



## Notes

### Why Do We Sing?

- First, we sing because we're commanded to.
  - The Psalms assume that Christians sing.
- Second, we sing because God is worthy of our songs.
  - Psalm 7:17, "I will give to the LORD the thanks *due* to his righteousness, and I will sing praise to the name of the LORD, the Most High."
  - Singing is something that we are consciously doing *in light of and in response to* God's character and attributes.
  - Repetition can be the killer of thoughtfulness.
  - If repetition can kill thoughtfulness, so can a brand new song.
  - If you are using your brain during the sermon, don't stop using it once we start singing
- Third, because we're made in God's image.
  - Genesis 1:26, "Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."
  - God has communicable attributes and incommunicable attributes—attributes we share with God, and attributes God has to Himself alone.
  - We serve a singing God.
    - Zephaniah 3:17: "The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing."
  - Singing is one precious and beautiful way that we can give God glory as image bearers.
- Fourth, songs help us remember. I
  - We're a forgetful bunch of people, but in God's kindness He has given us music to help our brains remember crucial doctrines that can carry us through the darkest nights.

### What Songs Should We Sing?

- First, a corporate worship song should be clear and understandable.
  - *How Great Thou Art*: Oh Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder consider all the world thy hands have made. I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder; thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed!
- An example of something that isn't clear? A song written by Chris Tomlin called, "At the Cross (Love Ran Red)":

There's a place where mercy reigns and never dies  
There's a place where streams of mercy and grace flow deep and wide



Where all the love I've ever found  
Comes like a flood  
Comes flowing down

At the cross, at the cross, I surrender my life  
I'm in awe of you, I'm in awe of you.  
Where Your love ran red and my sin washed white  
I owe all to you, I owe all to you.

- There's no mention of the wrath of God, Christ's atonement for our sins, our peace with God, or anything else. I wouldn't use that song to share the gospel with someone
- A song that is far more clear by Hillsong called "Man of Sorrows."

Man of sorrows lamb of God, by His own betrayed  
The sin of man and wrath of God has been on Jesus laid

Silent as He stood accused; beaten, mocked, and scorned  
Bowing to the Father's will, He took a crown of thorns

Oh that rugged cross, my salvation! Where your love poured out over me  
Now my soul cries out Hallelujah! Praise and honor unto thee!

Sent of Heaven God's own Son, to purchase and redeem  
And reconcile the very ones who nailed him to that tree.

Now my debt is paid, it is paid in full  
By the precious blood that my Jesus spilled  
Now the curse of sin has no hold on me  
Whom the Son sets free, oh is free indeed!

- The imputation of God's wrath to Christ and Christ's righteousness to us.
  - It mentions Jesus' sufferings, and His desire to accomplish the Father's will.
  - It celebrates the reality that Jesus was sent to purchase and redeem us, the very ones who nailed him to the tree.
  - Its rejoices that our debt is paid in full by Jesus' blood, and now as a result of it we have been set free.
- Second, worship songs should be accessible.
    - Accessible means that after clearly understanding what the song says, I can personally *identify* with the narrative or message of the song

Then sings my soul, my savior God to thee; how great thou art!

- Third, a corporate worship song should be a marriage between biblical truth and beauty.



- Truth simply means that everything that worship song says should be *true, right, and reflect/reference correct doctrines found in Holy Scripture.*
  - Should not be false, wrong, or contrary to correct doctrines found in Holy Scripture.
- Beauty means that *what* the worship song says should be said in a way that makes the truth *come alive and affect us.*

*The Love Of God Is Greater Far.*

Could we with ink the ocean fill,  
and were the skies of parchment made;  
Were every stalk on earth a quill,  
and every man a scribe by trade;  
To write the love of God above  
Would drain the ocean dry;  
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,  
Though stretched from sky to sky

- The verse above goes through great lengths to paint a mental picture for us of how vast God's love truly is.
- Fourth, corporate worship songs should be both catchy and easy to sing.
  - By catchy, I mean a song should be pleasant, memorable, and something people want to sing.
  - When I say easy to sing, I mean that the song should be in a range that is comfortable *for the congregation as a whole*, not necessarily for the worship leader.
    - *If people cannot sing with you than you aren't worship leading; you are worship performing.* One the one hand, we mentioned before if you can't sing with them that doesn't mean you disengage. But on the other hand, not every song we sing will be singable to everyone. As a general rule, however, corporate worship songs should be able to be sung corporately.
- Fifth and finally, corporate worship songs should universal.
  - Universal simply means that *almost anyone* can identify with the song.
  - Just as God's salvation is broad but particular, so to our songs should be accessible by the individual yet broadly universal to all Christians.

## Helpful Caveats

- First, do not become a cage-stage worship song critic.
  - Remember why we sing. It's not about you. It's about the Lord.
- Second, always look for the good first, then the bad.
  - Just because you wouldn't use a song, that doesn't mean it's unusable.
  - Philippians 4:8: "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."
    - Do you tend to see the bad first?