then said: "The Lord will

send His faithful love by day; His song will be with me in the night—a prayer to the God of my life” (vs. 8 HCSB). Did you catch that? His expressions of songs during the night are prayers to His living God. Songs are prayers and expressions of love to God.

How can we not ...

#6) Sing a new song - Isaiah 42:10?

“Sing to the Lord a new song, His praise from the ends of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and all that is in it, you islands, and all who live in them” (Isaiah 42:10).

There are new songs to sing to the Lord every day because He is always doing new things in our lives to show His power and presence. We can look to Him to refresh our spirits when we are low with a new song of joy and peace. Our part of this newness is to be aware, humble, and open to what the Lord is doing in our lives.

How can we not ...

#7) Sing in times of trouble - Acts 16:25?

“About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them” (Acts 16:25).

Singing in the darkest moments of our lives seems strange. However, it’s what God’s people should do when we are struggling in literal or emotional prisons. We sing our way free from the bondage of fear and anxiety—in doing so, our faith is strengthened to press forward another day.

How can we not ...

#8) Sing with gratitude - Colossians 3:16?

“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts” (Colossians 3:16).

We have a reason to sing with gratitude to the Lord every time we wake up to a new day filled with grace and mercy. Many times we forget to express our gratefulness in the busyness of our lives. However, we can sing songs of thankfulness for God’s goodness to us individually and corporately as a church. This is an important “didactic” expression to teach and grow people. Singing helps people learn. Isn’t that what “Sesame Street” and our children’s programs have taught us? Learning things through song can make things stick with us for a lifetime. Singing is a tool for learning and wisdom.

How can we not ...

#9) Sing with understanding - 1 Corinthians 14:15?

“So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my

understanding; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding” (1 Corinthians 14:15).

When we sing to the Lord, it’s more than a beat or rhythm that makes it real. The words we sing must resonate with our understanding of who God is and what He means in our lives. Singing with understanding gives us the connection in our minds and hearts with the beauty of knowing God.

How can we not ...

#10) Sing from the heart - Ephesians 5:19?

“Speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:19).

There are many people associated with the knowledge of God in their minds, but they don’t know Him in their hearts. So it is with singing to the Lord. In order for us to really connect and know the Lord in song, we must know Him in our hearts. That is, knowing Jesus Christ as Lord and living out His commands. Even when the Pharisees of Jesus day told the Lord to make His disciples and followers stop praising and singing, what did Jesus reply? But Jesus answered, “I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!” (Luke 19:40). So, do you think that there will be stones singing in California if the ban holds and is passed?

Sing your songs to God! Even in world-evangelism as we fulfill the Great Commission through the earth, our songs arise as part of this outreach. Isaiah 60 is a great missionary and evangelistic passage, and it says this: “Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; but the Lord will raise upon you and His glory will appear upon you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.” (Is. 60:1-3 NASB). This is talking about the coming of Messiah to the world, the raising of the people of Israel, and the culmination of the world as worshiping the One true King Jesus someday when He comes. Celebration for all that happens and what God has done for us is an essential part of our worship. In short, singing is part of our essential worship and praise of God. Is there a way to keep the expressions of worship without stopping or muzzling churches and people of faith? Can one stop the whole world from expressions of joy and love which we all feel and say through songs? Are we banning the expression of public singing that happens when in the streets of New York City, blocks of people sing out their apartment windows? If they are attacking people of faith, why are they not focused on people without faith or every expression of singing and songs? Why are they not stopping “cheering, shouting, and chantings?” As we recover from the impact of a global pandemic and turn our minds toward the coming national elections, now, more than ever, we should be in prayer for our nation! Do you see my concern for this issue? Is the enemy trying to

silence “Christ’s song?”

Singing rises out of the essence of our souls. We don’t have to be trained singers or gifted in singing to raise our voices and hearts to Him in praise. Our thankfulness in the song will lift His name in the presence of saints and sinners. We never know how God will use our singing of personal testimonies to bring someone to Jesus. So, how can we as believers keep from “singing our praise?”

Will you pray with me?

“Our Heavenly Father and King, we come to You today as people who would rather govern our own lives than submit to Your rule and shepherding. Instead of bowing down in reverence, full of awe and wonder that You, the almighty creator King of the universe should stoop so low and care for us, we often treat You as a servant who should do our bidding and meet all our desires. Instead of honoring the wonderful and merciful Father that You are to us, we run from Your goodness and love toward the false and dangerous hopes of our desires and idolatries. Our inability to discipline our wandering ways results in such hurt and brokenness in our lives and families. Jesus, thank You for worshipping Your Father with unwavering faith and unshakable hope on our behalf. Thank You for saving us, and putting a ‘new’ song in our hearts. Holy Spirit, we are utterly feeble and weak, and we need Your power to work in us. Put a ‘new’ song in our hearts! Help us know how to keep singing! Help us to keep showing others that they also can know the joyful expressions of praise and song when Jesus comes to reign in their lives. Transform us into a people of praise. Open our lips to join the heavenly worship service and sing praise to our heavenly King, today, tomorrow, and forevermore. We pray in Jesus, the Giver of Life, and Master of Music, Amen.”

***How can I not sing and pray,
Pastor Corvin <><***

Quote: “Our songs and psalms sorely vex and grieve the devil, whereas our passions and impatiences, our complaining and crying, our ‘alas’ and ‘woe is me’ please him well; so that he laughs in his fist. He takes delight in tormenting us, especially when we confess, praise, preach, and laud Christ.”

... Martin Luther (1546)

Quote: “One reason we can hardly bear to remain silent is that it makes us feel so helpless. We are so accustomed to relying upon words to manage and control others. If we are silent, who will take control?” ... Richard J. Foster (1942)

