

A Singing Church

Week 4 - Sing With Heart And Mind

Come Behold The Wondrous Mystery

VERSE 1

Come behold the wondrous mystery
In the dawning of the King
He the theme of heaven's praises
Robed in frail humanity
In our longing, in our darkness
Now the light of life has come
Look to Christ, who condescended
Took on flesh to ransom us

VERSE 2

Come behold the wondrous mystery
He the perfect Son of Man
In His living, in His suffering
Never trace nor stain of sin
See the true and better Adam
Come to save the hell-bound man
Christ the great and sure fulfillment
Of the law; in Him we stand

VERSE 3

Come behold the wondrous mystery
Christ the Lord upon the tree
In the stead of ruined sinners
Hangs the Lamb in victory
See the price of our redemption
See the Father's plan unfold
Bringing many sons to glory
Grace unmeasured, love untold

VERSE 4

Come behold the wondrous mystery
Slain by death the God of life
But no grave could e'er restrain Him
Praise the Lord; He is alive!
What a foretaste of deliverance
How unwavering our hope
Christ in power resurrected
As we will be when he comes

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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
 - Singing can help us engage emotionally with words
 - Singing can help us use words to demonstrate and express our unity

Commanded and Compelled to Sing (Week 3 Recap)

Commanded To Sing

- That We Sing
- Where We Sing
- What We Sing
- How We Sing

Compelled To Sing

- Revelation and Response
- Scripture's Salvation Songs

Question: Any questions/comments from weeks 1 through 3?

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SING WITH HEART AND MIND

- Your heart and mind need a balanced diet of gospel truth to build you up for the working week, times of trial, and all seasons of life
- Lyrics of songs repeat in our hearts and find their way into shaping our priorities, our behavior, our loves, the language of our prayers, answers we give for the hope we have in Christ
- The songs we sing on Sunday stick with us and shape us

“Truth soars on the air of a great melody”

- Getty

- We don't enjoy food merely because it is edible, neither do we enjoy songs just because they contain truth but because they are artistically and beautifully satisfying
- Songs thrill our minds and hearts
- We can't wait to sing them, and never forget them

Singing Takes Sunday's Truths into Monday

- The songs we sing on Sunday provide the soundtrack for our week
- If we don't sing about a particular truth, it's likely we'll pray about it less and live with little thought of it
- Christ-filled songs:
 - Support us when we lack courage
 - Bolster our faith
 - Uproot the weeds of worry and fear
 - Help us explain the gospel to the unbeliever
 - Comfort us in the face of tragedy
 - Place our feet on gospel truth
- We must sing over and over again how we were once under the wrath of God, condemned to die, and without hope. Then we need to sing of how hope came from above in human form, Jesus, and how:

Philippians 2:7-11

⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- If singing is not affecting how we process life we are not taking advantage of the gift that singing is to us.
- Throughout the week, sing what you sang on Sunday. Sing the gospel.

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Singing Sustains You In Every Season of Life

- If songs are “soul food”, we need a balanced diet of the songs we sing
- If we are prepared to live for Christ in the whole of life, we need to be singing about the whole of life
- Psalms are songs to God, about God, sung in community with the people of God
- Psalms are our best resource for teaching us what to sing about, and how to apply the gospel to every season of life

“[The Psalms] are not just a matchless primer of teaching but a medicine chest for the heart and the best possible guide for practical living.”

-Timothy Keller

- The Psalms
 - They give us a vast vision of who God is
 - He is Judge (Ps. 75)
“... but it is God who executes judgment, putting down one and lifting up another ... I will declare it forever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.”
 - He is the Shepherd (Ps. 23)
“The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.”
 - He is holy (Ps. 15)
“O Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent? Who shall dwell on your holy hill?”
 - He is King (Ps. 2)
“Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.”
 - He is Creator (Ps. 19)
“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge.”
 - His voice (Ps. 29)
“The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord, over many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful, the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.”
 - His attention to our tears (Ps. 56)

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“You have kept count of my tossings; put tears in your bottle. Are they not in your book? Then my enemies will turn back in the day when I call. This I know, that God is for me.”

- His attention to our burdens (Ps. 25)
“The troubles of my heart are enlarged; bring me out of my distresses. Consider my affliction and my trouble, and forgive all my sins.”
 - The glorious things He’s done for His people (Ps. 78)
“He divided the sea and let them pass through it, and made the waters stand like a heap.”
 - The glorious things He will one day do for us (Ps. 31)
“Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the Lord!”
 - Sing a diet that grows in us a confidence and a deepening joy in God
 - Sing and sing again songs that help you see God, so you are moved to love Him more and transformed by His spirit to become more and more like His Son
- The show us how to deal with real life
 - The Psalms are where we “find the experience of being human before God exposed and sharpened” - Eugene Peterson
 - Incredibly honest, embracing realities of life and singing through them
 - From wrenching lament (13:1) to leaping praise (16:9-10), experiencing highs (18:33) to lows (103:14), and times of darkness (88:18), times of joy (16:11)
 - A third of the Psalms are laments - though we might sometimes come to church with a spring in our step, often we come with heaviness of heart, none of us comes with everything figured out
 - We need songs that recognize these realities BUT don’t leave us to despair of those realities! They lead us to our rock and refuge in the storm

“A diet of unremittingly jolly choruses and hymns inevitably creates an unrealistic horizon of expectation which sees the normative Christian life as one long triumphalist street party — a theologically incorrect and a pastorally disastrous scenario in a world of broken individuals. Has an unconscious belief that Christianity is — or at least should be — all about health, wealth, and happiness silently corrupted the content of our worship?”

-Carl R. Trueman

- Do our songs present a veneer of happiness rather than joy in the midst of pain?

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- Are the fountains we sing of deep enough for the thirst of the trials of life?
 - If not, our song diet isn't deep enough, our words are too small
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- The psalms tell us to sing when we're happy
 - But we must not sing ONLY when we are happy
 - We can also sing when we're sad, we have freedom to weep and pour out our souls
 - We sing for our brothers and sisters in those moments when they cannot
 - The Psalms help us to bring all of our lives - failures, successes, losses, gains, dreams, and ambition into gospel perspective
 - Singing helps sustain you in every season of life, including attack from the enemy. And not only does it sustain you under that attack, but it can fight back and crush the enemy!

Question: Do you feel our songs connect us to every season of life (seasons of suffering and aging as well as celebrations and times of thanksgiving)? Why or why not?

Singing Reminds You of What God Has Done in Your Life

Question: Is there a hymn(s) or song(s) from your past that acts as a "milestone marker" for your walk with Christ? Why is it still significant and how does it speak to your heart today?

- We can have songs that mark certain waypoints of our life in Christ
- When we sing those songs again, it's an opportunity to be encouraged and excited and humbled all over again
- When we remember God's faithfulness in our past, often etched in our hearts through a song, we are inspired and equipped to face the ups and downs of the week ahead

Singing Keeps Your Mind On Eternity

- We need our singing to be filled with the unending story of the hope of heaven
- Some of the songs we sing should focus on heaven, hell, judgment, and that we are eternal beings facing a future in eternity
- One day we'll sing our last song in this life, the songs we sing now should speak of eternity so it is familiar and those songs are on our hearts and lips as we enter eternity

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Conclusion

- We need to grow our appetite for good soul food - for congregational singing
- When you stand to sing, consciously focus on what is going on
- It is not that God suddenly arrives when we sing, he is never absent, but we often are!
- When you sing:
 - Ask God to help you focus
 - Think about the words you are singing and the images they are painting
 - Respond in prayer to lines that strike you
 - Be mindful of those around you and that you are singing to each other
 - Enjoy being a part of something greater than just yourself
 - Make note of phrases/words that you don't understand and ask about them
 - If your attention has flickered - don't give up, refocus!
- Throughout the next week
 - Sing the songs!
 - Remember them as you wake in the morning, shower, drive to work, etc. and as you fall asleep
 - Put song lists together that you can listen to and sing along to
 - Keep a hymnal close by

“Sing to yourself what you sang on Sunday, for what you sing shapes your heart, your mind, your soul. Give yourself good, deep, rich, gospel truth to feed on. You are what you sing.”

-Getty