

A Singing Church

Week 3 - Commanded and Compelled to Sing

How Can I Keep From Singing?

VERSE 1

There is an endless song
Echoes in my soul
I hear the music ring
And though the storms may come
I am holding on
To the rock I cling

CHORUS

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

VERSE 2

I will lift my eyes
In the darkest night
For I know my Savior lives
And I will walk with You
Knowing You'll see me through
And sing the songs You give

BRIDGE

I can sing in the troubled times
Sing when I win
I can sing when I lose my step
And fall down again
I can sing 'cause You pick me up
Sing 'cause You're there
I can sing 'cause You hear me, Lord
When I call to You in prayer
I can sing with my last breath
Sing for I know
That I'll sing with the angels
And the saints around the throne

Class Goals

1. To discover why we sing
2. To consider how it impacts our faith
3. To cultivate a culture of family singing
4. To equip our church family for singing
5. To see congregational singing as a witness

Created to Sing (Week 1 Recap)

- Designed to Sing
- What if I Can't Sing?
- Singing in His Image
- Singing With All Creation

Bob Kauflin Sermon Video (Week 2 Recap)

- Why do we sing? Because we have a singing God!
- Music and the words are not supposed to oppose each other, God gave us music to serve the words we sing
- How does the music serve the words?
 - Singing can help us remember words
 - Use melodies that are effective
 - Best melodies from 300 years ago or 10 years ago?
 - Familiar and new melodies have a place in our singing
 - Sing words that God wants us to remember
 - Lyrics to our songs should reflect the themes of Scripture
 - Seek to memorize songs
 - Singing can help us engage emotionally with words
 - Cultural norms, major and minor keys
 - Assign memory associations to songs
 - Heightens emotional impact of words
 - Repeat words, lengthens words, pause to consider words
 - A broad emotional range in the songs we sing
 - Differentiate between emotionally moved and spiritually enlightened
 - Singing should be an emotional event
 - Emotions are a response to the truths we sing about God
 - Singing can help us use words to demonstrate and express our unity
 - Singing together tends to binds us together
 - Every voice in the church matters
 - The question is: "Do you have a song?"
 - Seek songs that unite rather than divide the church
 - The instruments should support the singing
 - Musical creativity has functional limits
 - It is the gospel, not music, that unites us
 - We don't gather around our musical preferences, we gather around Jesus, we gather around the gospel

Question: Did anything in Bob Kauflin's sermon resonate with you personally? Did it cause you to think of worship singing in a new way?

COMMANDED ... to Sing!

That We Sing

- Our spiritual health depends on it
- 400 scriptural references, about 50 direct commands

Psalm 149:1

¹ Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of the saints.

Psalm 5:11

¹¹ But let all who take refuge in you rejoice; let them ever sing for joy, and spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may exult in you.

Psalm 9:11

¹¹ Sing praises to the Lord, who sits enthroned in Zion! Tell among the peoples his deeds!

Psalm 30:4

4 Sing praises to the Lord, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name.

Colossians 3:16

¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

- We shouldn't disregard the command because we don't like the music or aren't in the mood
- Christian singing is far more than doing our duty, but never less

"We need to trust the God worthy of our worship with how we worship. Singing doesn't always feel natural, and many of us aren't good at it, but God tells us to sing. Refusing to sing to God is like ignoring what your mom might like for Christmas, and buying her whatever you really enjoy. God has told us one way he wants to be loved, worshiped and enjoyed - through singing."

-Marshall Segal

Do You Hear The People Sing?

Where We Sing

Psalm 149:1

¹ Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of the saints.

- It's not "just the singing", something to be late for or skipped
- Singing should be valued and taken seriously

"It may sound like a rather obvious statement to make, but in the assembly each of us will not be in the majority. That means you are going to be singing songs you may not have chosen because they are not your favorite, to arrangements or with accompaniment that you may not have chosen because they are not your favorites. You are going to need to be willing to lay down your own tastes for the good of the wider assembly. For as long as we have the health and the ability, we are each called to sing with the people of God and to love our people enough to serve each other in the way we sing."

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What We Sing

Colossians 3:16

¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

- Lyrics should link together to bring a deep expression of Scripture to every singer
- Don't just sing, but think!
 - What are you singing?
 - How does it point you to Jesus?
 - What truths are you declaring?
 - How is your singing being used to declare truths to those around you?
 - Which lyrics cause you to consider Christ afresh and be filled with joy?
 - How will you sing these songs to others and yourself throughout the week?

How We Sing

Colossians 3:16

¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

“The true root of thankfulness is gratitude in our hearts for the unmerited benefits of God’s goodness in our lives.”

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- This root of thankfulness blossoms into a good, positive, and loving attitude towards God’s call for us to sing to Him
- It’s impossible to sing in a tepid manner about something you are excited about and grateful for
- Singing reveals how we think and feel about something

Question: What are some things that might help you cultivate singing with intentional thankfulness?

COMPELLED ... to Sing!

Revelation and Response

“Worship isn’t primarily about the music, techniques, songs, or methodologies. It’s about our hearts. It’s about what and who we love more than anything.”

-Bob Kauflin

- God’s love inspires us to respond with songs of praise
- Our motivation to sing does not come from likes, comfort levels, musical tastes or preferences, but:

“It (singing) is driven by a heartfelt desire to convey gospel truth to those of us who already know it and need to be refreshed and renewed by it – and to communicate it to those who don’t yet know, but who might be drawn to Christ through seeing and hearing people who clearly mean it because of the way they sing about it.”

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- We are not compelled to sing worshipfully out of thin air
- Worship comes as response to revelation
- We are wired this way as humans
- Praise is prompted by - compelled by - the revelation of something glorious
- The gospel is the revelation of the most glorious truth in all of history
- The gospel is a declaration of eternal freedom
- It is a revelation that compels us to respond, and so we do - by singing!
- Not just freed from something, but for something - to glorify Him
- We praise what we love

“I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is appointed consummation.”

-C.S.Lewis

- The joy of something is only half full until we've been able to tell someone else about it
- Goes against the grain of our humanity to keep from praising what is praiseworthy or keep quiet about what we are pleased with
- God is most worthy of our praise - so we respond not just knowing we should praise him, but by feeling we cannot help but praise him!

“He put a new song in my mouth;
His love is ever bringing;
Cool leaves of healing from His tree;
And though in drought,
How can I keep from singing?”

-Amy Carmichael

Question: If “worship is a response to revelation” what devotional practices in your own life might help you connect congregational singing as a response to freedom in Christ?

Scripture’s Salvation Songs

- The First Song
 - Exodus 15 is the first song recorded in Scripture
 - A song of praise and thanksgiving
 - Sung by Moses and the Israelites after the Lord brought them safely out of Egypt
 - This story mirrors our rescue in Christ

“We stand on our own eastern shore, with our enemy defeated and death destroyed. We have been saved. And so we sing.”

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- Songs of Battle
 - Judges 4 & 5 - a stunning victory!
 - 1 Chronicles 15 - the return of the ark
 - 2 Chronicles 20:21-22

“We sing because it is part of our armor for battle in this life and the means for celebrating our victories - and in Christ, we always have the victory.”

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- Songs of David

- Since we are always saved, we are always able to sing

Psalm 117:1

¹ Praise the Lord, all nations! Extol him all peoples!

Psalm 96:2

² Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.

Psalm 105:2

² Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works!

- Psalm 40 and 31, models of “revelation and response”

- Songs of the Prophets

- The foundation of the new temple was completed

Ezra 3:10-13

¹⁰ And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests in their vestments came forward with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the LORD, according to the directions of David king of Israel. ¹¹ And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD, “For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever toward Israel.”

And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. ¹² But many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' houses, old men who had seen the first house, wept with a loud voice when they saw the foundation of this house being laid, though many shouted aloud for joy, ¹³ so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the people's weeping, for the people shouted with a great shout, and the sound was heard far away.

- The walls of Jerusalem are rebuilt

Nehemiah 12:27-29

²⁷ And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with gladness, with thanksgivings and with singing, with cymbals, harps, and lyres. ²⁸ And the sons of the singers gathered together from the district surrounding Jerusalem and from the villages of the Netophathites; ²⁹ also from Beth-gilgal and from the region of Geba and Azmaveth, for the singers had built for themselves villages around Jerusalem.

- Prophets sang of salvation foreseen

Jeremiah 20:13

¹³ Sing to the Lord; praise the Lord! For he has delivered the life of the needy from the hand of evildoers.

Zephaniah 3:14

¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem!

- Songs of the Prisoners

- The early church was a singing church
- Paul and Silas in prison (Acts 16:25)
 - Strengthened them and witness to their jailer

- Compelled to sing
 - Singing is an overflow of a heart that is captivated by the gospel
 - Our singing won't stop in this life, but will continue on in eternity (Rev 15:2)

Closing Exhortation

“We will spend our eternity singing, for the gospel compels us to sing. And we are a people who, as we reflect on the gospel, cannot help but sing. We do not sing because we have to. We sing because we love to.”

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