

Singing With Grace

Acceptable Worship:

Joh 4:24 God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship **Him must** (*imperative*) worship *Him* in spirit and in truth.

- We cannot worship God acceptably while lacking either “in spirit” or “in truth”. While spirit in this context speaks of the mental disposition (*nature*) of the inner being within all of us, it has to be done according to truth. We cannot worship God if our minds aren’t in it, or out of having to feel good through it. All our thoughts are to be void of the affairs of life outside and focused on the revering of the One, Who alone, can save us. There are those who are able to do that very thing but not according to the truth. Satan is quite the deceiver when it comes to man’s worship to his Maker. And just because we might know **how** to worship God in truth, if we don’t possess the right attitude toward it, we are found lacking when it comes to pleasing Him. So, what is truth?

Joh 17:17 Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth.

- The truth is found in His words contained in our Bibles. That’s where we find **how** He desires to be worshipped. There are multiple passages that show where God cannot lie. One of which is Num 23:19.

Num 23:19 God *is* not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do *it*? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?

- Therefore as Jesus commented when tempted after His baptism, we are to rely on the nourishment of His word more so than the nourishment that would sustain us physically. Remember, God spoke the physical into existence so He knows what our physical bodies need as much as He knows what we need spiritually.

Mat 4:4 But He answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

- Both are important! The physical sustains us in this temporal environment while the spiritual sustains us into the eternal. How much more important is it then that we hold to the spiritual foundations given in order to know true worship?

Heb 2:1 Therefore we ought to give **the more earnest heed** to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip. 2 For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; 3 How shall we escape, **if we neglect so great salvation**; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *Him*; 4 God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will? (*Emp. Added*)

- Our very salvation depends on worshipping God according to the parameters He has set, even thru our music!

Music in worship of the Old Testament

Psa 7:17 I will praise the LORD according to His righteousness: and will **sing praise** to the name of the LORD most high. (*Emp. Added*)

- Singing under the Old Testament was not something only for the Levites. Old and New denote a difference is to be understood between the one and the other. New gives the idea of a more up-to-date model to something that became obsolete. Like a new and improved laundry detergent or this year's model vehicle compared to last year's. Or like certain Israelites who decided to go into the promised land after their latest command was not to. They were first told to go into Canaan but many decided not to after listening to the negative report from ten spies who were dismayed by what they saw in the land. It was then that God issued a new command to return to the wilderness but a few who rebelled **that** command instead went into the land only to be discomfited by the Amalekites. And so it is with the two Covenants. The New made the Old obsolete.

Heb 8:13 In that He saith, A new *covenant*, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. (*And it did.*)

- As the worship in the Old was ended to make room for the worship of the New, likewise the music of the Old was done away with to make room for the music of the New. The only thing that remains the same is the One to Whom we focus our adoration toward.

2Ch 29:25 And he set the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: **for so was the commandment** (*this was a direct command*) **of the LORD by His prophets.** 26 And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets. 27 And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the LORD began **also with** the trumpets, and **with** the instruments *ordained* by David king of Israel. (*Emp. Added*)

- The Divine command was given to the Israelite nation under the Old Covenant where the priests under **that** Testament were to be provided with mechanical (*non-anatomical*) instruments of music.

Heb 9:1 Then verily the first *covenant* had also ordinances of divine service, and a **worldly** sanctuary (*made "according to the pattern" [Ex 25:8-9] and made with hands whereas the N.T. sanctuary was made "without hands" [Dan 2:34]*). (*Emp. Added*)

- But that system of worship, by man's interference, could have been, and indeed was, corrupted when those under it felt their way was better than what was given by God. Samuel asked Saul a rhetorical concerning this.

1Sa 15:22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, *and* to hearken than the fat of rams.

- It is never to be about what **we** like in our worship to God through song, but is always to be about what He has commanded and expects. Only complete obedience to His will is what will please Him.

Music in worship of the New Testament

Heb 8:13 In that He saith, A new *covenant*, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

- Along with the statutes and commandments of the Old went the requirements that we worship in the same manner they did under its precepts.

Heb 9:10 *Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and **carnal** (Gk.4561- as the symbol of what is external) ordinances, imposed on them **until** the time of reformation. (Emp. Added) (Thus showing the O.T. system was only to be a temporal system.)*

- There are even those in the church who mutate the Greek language in order to find a way to show how mechanical instruments (*external forms of making music*) are to be accepted in our worship of today. These are the “carnal” (*or external*) ordinances they try to impose on the church according to **their** interpretations. They cite the Greek language in general to make their case when that ancient Koine (*common*) language is no longer used at present day as a primary dialect even in Greece.

“Languages must be understood in the period and in the locality in which they were used. This is true of the Greek language. Neither the Attic Greek (classical Greek) of an earlier period nor the Greek of a later period consistently reflect the meaning of the Koine Greek of the New Testament.”
A CAPPELLA MUSIC, WHY? By Owen Olbright

- We can’t use a later form or use of any given word as an explanation of what it was originally intended to mean. Words have different meanings depending on the age they are used in and in the context in which they were used. The word “gay” as used in the US in the early 1900s, has changed within the last century from, as it was then, “happy” to the most recent meaning in the later 1900s/ 2000s, “homosexual”. Another word, “square” back then would have meant “honest, honorable”. Even when I was a Cub Scout, part of our recited oath was “*to do my best, to do my duty, to God and my country, **to be square** and to obey the laws of the pack*”. That meaning has since changed to where one is understood as being “dull, conventional and prude”. So when attempting to understand the original meaning of any word throughout the Bible, we should be willing to go to the original definition to understand the meaning and context wherein it was used. Such is the case with the word *psallo* which has been misconstrued to mean something altogether different than what it was originally intended to mean.

Eph 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

- The more “Spirit filled” a person is the more he/she is able to sing with grace in their hearts. As we fill our inner man with the word of God, which contains the words necessary to be guided by, we continue to fill our consciences with the understanding of Who God is and what He requires of us, **especially** when it comes to worshipping Him. Thus, a person that is led by the word of God is said to also be led by the Spirit of God. The more we fill our inner thoughts with the Bible the more we are “filled with the Spirit” which is necessary to allow...

Col 3:15 And let the peace of God rule (*Gk.1018- govern*) in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; **teaching** and **admonishing** one another in psalms and hymns and

spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts **to the Lord**. 17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, **do all in the name** (*Gk.3686- authority*) **of the Lord Jesus**, giving thanks **to God** and the Father by Him. (*Emp. Added*)

- Whatever we do concerning our worship is to be done with the authority given by God without adding to or taking away from what was written! Why then (*Eph 5:18*) would the apostle refer to the sin of drunkenness right before giving a direct command on our music as it pertains to our worship toward God? Answer: Since alcohol has a tendency to blur the reasoning process of the mind, and God expects us to be of clear minds when we come before Him in any situation, let alone worship, then it goes to show that He has given specifics for us to heed to lest we err as did Nadab and Abihu when they offered “strange fire” in their function as priests in the Holy Place. (*Christians are the priests of the New Covenant.*) Their coals were to come from the altar of burnt sacrifices but obviously originated elsewhere as Lev 10:9 infers. Only the coals from that altar were to be mixed with the fragrant gum and placed on the altar of burnt incense. Just as our prayers are to be spoken by those of us who live a sacrificed life totally devoted to God. Prayers made otherwise are equal to offering up “strange fire before the Lord” (*Lev 10:1*).

Lev 10:8 And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying, 9 Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, **when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation**, lest ye die: *it shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations: 10 And **that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean**; 11 And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses. (*Emp. Added*)

- And it doesn't take being intoxicated to worship God unacceptably. Those who do worship unacceptably may not even know they are going against Biblical standards when they do such. But that won't be an excuse to fall back on as though God excuses sin under any circumstance. That's where “teaching” and “admonishing” are important factors to consider when seeking the difference between truth and error. The word admonish actually means “to put in mind, that is, to caution or reprove gently” (*Gk.3560*). Thus the need to understand every meaning to each verse of song as it is to be compared with scripture. This also is to impress upon us the need for daily Bible study.

Eph 5:19 **Speaking to yourselves** in psalms (*Gk.5568- a set piece of music, sacred ode*) and hymns (*Gk.5215- sacred ode*) and spiritual (*Gk.4152- non-carnal [carnal being external whereas spiritual deals with the inner man]*) songs (*Gk.5603- a chant or ode*), singing (*Gk.103- to sing*) and making melody (*Gk.5567- Thayer: to sing praise in honor of God*) in your heart (*Gk.2588- the thoughts or feelings*) **to the Lord**; 20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; (*Emp. Added*)

- Sadly, there are those who try to incorporate a **different** meaning of the Greek word *psallo* in an effort to change it to fit their agenda for a more enjoyable, outward experience in worship. Who or what is our focus anyway when we worship in song?

Rom 15:3 For even Christ pleased not Himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell on Me. (*Emp. Added*) (*Is man to think he is better than Christ?*)

Worship and edification.

1Co 14:26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. **Let all things be done unto edifying.** (Emp. Added)

- Whether in the miraculous context of I Cor.14 or in general (“all”) everything we do should be done to uplift a fellow saint. We should never do things through arrogance, pride or with the express purpose of intimidation or doing anything that would put down or discourage a fellow Christian. Paul had all the gifts of an apostle but was never prideful or boasted of having even one of them.

1Co 14:18 I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: 19 Yet in the church **I had rather speak five words with my understanding**, that **by my voice I might teach others** also, than ten thousand words in an *unknown* tongue. 20 Brethren, be not **children** (Gk.3813- *immature Christian*) **in understanding**: howbeit in malice be ye children (Gk.3515- *innocent*), but **in understanding be men** (Gk.5046- *complete*). (Emp. Added)

- When we sing songs that pass Biblical scrutiny we are teaching one another through the words of truth addressed therein. In this sense we **are** teaching each other while at the same time worshipping God. Thus the two-fold nature that is to exist in spiritual music; worship God, teach each other. But there exists the tendency to go beyond truth in any statement directly given by God on any given subject. Sadly, worship is no exception. There seems to always be someone who can never be satisfied with just doing things the way God has intended without trying to make it more appealing to the human nature within us all.

“In fact, the innovations that are causing such a stir in the brotherhood are equivalent to the candy and soda that children prefer over eating their vegetables. To change the metaphor, they are pacifiers that spiritual infants need to keep them content.”

“If worship has become boring and un-meaningful to a member, so much so that he feels the need to change churches or liven up the worship assembly with theatrics, he has a spiritual, internal problem- a heart problem. His restless discontent is more of a reflection of his own spiritual condition than the status of the worship assembly.”

Piloting The Strait by Dave Miller

Col 2:23 Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship (Gk.1479- *voluntary piety*, that is, *sanctimony* [**pretend piety**]), and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

- These are the “wolves in sheep’s clothing” Jesus spoke of in Mat 7:15.

“Will worship is based upon what the worshiper wants instead of what God wants.”

Gary Hampton

- It is a façade worn by those who wish to impress the true worshipper with their supposed, self-imposed Biblical intellect. But any worshipper who understands the truth in this matter isn’t impressed with what their ignorance really reveals.

Mat 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may **see** your good works, and **glorify** your Father which is in heaven. (Emp. Added)

- Worship is to be from deep within, even to the depth of the soul, to be pleasing to God. It is such that can be observed by others. And that is not to say it is to be done in such a way as to be acting all energetic and excited as the charismatic movement has portrayed in their interpretation of this. We are to show a level of reverence, humility (*along with our joyful praise*) and understanding with regard to showing our respect and awe toward God and His Magnificence.

Ecc 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole *duty* of man. 14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil.

- In conclusion, as singing is only one part of our worship to God, He still seeks those who will worship Him, in every aspect whatever it might be, using our intellect, controlled emotions, knowledge and with application of truth.

1Co 14:15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will **sing with the spirit**, and I will **sing with the understanding** also. (*Emp. Added*)

- We close each service with an invitation to those who are not “in Christ”. As can be understood by the content of this lesson, we are always striving to ask what the truth is on any given Biblical subject. With that in mind, listed below is the Biblical pattern that God has given us in order to be saved.

#1.Have you heard?

Romans 10:14 ..."how shall they believe in Him **Whom they have not heard?**" (*Emp. Added*)

#2.Do you believe?

Heb 11:6 ..."for he that commeth to God **must believe that He is...**" (*Emp. Added*)

#3.Have you repented?

Act 3:19 ..."**Repent** ... be converted, that your sins may be blotted out..."

Rom 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; (*Emp. Added*)

#4.Have you acknowledged Christ as the Son of God, Who alone can save you?

Joh 14:6 I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.

#5.Have your sins been washed away?

Mar 16:16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

#6.If you've done all these things, have you remained faithful?

Romans 6:4 "...we also should walk in newness of life."

#7. Are you growing?

2Pe 3:18 But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen.

Charli Yana

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