

Part B: Why do we sing in church?

1. Singing is a wonderful way to worship God

Congregational worship is a 'particular expression of the total life-response that is the worship of the new covenant'.¹ One way of worshipping God together is by *praising* him, because of who he is. What more reason do we need?

Hebrews 13:15

Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise – the fruit of lips that openly profess his name.

2. Singing is, and has always been, an important way for God's people to respond to His character and acts.

Old Testament

Exodus 15:1-2

¹ Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD :

"I will sing to the LORD,
for he is highly exalted.
The horse and its rider
he has hurled into the sea.

² The LORD is my strength and my song;
he has become my salvation.
He is my God, and I will praise him,
my father's God, and I will exalt him.

Psalms 96:1-4

¹ Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.

² Sing to the LORD, praise his name;
proclaim his salvation day after day.

³ Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

⁴ For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;
he is to be feared above all gods.

¹ David Peterson, *Engaging With God*, 220-21.

New Testament

Luke 1:46-8, 54-5

⁴⁶And Mary said:

"My soul glorifies the Lord
⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.

...

⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful
⁵⁵to Abraham and his descendants forever,
even as he said to our fathers."

3. Singing joins in the song of the universal church, and anticipates our fellowship in the new creation

Ephesians 2:4-6:

⁴But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,

Hebrews 12:22-23:

²²But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, ²³to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect...

Revelation 5:9-10, 13

⁹And they sang a new song:

"You are worthy to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
because you were slain,
and with your blood you purchased men for God
from every tribe and language and people and nation.

¹⁰You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God,
and they will reign on the earth." ...

¹³Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing:

"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be praise and honor and glory and power,
for ever and ever!"

4. Singing is good for us!

- It builds us up as a church

1 Corinthians 14:26

²⁶What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.

- It allows us to express our emotions

James 5:13b

Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise.

- It can be an effective tool for evangelism

Acts 16:25

²⁵About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.

5. We are told to

Colossians 3:16-17

Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ¹⁷And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (TNIV)

Ephesians 5:18-20

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹speaking to one another with psalms, hymns and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, ²⁰always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (TNIV)

Discussion Questions

- As musicians and church leaders do we do enough to help our congregations understand the reason why we sing at church?
- Is it appropriate to consider playing in the band or leading singing as a teaching role?
- Why do we have musical instruments accompanying singing?
- Does the purpose of singing in church change the style we choose to lead the singing in?