

View

A Publication of the Folsom Point church of Christ, 900 E. Natoma, Folsom, CA

April 20, 2008

A Great Meeting!

Which new song that we learned this week is stuck in your head? For me, “Exalted” is the one, and “What is Love” creeps in there now and then as well. Isn’t that good!? What better thing can one have “stuck in your head” than a song that exalts God or reminds you of the importance of love? We had a great four days of singing last week. I loved it.

Singing praises to God is a command to the assembled church (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). But is that the only reason we sing? I hope it’s not for you!

Singing, at its best, is an expression of our love for and thanks to God (“praises”) and teaching and admonishing one another through the words we sing. It gives us an opportunity to express ourselves in an enjoyable way that touches the heart and mind and, often, the emotions as well.

Singing, to be effective, must emanate from a pure, committed heart. Otherwise, the words coming from our mouths are just words; perhaps worse — they can be hypocritical words. If one’s heart is

not right, it doesn’t matter how melodious the voice or how deep the feeling that one puts into the singing — the worship is vain. You’ve got to fully believe what you are singing and be willing to practice what you sing or the singing is accomplishing nothing.

Assuming our hearts are right, though, ultimately, congregational singing is all about the words. The melody, harmony, rhythm and tempo make the song “singable,” but are secondary to the lyrics. The content of the song are the words we sing; the music is the form in which the words are delivered.

However, without the music, the lyrics would not be “spiritual songs.” Without the music, the words would be...words. We

“YOU’VE GOT TO FULLY BELIEVE WHAT YOU
ARE SINGING AND BE WILLING TO PRACTICE
WHAT YOU SING OR THE SINGING IS
ACCOMPLISHING NOTHING.”

could chant them — that would be OK, but why would we limit ourselves to monotone melodies?

I can’t say for certain, of course, but I personally believe that music — that is, the scale, the notes, all the components we call “music” — are a gift from God. Music, at its best, is a powerful and moving medium and it’s hard for me to believe that God didn’t purposely place the elements in the world knowing that man would adapt them to produce

what we call “music.” It is hard to imagine a world without music. In fact, the Bible often refers to it, especially in the accounts of the worship in the temple and in the Psalms

We do know that singing is not only authorized by God, but also loved by God. That’s why He commands us to sing.

Tim Stevens spent four days helping us learn some new songs and teaching a little (very little) about the mechanics of music as well. He worked with the song-leaders for about 50 minutes each day, in addition to the regular meeting with the entire church. Tim is a highly competent teacher of music; his grasp of the subject is obvious and was very helpful.

The elders received many positive comments about his work and we feel the time was very well spent. We feel that the church should bring its best to God every time we get together. The meeting with brother Stevens was designed to help us accomplish that, specifically in the area of singing. While one does not have to have a great voice to get into heaven or (more mundanely) to worship God effectively, one should always want to bring his best to the enterprise. A man who reads poorly, for example, would be wise to work on his reading skills so that he could study his Bible more effectively.

In any endeavor to worship, a bit of instruction on “mechanics” can be helpful. Not too long ago, Berry Kercheville came to teach us how to better “enjoy” our Bibles. We didn’t spend all of the time just reading the Bible; he gave us some pointers and exercises that helped us get more out of the Scriptures when we do read them. That was an appropriate use of our time.

Likewise, I have attended meetings and classes that were entirely devoted to the subject of prayer. In the course of the meeting or class, certain “mechanics” were covered — speaking loud enough in public prayer, what to say and not to say, etc. Again, that is an appropriate use of our time because we need to serve God in these areas in a way that is most effective and less distracting to others. If our singing can be more unified and “better” (meaning less distracting and more rich and full) then we should do our best to achieve that level of ability.

I’ll throw in the disclaimer that I expressed in my closing remarks on Wednesday night — 250 Christians with great voices singing beautifully is no more spiritual or pleasing to God than 5 Filipino Christians singing their hearts out in a jungle somewhere — indeed, it can be much less pleasing to God if we do not bring the same level of enthusiasm, love and devotion to our worship as the five. But whether five or 250 or 1500 — we should do our best and “make every occasion a great occasion.”

There is no difference, by the way, in giving this instruction to the entire congregation vs. to a smaller group, in a smaller room. The Bible does not distinguish between different kinds of assemblies. It simply specifies that certain things (the Lord’s Supper and taking a collection) are to be done each first day of the week, but it does not specify beyond that. In the book of Acts, the church is seen gathering for all kinds of scriptural reasons.

[Continued on page 3]

The church of Christ

Meeting at 900 E. Natoma
PO Box 492
Folsom, CA 95630
916/608-4866

Elders

Forrest Brown: 530/295-9230
Randy Clark: 916/939-5066
Rich Ladd: 916/774-9048
David Posey: 530/676-9514

Deacons

Brent Agee: 916/786-0436
Bryan Byrd: 916/351-9320
David Byrd: 916/985-6564
Michael Caisse: 530/672-2902
Jeff Clark: 916/985-8689
John Daniels: 916/985-3090
Jerry Deschler: 916/285-9115
Steve Dickey: 916/983-1071
Steven Doty: 916/933-5004
Eric Fields: 916/817-6495
David Main: 650/292-5417
Terry Raposa: 916/782-1140
Dane Scott: 916/631-7221
Russ Tarrant: 530/672-1748
Steve Thompson: 916/983-4170
Jeff Warshaw: 916/933-9399

Evangelist/Editor

David Posey: 530/676-9514
dpose@pacbell.net

Services

Sunday Morning Assembly
9:30 AM
Sunday Evening: 5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Study
7:30 PM

Classes for all ages.

Private classes arranged
at your convenience.

For more information,

visit our web site at:

www.folsomchurch.com

Webmaster: Richard Harvey

Agenda

The Lord's Day, April 20, 2008

9:30 AM: Worship: Singing, Lord's Supper, Preaching

Sermon: Singing

☛ Preaching: David Posey, The Story

5:00 PM: Lord's Supper, Preaching.

Classes @ 5:30 PM

Auditorium, I John

• Teacher: Dennis Wade

Room 11-12,

Characters of the Bible

• Teacher: Bryan Byrd.

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

10 AM, Here — "The Bible for Everyday"

Teacher: David Posey, Sr.

7:30 PM, Classes

Auditorium, Proverbs

• Teacher: Randy Clark (Jeff Clark, Assisting)

Room 11-12, James

• Teacher: David Posey, Sr. (Zac Brown, Assisting)

Notes

Most sermons are available in MP3 format on our website (www.folsomchurch.com) or on CD (see a deacon).

The elders are very pleased with the results of the four days' work that Tim has done here and with the way it was received by the members here. We are going to take some immediate steps to build on it, so that the knowledge we've gained in learning new songs and our enthusiasm for singing does not wane. We're going to encourage the song leaders to sing the songs we've learned fairly often and we are going to provide a few more opportunities for the entire church to sing together.

Meanwhile, "are you cheerful? Sing praise!" (see James 5:13).

Dp

The Joy God Brings

By Don Hooton

Paul says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy" (Galatians 5:22-5:22). "Do you have that joy?"

Now don't mistake happiness for joy. It's easy to do that. The Bible mentions "joy" or "rejoicing" 330 times. But it only mentions "happiness" 26 times. Happiness depends upon what happens to you. So if all the circumstances are right, then you can be happy. But joy comes from another source and it is not based upon earthly circumstances.

Joy is an evidence of the gospel of God in your life. If God is in your life and the gospel is your hope, then this fruit of the Spirit will be obvious in your life. This joy is the result of being saved by grace through faith. Paul wrote, "Therefore having

been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5:1-2).

This joy is also connected with "faith" (Philippians 1:25) because we believe in the promise of the gospel. We believe in the promise of justification by faith. We believe in God. There can be no joy if there is no faith.

The object of this joy is God Himself (Psalms 43:4; Isaiah 61:10). The state of this exultation comes from the hope He brings in the gospel. This joy is a state of mind, rather than a response to circumstance, because God is the object of it. There can be no lasting joy if God is not the object of it.

And this joy is permanent. Jesus said, "And no one takes your joy away from you" (John 16:22). And Paul told Christians they were to rejoice in the Lord "always" (Philippians 4:4). When God has rescued us from sin and made possible this grand promise of life eternal, He changed everything in our life. And Paul said no one will "be able to separate us from the love of God" (Romans 8:39). The joy of the gospel is for the faithful a powerfully permanent state of living.

So don't mistake a giddy happiness for joy. But if you don't have the joy, it's there for the taking. God offers to everyone - everyday. It's in the good news of Jesus Christ!!!