



WEEKLY SERMON

Volume No. 2023 Issue No. 24
July 2, 2023

Sunday July 2, 2023

Pastor David Miklas

Message: Bible Character

Phone: 717.625.2992

E-mail: pastormiklas@aol.com

Text: Psalm 40:1-3

Nearly every English-speaking Protestant congregation unites at least once each Sunday in this noble overture of praise. It has been said that the Doxology has done more to teach the doctrine of the Trinity than all the theology books ever written.

The author of this text was a bold, outspoken 17th century Anglican bishop named Thomas Ken. Ken's illustrious career in the ministry was stormy and colorful. He served for a time as the English chaplain at the royal court in the Hague, Holland. He was so outspoken, however, in denouncing the corrupt lives of those in authority at the Dutch capital that he was compelled to leave after a short stay.

Upon his return to England, he was appointed by King Charles 11 to be one of his chaplains. Ken continued to reveal the same spirit of boldness in rebuking the moral sins of his dissolute English monarch. Despite this, Charles always admired his courageous chaplain, calling him the good little man.

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

Doxologies and Benedictions found in the Scriptures:

Numbers 6:22-26, **“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, (23) Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, (24) The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: (25) The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: (26) The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.”**

II Corinthian 13:14, **“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.”**

Ephesians 3:20-21, **“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, (21) Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”**

Colossians 3:16-17, **“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. (17) And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”**

I Thessalonians 3:12-13, “**And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: (13) To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.**”

I Thessalonians 5:23-24, “**And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (14) Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.**”

II Thessalonians 2:16-17, “**Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, (17) Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.**”

I Timothy 6:15-16, “**Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; (16) Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.**”

Hebrews 13:20-21, “**Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, (21) Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.**”

II Peter 3:18. “**But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen.**”

Jude 24-25, “**Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, (25) To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.**”

Revelation 1:5-6, “**And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, (6) And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.**”

Revelation 7:12, “**Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.**”

In His Amazing Grace
Pastor David Miklas

Character and “Sacred Music”

INTRODUCTION: In Colossians 3:16 we read, “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.”

Many of our churches today seem to know nothing of the great old hymns that have instructed, comforted and enriched the church for generations. Hymns constitute a crucial part of worship, but not by any means the whole. In churches which use almost exclusively what are called “praise songs,” that part of the service is usually referred to as “worship” as though prayer, preaching, offering and listening were something else.

What a tragic loss there is today because of the disappearance of this powerful aid, “Sacred Music” to our spiritual stamina. A true hymn has “Rhyme, Melody and Harmony” a logical progression from the first verse to the last. Where, O, where is the holy melody of the presence of the Lord.

Here is another thing that you ought to consider, Someone wrote:

“Every real hymn has its story, if only we could discover it. The background of the author’s life, his spiritual experiences, his conflicts, his sufferings, his victories, sometimes a startling incident, sometimes a soul crisis, sometimes a season of exaltation – these things are woven into the thought and feeling of a great hymn. And perhaps, in some measure, the fact that the hymns have been wrought out of actual human experiences given to them the great power which they undoubtedly exert upon the hearts of men. Certainly, to know what conditions produced a given hymn often adds to our appreciation of its meaning and our responsiveness to its message.”

In Ephesians 5:18 we read, “And be not drunk with wine, in which is excess, **BUT BE YE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT,**” That word “filled” means “being under the control of”. Now in reading that verse, did you notice it ends with a comma, not a period? The next verse describes the very **FIRST** result of being under the Holy Spirit’s control, “**WE SING**”.

“We make melody with our hearts. We communicate His presence within us by presenting our own, individual Concert of Sacred Music to Him.”

The spirit-filled saint is a song-filled saint! Animals can't sing. Neither can pews or pulpits or Bibles or buildings, only you. And your melody is broadcast right into heaven.

Question #1: Among whom do we sing? **Answer:** “To yourselves...to the Lord.” Our song is to be directed among ourselves to the Lord. It is to be used in our worship, as praise to Him. “Music is not primarily designed by God as a tool of evangelism!” I think God can use music to bring somebody to Christ, but there has to be a presentation of the gospel somewhere along the line.

“We are not told the world is to be won by music groups.” However, our music is primarily the expression of a Spirit-filled life and it's really not intended for the world.”

I think it's sad when we want so much to sing our songs to the world that we put them in the “World's vernacular” and think it's going to be evangelistic. This is not the point of music in the Scripture, “We are to sing among ourselves... to the Lord!”

Question #2: From where does our song originate? **Answer:** “...in the heart...” Our music must be different than the world's music because music is a reflection of what is in the heart. “As Christians, our songs should reflect the joy of our hearts from the glorious work of salvation in our lives.” If the heart isn't right, the song doesn't please God no matter how well you sing it. It's the heart that is the issue!

We have lost sight of that in our churches today. Modern Christianity has promoted, pushed and portrayed across the Christian scene musicians and singers whose hearts are not right before God. God is not interested in their songs if their hearts are not right. I believe they ought to back up and get their life right before they claim to represent God's music.

Question #3: To whom is our song sung? **Answer:** "...to the Lord..." How do we know if our music is acceptable to God? We must ask ourselves,

Is it offered to the Lord as a gift of praise?

Do the words rightly reflect God's thoughts, attributes, and revelation?

Are the words Doctrinally correct?

Is the vehicle, tune or method with which we sing honoring to God?

Is there a balance in the Rhyme, Melody and Harmony?

Question #4: With what is our music to be composed? **Answer:** "...speaking...singing and making melody with Psalms, Hymns and spiritual songs..." One of the greatest contributions to my spiritual development, has come from the influence of sacred music. As a young boy, I learned to love gospel songs and hymns as well as the Bible in church, at summer camps, and old-fashioned tent meetings.

The Word of God has much to say about music. In the Bible the word **song is used 79 times** and the word **sing is used 119 times**. Here is a very small sampling:

Psalm 30:4, **"Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness."**

Psalm 100:1-2, **"Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. (2) Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with SINGING."**

Psalm 149:1, **"Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints."**

Psalm 40:1-3, **"He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. (3) And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God..."**

Psalm 33:1-3, **"Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright. (2) Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. (3) Sing unto him a new song..."**

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

Psalm 96:1-3, **"O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth. (2) Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day. (3) Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people."**

Psalm 98:1, **"O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory."**

Proverbs 29:6, **"In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare: but the righteous doth sing and rejoice."**

Matthew 26:30, **"And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives."**

Hebrews 2:12, **"Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."**

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."

Ephesians 5:18-19, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; (19) Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; (20) Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;..."

The most important book next to your Bible, is your Hymn Book. Someone said,

"Enshrined within its passages beautifully phrased in words and melodies are the songs written by the inspired saints of yester-year and poets and composers of today. Its truths are glorious and priceless, worth more than silver and gold. With glad hearts, we can share and sing the sublime truths of God's eternal goodness, His sovereignty, His will, and design to come, and the Saviour's mighty love. Herein is a spiritual treasury of devotion, aspiration, comfort, and assurance. Take your Hymn Book and cherish it and cast it not aside lightly. Hold it with reverent hands as you sing unto Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

The great Johann Sebastian Bock said, "The aim of all music is to the GLORY OF GOD and the refreshment of the spirit." To define **SACRED MUSIC**, consider these **SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS**.

First: SACRED MUSIC should INSPIRE. The proper kind of music should encourage us to strive for noble living. Many could testify that they have come to the place of dedication from the message of a well selected and properly presented song. As someone said, "Music, based upon the Word of God, should call forth our human best for His divine purposes."

Second: SACRED MUSIC should ENCOURAGE. Let's face it. We all go through times of discouragement. Despondency often besets us. **Elisabeth Elliot** wrote, "In January of 1956, when five women were waiting with bated breath to find out whether our husbands were dead or alive, the hymn "How firm a Foundation" with those magnificent words taken from Isaiah 43:1-2 sustained me throughout the night.

Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismayed,
For I am thy God and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;
For I will be with thee thy trials to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress...

The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell shall endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no, never, no never forsake!

Check it out. Many a song writer in times of distress and discouragement has written a hymn or song that today continues to bless and encourage us as we sing it.

Third: SACRED MUSIC should TEACH. Sacred Music, Gospel Music, and Hymns should be correct in Doctrine. Music should teach us the love of God, Salvation by Grace, Eternal Security, Justification by Grace, the second coming of Christ, and heaven. The great doctrines of the Word of God should be made plain in our Songs.

There is something wrong with a song that does not teach.
There is something wrong with a Hymn that is not doctrinally or Biblically correct.

Biblical teaching, correct Bible teaching, must be interwoven in all sacred songs and hymns.

Think about all the little Sunday School choruses and hymns you have heard and sung over the years. One of the reasons they are such good teachers is they are sung over and over again. Many a wayward person has come to the Lord Jesus Christ later in life because they remember a song their godly mother sung many years before.

Fourth: SACRED MUSIC should always POINT TO THE SAVIOUR. Romans 10:17 tells us that "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." When songs reflect the message of Christ they will lead men to Christ. The Word of God can be preached through Hymns as well as through the spoken Word, such as:

"My faith looks up to thee,"

"My Hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' Blood and righteousness," and

"What can wash away my sins? Nothing but the Blood of Jesus."

Fifth: SACRED MUSIC should INSPIRE PRAISE: In Ephesians 5:19, we read, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and **MAKING MELODY** in our hearts to the Lord." The word "**MELODY**" means literally "to sing praises unto God." **SACRED MUSIC** should lift us up in praise unto God. Such songs as:

"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name,"

"Glory to His name," and

"Praise Him, Praise Him".

Sixth: SACRED MUSIC should EXPRESS OUR LOVE TO God AND OUR SAVIOUR. Several of the most beautiful of all hymns in expressing that love are,

"O Love that will not let me go,"

"Love lifted me,"

"Oh, How I love Jesus", and

"Jesus loves even me."

Seventh: SACRED MUSIC should PROVIDE ASSURANCE, that helps us to know our Salvation is steadfast and sure. In times of distress and darkness, singing brightens any situation, reminding us that our God is still on the throne. Was this not so with the Apostle Paul and Silas there in that Philippian jail? There in the darkness of the night and with backs bleeding, they sang songs and a soul, actually a whole house of people, came to Jesus.

Listen to this poem entitled "Old Fashioned Hymns."

The good old-fashioned Hymns appeal to me,
The kind that are set to simple melody.
I'd rather hear the church choir sing them out,
Than all the classic songs you hear about.

It seems to give my soul a heap of joy
To hear those hymns I learned when just a boy
And went with Ma to church and heard her sing,
With Pa's bass voice that made the rafters ring.

No singer ever thought to ask for pay,
Nor yet the organist who came to play;
We sang because our hearts were full of love
And gratitude and faith in God above.

It's true, I guess, sometimes we sang them wrong;
But happy voices made the sweetest song.

And when we missed the tune a little bit,
The joy we put in song made up for it.

This song is plenty good enough for me,
Familiar like, "Nearer, My God, to Thee."
And how I feel the joy and wondrous power
In that hymn, "I need Thee Every Hour."

And don't you know that God above can see
Just how we sing, "My Faith looks up to Thee."
Oh, yes, my friend, old-fashioned hymns appear
to have the sweetest music I can hear.

Martin Luther had two basic objectives when he fired the reformation canon into the 16th century wall of spiritual ignorance.

**First, to give the people a Bible they could read on their own, and
Second, to give them a hymnal from which they could sing on their own.**

The Bible we have, and its word we read. The hymnal we have, but where has its melody gone? We simply do not sing as often as we ought, and therein lies the blame and the shame. Let me give you several corrective suggestions:

1. Whenever and whatever you sing, concentrate on the words. If it helps, close your eyes.
2. Choose a favorite hymn and paste it in your Bible. Then make a definite effort to add one or two songs a month to your knowledge of hymns and choruses that can be sung during your driving schedule or soap and shower time.
3. You might try singing before mealtime in the evening or during your family devotional times.
4. Blow the dust off your tape or CD player and put on some beautiful godly music. Just watch what happens to the atmosphere when you do this. Then if you can for added enjoyment, sing along and add your own harmony.

By the way - never mind how beautiful or pitiful you may sound. You are not auditioning for the choir; you're making melody with your heart. "Sing out!"

The Psalmist declared in Psalms 98:1-2, "O sing unto the Lord a new song: for He hath done marvelous things ... The Lord hath made known His salvation ..." Any music that does not glorify God, refresh the spirit, and bring others to the knowledge of salvation in Jesus Christ should be rejected because like all things temporal, any other kind will pass away with the hay and stubble of this world.

O what a thrill to sing,

**All hail the power of Jesus' Name! Let angels prostrate fall.
Bring forth the Royal Diadem And crown Him Lord of all.
Bring forth the Royal Diadem And crown Him Lord of all.**

**O that with yonder sacred throng We at His feet may fall.
We'll join the everlasting Son, And crown Him LORD OF ALL.**

If God has spoken to your heart after reading the sermon "Character: Sacred Music" then right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you.

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in

Acts 16:31, "...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..."
Romans 10:13, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: **“I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation.”**

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, please let me know. Please send an e-mail to pastormiklas@aol.com and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

The **“Weekly SERMON”** was sent as a ministry of Bible Baptist Ministry, 14 United Zion Circle, Lititz, PA 17543. Our Privacy policy ensures that your e-mail address will not be sold, or shared with any third party.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE OF THE FOLLOWING PERMISSION TO COPY: The **“Weekly SERMON”** is reproduced in several formats, therefore, in its original form, without any changes, the **“Weekly SERMON”** may be copied and re-transmitted by electronic mail, and copies may be printed for individual or ministry purposes, provided that such copying, re-transmission, printing, or other use is not for profit or other commercial purpose. Any copying, re-transmission, distribution, printing, or other use of the **“Weekly SERMON”** must set forth in full the heading that is given before each **“Weekly SERMON.”** Any other request for use, please contact Bible Baptist Ministries at pastormiklas@aol.com or by phone at **717-625-2992**.