

Our Singing

by Bill Crews

One of the ways available to a Christian for praising God, thanking God, and petitioning God, as well as for edifying self and instructing, exhorting and edifying others, is **singing**. We are called upon, if cheerful, to sing praises unto God (James 5:13). We are commanded, in all wisdom, to teach and admonish one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Col. 3: 16). We are commanded to speak one to another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Eph. 5:19). The words we use should be in harmony with God's revealed Word, and we should both understand them and mean them as we sing them. While we sing without with our lips, there should be a making of melody within in our hearts to the Lord (Eph. 5:19). We must sing with grace (gratitude, thanksgiving) in our hearts unto God (Col. 3:16).

Our singing, then, should be all of these and more. It should also be our **very best**, and improve with practice and time. We should learn the words until we can sing them from memory. What does it say about the quality of our worship if we sing songs over and over for many years without our ever learning the words? We should also learn the melodies until we can sing them from memory. Are we really making melody in our hearts when the melody of sound is never learned? We should sing at times other than our public assemblies. My mother sang "the songs of Zion" while she worked. That told me that she was happy, that she loved the Lord, and that her being a Christian was a daily vocation. When God tells me in Acts 16:25 that persecuted and suffering Paul and Silas, in a Roman prison and about midnight, prayed and sang hymns unto God, that tells me that those men had done a lot of such singing in their lives. Even our Savior was one who sang (Matt. 26:30; Mk. 14:26). And there will be glorious singing in heaven (Rev. 5:9-10; 15:3-4).

When Christians assemble, whatever the time, one of the things in which all can *audibly* participate is singing. And there is something wrong when Christians do not want to or will not participate. Singing, whether in our Lord's day assemblies or in our assemblies at other times (a regular week-night, gospel meetings, etc.), can do so much for us. But what a great responsibility rests upon anyone who leads in such singing. The selections are important, and the way in which they are rendered is important. Certainly songs can be led too fast and too high, but it is the opposite tragedy that usually befalls a congregation that does not work on improving its singing. Let a leader pitch a song too low and sing it too slow, and the results can be anything but uplifting and rewarding. Any gospel preacher can tell you that the finest preaching can be diminished in effect by dead singing. And there is no good excuse for it.

The Roanridge congregation has been blessed with good singing throughout its existence. We presently have several capable song leaders. All the members, past and present, who love to sing and appreciate good singing are truly grateful for the work done by so many. Let us keep up this good tradition -- singing that sounds good and, even more important, singing that is pleasing to God.

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