**Preaching & Teaching In Hymns**

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday October 11th, 2020

Text: Colossians 1:28; 3:16

### Intro

1. When talking about singing to God, Scriptures often cited are Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16 and they are most often used to refute the use of mechanical instruments in worship.
   1. However, they also represent the deeper meaning of our singing to God: teaching and preaching!
2. There is an awesome responsibility of being a song leader!

#### The Awesome Responsibility of a Song Leader

* 1. The O.T. musicians set the precedent for teaching in song:
     1. I Chr. 15:16-19: When David brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem he appointed Levite singers to accompany him.
     2. They were Heman *(Ps. 88; I Chr. 6:33),* Asaph *(Ps. 50; 11 others),* and Ethan *(Ps. 89),* but also among them was Obed-Edom, whose house the ark rested for 3 months after God struck down Uzza *(I Chr. 13:9-14) –* a lyre player and singer *(I Chr. 15:19-21).*
     3. They were Levitical priests, and as such they were wise. Only Solomon surpassed them in wisdom (I Kings 4:31: Indicating they were very wise).
     4. As Levites they were trained in the word of God and were expected to teach others.
     5. I Chr. 15:22: “Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was in charge of the singing; he gave instruction in singing because he was skillful” – He taught them to sing!
     6. II Chr. 29:25-28: King Hezekiah later stationed the Levitical musicians and singers in the Temple as David had done by the word of God through Gad the seer & Nathan the prophet.
     7. Neh. 12:46: Nehemiah later reestablished the singers as was done in earlier times (7:1), and they sang “songs of praise and hymns of thanksgiving to God.”
  2. The teaching in song carried over into the N.T. pattern of worship:
     1. Notice how ***teaching*** and ***admonishing*** with the word of Christ is done in both preaching (Col. 1:28) and singing (Col. 3:16).
     2. “Proclaim” *(G2605)* in Col. 1:28 means “to preach, to declare, to announce, to tell, to speak of” and is translated “preach” in KJV/NKJ
     3. Preaching & Teaching is to be done through singing hymns!
  3. Who typically decides what the congregation will sing?
     1. The Song Leader!
     2. The preacher will study and work for many hours to accomplish one sermon, while the song leader leads the assembly in singing 4 or more sermons each time!
     3. What gets stuck in your head more often: Speeches or Songs?
     4. Every hymn has the congregation teaching, confessing, or professing *something!*
  4. The song leaders choose a number of sermons every Sunday: There is an awesome responsibility of being a song leader!

#### Are Song Leaders Prepared?

* 1. In an article by Andrew Roberts, he relates an oft too-familiar scenario:
     1. He writes, “It’s Sunday. It’s 10 AM. Do you know where *your* song leader is?”
     2. He goes on to say, “People are already seated and begin looking around. They wonder, ‘Why haven’t we started yet?’ One can faintly hear the words echoing around the auditorium: ‘Well, I guess I can lead…if no one else will.’”
     3. He also relates an encounter at a congregation the first Sunday he was preaching there for a gospel meeting. To sum up: The Announcer was done making the announcements then called on the song leader to come forward. Someone shouted out that the song leader wasn’t there. The Announcer called on 3 different men to lead songs, and they all declined so he picked up a song book and was picking songs when one of the men who had refused said, “I mean, if nobody else will, then I’ll lead.” To which the Announcer said, “Oh no! I’ll do this!” *A little humorous, yet a lot horrifying!*
  2. When things like this happen at any congregation, it gives off the impression to visitors and members alike that the service is disorganized (I Cor. 14:40: Things done orderly).
     1. Things do happen, and the congregation must roll with it the best they can.
     2. Song Leaders ought to be prepared!
     3. Preparation also includes calling or making arrangements beforehand if they cannot make it to services (whether known before or if something came up).
     4. That way the substitute Song Leader can step in and lead songs in an orderly fashion.
  3. Congregations that have more than one good song leader are truly blessed (We are here)
     1. The question is, “Just as the preacher and teachers must be prepared…Are the song leaders aware and prepared for the awesome responsibility of leading the congregation in preaching & teaching through singing hymns?”
     2. To do it well, it requires far more than just musical skill.
  4. A song leader needs wisdom, preparation, and planning!

#### A Song Leader’s Preparation & Planning

* 1. For every hymn a song leader chooses to sing, he excludes hundreds of others!
     1. Why does he choose the hymns he has chosen?
  2. This may be helpful to song leaders in determining if a certain hymn ought to be chosen:
     1. **The lyrics will reflect a basic theme of Christianity:** We are to sing “psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs” (Col. 3:16). If a song leader is on the fence about a song’s intent, then avoid it! There are hundreds more without ambiguity
     2. **The lyrics will be in harmony with Scripture:** We must sing “truth” (Col. 3:16: “word of Christ”). If a song leader encounters questionable lyrics, then change the words and explain why, omit the verse, or choose a different hymn!
     3. **The rhythm & tune will properly express the tone & feelings of the lyrics:** Some hymns are sung slow or fast for emphasis. Example: ***Don’t*** *sing ‘We’re Marching to Zion’ as a funeral dirge!*
     4. **The language will be clear & understandable:** We are to sing with understanding (I Cor. 14:9, 15). Some avoid certain songs because of the archaic language used. If the song leader doesn’t understand it, he shouldn’t lead it. The song leader ought to be able to explain to others the meaning of something he led the congregation in singing! (“Teaching & admonishing”)
  3. There are many ways a song leader can prepare for the song services *(This list is not exhaustive).*
  4. Song Leaders ought to purposefully choose their hymns to edify and to teach!

## Conclusion

1. Let’s encourage song leaders to appreciate that they stand in the noble company of David, Asaph, Heman, Ethan, Obed-Edom and Paul as teachers of God’s word to God’s people!
2. Let’s also encourage song leaders to see that leading the congregation in singing goes beyond mere musical appreciation or vocal honing, but is a way commanded by God to teach and admonish! (Col. 3:16)
3. Let’s encourage song leaders by singing out with them so no one feels they are singing a solo!
4. Song leading is an awesome responsibility and Song Leaders stand in good company!
5. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent and be baptized into His name!
6. If a Christian in error, don’t wait till it’s eternally too late. Repent and be renewed!
7. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!