

Come, Let Us Sing!

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Charles Osgoode once interviewed a group of soldiers who had been held captive during the war in Vietnam. They had endured a horrible existence and had been treated terribly during the time of their incarceration. When he asked what they did to help boost their spirits and enforce their hope, they gave a most interesting answer. "We sang together," they said. As often as their captors would allow, they would assemble together and sing. They sang a variety of songs which they pieced together from memory, most of them recollections of old religious hymns and phrases they had known, especially those that were expressions of belief and hope. Singing helped them endure.

This story brings to mind the story of Paul and Silas when they were imprisoned in Philippi. "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God," we are told (Acts 16:25). Both these instances bring to mind what is the true value of singing praises to God, both in the public assembly and at home as well. And they bring to mind what singing brings to us personally and together as the people of God. Singing together is an indication of unity. When we sing together, there is a commonality about it as we focus—each one of us—on the lyrical constructions and we together call to mind such high thoughts as the majesty of God, the love of our Savior, the joy of our salvation and a host of other joyful expressions. There is a oneness of mind in singing that is found in no other form of expression, saving perhaps for prayer. It is a joyous time when the saints of God blend their voices in love and devotion to God Almighty. What wondrous pleasure! What unspeakable joy! Singing is an indication of unity at a most beautiful and enjoyable level.

Singing together is also an indication of a united attitude. When a person sings a song of praise and does it "with the spirit and the understanding" (I Corinthians 14:15), and when others join in with the same declarations of praise, there is brought into being a powerful united attitude of grand appreciation to God. Some songs suggest attitudes of constancy and devotion to duty; some suggest the love of the Savior; some issue His invitation to salvation; but they all take on an added significance when they are sung with those who share a common joy and love in Christ. When we sing together, we sing in unison. When we sing together, we all sing harmony.

Ephesians 5:19—"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." One translation renders this passage "...addressing one another" with spiritual songs. "Spiritual songs" are just that—songs constructed so as to give expression to our deepest spiritual feelings of praise to our God and to one another. We speak to one another in a special way when we sing

together. Singing is a special way to join our hearts.

Spiritual songs also give us special ways of worshipful praise for our God and His Son. They make a special way to call out, with loving gladness, just who God is, and how He has a high place in our lives. Spiritual songs are also a unique and special way of speaking to ourselves while we speak to others about Him.

Singing is also a splendid and extraordinary way of teaching God's word. Colossians 3:16—"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." Spiritual songs have exceptional ways of expressing truth because of the blending of words and music. They make truth come alive in a special, melodious way. They sound out, with musical emphasis, the words of wisdom and truth from our Father.

Spiritual songs have a unique way of not only telling truth, but causing us to recall it. Songs of truth, put together with sensitive words and musical tones, tend to make indelible impressions, some of which can last for a lifetime. They impress our minds with lucid memories of special times and special occasions which become lasting recollections of His goodness, and our joy of being in Him. Spiritual songs are impressive.

"O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanks-giving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms" (Psalm 95:1-2).

Come, let us sing praises to the One True and Living God! And let us laud magnify His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior!