

Worship Lesson 6 3Q 2011

Worship and Song and Praise

SABBATH

What comes to mind when you think about the title of this week's lesson?

What songs have particularly blessed you over the years?

What about Amazing Grace? How many have been blessed by that song?

Amazing Grace was written by John Newton published in 1779. John Newton was a former slave ship captain, who had given up the belief in God, but during a severe storm in which the ship was in threat of capsizing he called out to the Lord. After that, he began to reflect on his life and wonder if it was possible for someone as sinful as he, not just a slave ship captain, but one who had rejected Christ and had mocked those who believe in him, to be saved.

He eventually taught himself Latin, Greek and theology and eventually became a minister. It was as a minister he wrote Amazing Grace.

Amazing Grace is purported to be the most famous Christian hymn, and reportedly to this day is performed more than 10 million times each year. It has appeared on top 10 charts for pop music on more than one occasion since 1960.

What is it about Amazing Grace that has made it so enduring and popular?

Read Memory Verse – Psalms 96:1 – thoughts?

What do you think the passage means by “a new song?”

Psalms 96 calls the world to praise God and give Him His rightful due – i.e. recognize Him for who He really is, creator, redeemer, source of righteousness, goodness.

Why do you think it means a new song?

Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. ² And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters and like a loud peal of thunder. The sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps. ³ And **they sang a new song** before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. **No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.** Rev 14:1-3

What is this new song they are singing? Why can only the 144,000 sing it?

Upon the crystal sea before the throne, that sea of glass as it were mingled with fire—so resplendent is it with the glory of God—are gathered the company that have “gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name.” With the Lamb upon Mount Zion, “having the harps of God,” they stand, the hundred and forty and four thousand that were redeemed from among men; and there is heard, as the sound of many waters, and as the sound of a great thunder, “the voice of harpers harping with their harps.” **And they sing “a new song” before the throne, a song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand.** It is the song of Moses and the Lamb—a **song of deliverance. None but the hundred and forty-four thousand can learn that song; for it is the song of their experience—an experience such as no other company have ever had.** “These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.” These, having been translated from the earth,

from among the living, are counted as “the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.” Revelation 15:2, 3; 14:1-5.—GC 648, 649.

What is the new song? Then what is the old song? How do we learn to sing the new song? Would it require we have a new understanding, knowledge, experience with God?

Which song are we singing today?

What do you think about the Bible admonitions to shout?

In last week’s lesson, Lev 9:24 when the sacrifice was consumed the people “shouted for joy.”

Throughout the Old Testament when the Ark of the Lord was brought into the camp the people would shout with shouts of triumph.

Do we miss something when we don’t shout?

How did the people in France react when the allied troops entered the city to set it free? Did they shout? How did people all over the world react on V-E day? Was there shouting?

How do people react when their football team scores the winning goal in the final minute of the game?

When we see Christ coming in the clouds, the graves are opening, the sky is unfolding, angels are winging their way to and fro bringing saved ones to Christ, our mortal bodies are being transformed into immortal ones – will there be shouting? Or will people be going, “SHHHHUSSSH HHH BE REVERENT?”

Do we have anything to shout about? Why are we so “solemn” and reserved and afraid to shout? Do we fail to see the significance of what Christ has done for us?

Or are we too damaged by sin to react to what Christ has done? While the citizens in Europe shouted for joy when the allied troops entered their cities and set them free, the survivors of the concentration camps just stared blankly ahead, expressionless, solemn, quiet – were they reverent or just so damaged by abuse they couldn't react? Are we so damaged by spiritual abuse, being beaten up by ugly God concepts that we cannot react with joy?

Through the cunning devices of the enemy the minds of God's people seem to be incapable of comprehending and appropriating the promises of God. They seem to think that only the scantiest showers of grace are to fall upon the thirsty soul. The people of God have accustomed themselves to think that they must rely upon their own efforts, that little help is to be received from heaven; and **the result is that they have little light to communicate to other souls who are dying in error and darkness. The church has long been contented with little of the blessing of God;** they have not felt the need of reaching up to the exalted privileges purchased for them at infinite cost. Their spiritual strength has been feeble, **their experience of a dwarfed and crippled character, and they are disqualified for the work the Lord would have them to do. They are not able to present the great and glorious truths of God's Holy Word** that would convict and convert souls through the agency of the Holy Spirit. **The power of God awaits their demand and reception.** A harvest of joy will be reaped by those who sow the holy seeds of truth. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." {TM 174.2}

The world have received **the idea** from the attitude of the church **that God's people are indeed a joyless people, that the service of Christ is unattractive,** that the blessing of God is bestowed at severe cost to the receivers. By dwelling upon our trials, and making much of difficulties, **we misrepresent God and Jesus Christ**

whom He has sent; **for the path to heaven is made unattractive by the gloom that gathers about the soul of the believer**, and many turn in disappointment from the service of Christ. **But are those who thus present Christ believers? No**, for believers rely upon the divine promise, and the Holy Spirit is a comforter as well as a reprover. {TM 175.1}

Do we have the elation, relief, joy, happiness in the heart that comes with victory, freedom from oppression, experience of new love? Or are we so accustomed to Satan's view of God that we are joyless and beaten down in despair?

I have been to churches, who have in the service, a praise moment when people applaud, shout and give praise to God. The people look up toward heaven and send their shouts and praise to God. Would you be comfortable if we shouted? Why or why not?

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph, "God chose Saul..." thoughts? What is the lesson? What matters to God? Is it abilities or character? What of a person has some defect in ability, dyslexia, blindness, paralysis, mental illness, is this what matters to God? Or does God look at the character, the heart? Can a person with disability still have a pure heart?

Can persons without apparent disability have a rebellious heart?

It is the heart attitude that matters, do we love God, do we want to do His will in our lives, do we love others, are we willing to learn and grow as God leads?

Read next paragraph, "David was..." thoughts? What do we learn from the life of David regarding qualification to serve God?

Did God know beforehand what David was going to do?
Assuming God did know, why didn't this disqualify David from serving God?

What about Noah? Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Aaron, Peter, you and me?

Is our fitness for God based on our perfection? No! None of us are perfect; our fitness for God's cause is based on our willingness, our heart attitude, our surrender to Him, not our performance per se. We may stumble, we may make mistakes, but if we remain humble, willing to learn from mistakes, willing to be corrected, reprovved, redirected, if we can unlearn things and are willing to give of ourselves for God and others, then we are useful in God's cause!

Notice, while David committed terrible sin, after the sin, while he initially compounded his sin by trying to cover it up and committing more sin, he eventually repented, learned from his mistake, experienced a change in heart and didn't treat people like that any more.

In other words, David was converted and transformed. He took the remedy and experienced a new heart and right spirit.

What about God's forgiveness? Did God withhold forgiveness from Saul? Was God unforgiving toward Saul? Was Saul forgiven?

Why did Saul not experience forgiveness?

MONDAY

Read top paragraph, "The sacrifices of God..." thoughts?

What does it mean the sacrifices of God are a broken and contrite heart? Does it mean this is what God wants rather than blood sacrifice?

Does it mean this is what was represented by the sacrifices on the altar? Does it mean the sacrifices were designed to lead us to a broken and contrite heart?

As we see the lamb slain, because of our sinful need, our hearts are broken – the sacrifice of Christ is “applied” to the broken and contrite heart, and the heart is renewed, the Holy Spirit burns within.

What about the sacrifice of Christ – was it for the purpose of procuring a broken and contrite heart in mankind?

But he was pierced for our transgressions,
 he was crushed for our iniquities;
 the punishment that brought us peace was upon him,
 and **by his wounds we are healed**. ISA 53:5

What does this mean? Why was He pierced and crushed? To accomplish what? Our healing!

What does it mean to be healed? What does healing look like?

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. 2Cor 5:21

Notice the reason He became sin, so we could become righteous – not so we could be declared righteous!

Read first two sentences of second paragraph, “As Christians, we take it as a given (or at least we should) that all of humanity is fallen, sinful, degraded. This degradation and sinfulness includes each one of us, individually.”

Thoughts? Do you agree? What does it mean?

- Is it our fault we are degraded and sinful?
- Are we guilty because we are this way?
- How did we become this way?

- When did we become this way?
- Does God hold us individually accountable because we are sinful?
- If we were born in this condition, not of our choosing what does God hold us accountable for? Does God hold us accountable for not accepting the remedy when it is available?
- Why? What does it mean to be “held accountable”?

The Lord God of heaven collected **all the riches of the universe**, and laid them down in order to purchase the pearl of lost humanity. The Father gave **all his divine resources** into the hands of Christ in **order that the richest blessings of heaven might be poured out upon a fallen race. God could not express greater love** than he has expressed in giving the Son of his bosom to this world. **This gift was given to man to convince him that God had left nothing undone that he could do**, that there is **nothing held in reserve**, but that all heaven has been poured out in one vast gift. The **present and eternal happiness of man consists in receiving God's love**, and in keeping God's commandments. Christ is our Redeemer. He is the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us. He is the fountain in which **we may be washed and cleansed from all impurity**. He is the costly sacrifice that has been given for **the reconciliation of man**. The universe of heaven, the worlds unfallen, the fallen world, and the confederacy of evil cannot say that God could do more for the salvation of man than he has done. Never can his gift be surpassed, never can he display a richer depth of love. Calvary represents his crowning work. **It is man's part to respond to his great love, by appropriating the great salvation** the blessing of the Lord has made it possible for man to obtain. **We are to show our appreciation** of the wonderful gift of God **by becoming partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. **We are to show our gratitude to God by becoming a co-worker with Jesus Christ, by representing his character to the world.** In great mercy

the Lord has **rolled back the thick darkness from before his throne, that we may behold him as a God of love.**

{YI, October 17, 1895 par. 2}

What do you think of this passage? Do you agree or disagree? Why did Christ have to die? To reveal the Father's love and to restore man back into unity with God! What was needed to restore man back into unity with God? To reconcile man to God, not God to man!

Read last paragraph, "Yet, the joy..." thoughts? How about instead of credited to us by faith, "assimilated" by faith?

I found this sentence interesting, "Our worship should center not just on our own sinfulness but on God's amazing solution to it." Thoughts?

What are they trying to say? I honestly was a little confused.

WEDNESDAY

Read top Bible verse, "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." (Job 38:7).

Who are these stars and sons?

The stars are the angels of God and the sons are God's created beings, represented heads of the other unfallen worlds.

Biblical evidence for other worlds?

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. Heb 1:1,2

Evidence for the sons being heads of the worlds and stars being angels:

The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. Rev 12:9

an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. ⁴ His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. Rev 12:3,4

the son of Enosh,
the son of Seth, the son of Adam,
the son of God. Luke 3:38

Adam was the “son of God” while all the other people in the Bible are the son of another human being. One could argue that the counsel in heaven was the representative heads of the worlds, the first beings created by God on each, and Satan comes from earth claiming a seat at the counsel as earth’s representative. God says, not so fast, Job doesn’t recognize you as his representative...

What was going on that caused the heavenly beings to shout?
What was happening in the universe?

THURSDAY

Read second paragraph, “Over the years...” thoughts?

What determines whether music is appropriate for church or not? What determines whether music is “good” music or “bad” music?

Would the effect it has on the listeners be of any relevance in making that decision? If the music contributes to more irritability, unruliness, rebelliousness, hedonism, violence, ugliness, unkindness, vulgarity, crudeness etc. could we conclude such music is not appropriate?

How about if the music contains those things?

If the music leads to greater peace, calmness, thoughtfulness, enhances reason, comprehension, learning, and promotes themes of kindness, self sacrifice, giving, beneficence would such music be appropriate?

Is it primarily in the style or in the message?

FRIDAY

Read first paragraph, “Let the subject...” thoughts? What does this mean?

Could we simply say, “we cannot heal ourselves”?

Think of someone dying of a terminal disease, does any amount of confession, repentance, good works, help fix their terminal condition?

This is our situation, we are literally “dead” in our trespass and sin, not “legally under a death sentence” but in a condition which if unremedied is incompatible with life. No amount of confession, repentance, good works will cure our situation – only Jesus Christ can do that. He is our cure and only in a trust relationship with Him, in which we receive Him, partake of Him, experience unity with Him do we find healing for our condition.

Read and answer questions 1, 2