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Twist and Shout-The Song of Creation

April 25, 2010

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Psalm 103:1-5 and Philippians 2:5-11

Psalm 96:1-6

- 1 O sing to the Lord a new song;
Sing to the Lord, all the earth.
- 2 Sing to the Lord, bless his name;
Tell of his salvation from day to day.
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations,
His marvelous works among all the peoples.
- 4 For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;
He is to be revered above all gods.
- 5 For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the Lord made the heavens.
- 6 Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Philippians 2:5-11

- ⁵Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:
- ⁶ Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,
 - ⁷ but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
 - ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to death—
even death on a cross!
 - ⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
 - ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
 - ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Let us pray:

Lord, May your Spirit move among us as we listen to your voice and open our hearts to the vibrations of your presence among us. As we hear your voice from the texts today, help us to act more boldly in your name.

In Jesus Name, Amen.

Everyone loves a good song!

Little kids, teenagers, adults alike, love a good song. It doesn't matter if it's a pop, hip hop, big band, country, honkey tonk, country or simple tune of a Mom singing to her baby boy in

her arms. Everyone loves a good song.

The power of a song is noted by how it stays in our hearts and minds long after it's been heard. It's almost as if the tune takes residence in our life and will come out in a moment's notice.

My guess is that your thinking of some tunes as I'm speaking right now. Some tunes carry more meaning to each of us than others as they remind of us of significant moments of our lives.

What about the song that brought you and your spouse together?

Or the song that was played at your wedding day?

Or the song you danced to during Prom this year?

Or the music played at the memorial service of someone you lost?

My mother passed away three years ago. One of the special memories of a song was during the memorial service of my Mom just. After contracting cancer, she died quickly and tragically. She grew up in a small town in central Kansas. When the memorial service was over, the musicians surprised the family by playing the song. "Somewhere over the Rainbow." To this day, I cannot hear the tune "Somewhere over the Rainbow" without thinking fondly of my Mom.

I am not the only one that shares these memories associated with songs. I'm sure if we went around today, each of us could come up with a song that has special memories.

The power of a tune vibrating through our heart changes our life.

A song has the power to change life for good

The sad reality is that the power of a song also has power to change life for ill as well.

Regardless is it is for good or ill. A song compels us to know ways of living.

David, in his writing of the Psalms knew the power of a song to convey what takes place in the deep places of our lives. He knew that songs have the power to tap into the deep well of our souls to speak of the heartache, the tragedies, the depth of the joys of life. Many of the psalms he wrote were meant to be sung or chanted.

Psalm 96 is one of those songs meant to be sung in our life.

It's hard to appreciate what this means for us today. However, there are some who sing this song every few weeks.

The Abbey of Gethsemane:

They would sing the Psalm every few weeks. During the day and during the night, the scripture would fill them and the song of the psalms would bubble out in their life. They, quite literally, would embody the song of scripture and it would take residence in their life.

The right song will embody something in a way different than if simply read. The power of a song is reflected in life as well.

Any parent knows the power of song to calm a child or excite them into a frenzied ball of energy.

Any band knows the power of a song to move an audience to a unspeakable euphoria or hushed reverence.

Any advertiser knows the power of a song to help us remember a product.

Any person in love knows the power of a song to speak to the heart of his companion.

We are persuaded and conditioned by the tunes we hear. Why is it that the most motivational messages in our lives are conveyed through song. Human speech is limited but a song gives life and creates life.

Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, knew this as well.

If you want people to embody something, use a song.

Paul was trying to accomplish this as he was writing to his fellow Christians in Philippi.

As he sat in a jail cell, he was writing to the Philippians to thank them for their help in sharing the gospel. As is typical with Paul, he was encouraging them to focus on the joy that can only come from life in Christ.

He was redirecting them to Christ as a way of unifying them and providing commonality instead of keeping them bound by their own jealousies, gossip and self interest. Paul calls us to a unity in Christ that allows us to be in rhythm with the Holy Spirit and God's creation.

What does Paul do?

He uses a song of the early church to point people to Christ as the one who is the song of life.

I want to read this text again. But I invite you to listen for the tune that fills this song up from top to bottom and side to side.

Listen to the text:

The Scripture says,

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus."

- 6 Who, being in very nature □ God,
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,
7 but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature □ of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
8 And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!
9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
12 to the glory of God the Father.

An early song that Paul used to remind the early Christians the centrality of Jesus Christ to their very life.

What is the tune to this song?

Nobody knows? People have guesed but know one knows.

Isn't that perfect, the scripture that has held up for the church as the most defining word about the very nature of God in Christ is left up to us to figure out what the tune will be in our life.

If people were to describe the melody of your life, what would it be?

What would be the instruments you would use to describe your life?

What genre would the tune of your life come from?

After people came in contact with you, what would be the tune they would hum?

A joyful one?

One with a lot of minor chords?

Major chords?

Rhythm and Blues?

One with a lot of Crescendos only to immediately taper off.

Off Beat.

What would be the tune that was left? The rhythm.

If a musician was to sit right down next to you and wrote down the song of your life, what would it be? **(Health Place-Oh, How I love Jesus)**

Better yet, ask the person seated to your right, what is the song you hear me singing with my life?

The Messiah.

Talking with Ed about the Messiah at 4:00 p.m and we were talking about the power of the Messiah to communicate the good news of the gospel.

I was telling him about my sermon and how Paul used this song to communicate the essence of Christ to the Philippians.

You know Spencer, music, at it's basic level is vibration. For that matter, spoken words as well. You see, music is a living art form.

At that moment, I got it.

Paul used the medium of song to communicate what it means to live a life of Christ.

To lead a life of Christ vibrations. Vibrations that linger in the lives of people we meet.

Here is the question: What is the song of your life?

I know of a church in Ohio that is known for a ministry they call servant evangelism.

Each and every Saturday, members of this church go into the community and offer free services in the name of Christ; free car washes, free soft drinks and bottled water, free gift wrapping at the holidays. They feed parking meters. They escort people with umbrellas in the rain.

When people ask in astonishment why they are doing these things, they reply, "It's our way of showing the love of Christ."

In fact, I wanted to see what the hype was about the church. So, I went one Saturday to participate in these servant evangelism projects. Over 400 people showed up that Saturday morning in March. I found out later that over 400 people show up every Saturday morning. Teams of 10-14 people go out to do different projects. I jumped on the car window washing duty. I washed people's windows when they stopped at the gas station. When they asked us why we were washing cars, we responded. We wanted to show you a simple way that God loves you.

Some would say, Oh, Ok.

One guy responded, Oh, yea your that church that does all that nice stuff for people.

Another wanted more information. It was a wonderful day.

Once, a group of members from this church walked into a Waffle House in Cincinnati. Some made their way to the back room, slipped on aprons and started washing dishes.

Others went to the juke box, fed in some dollars and started dancing to Diana Ross.

Waffle House is not exactly high on the hierarchy of restaurants, and it's probably a depressing place to spend Christmas Eve, the night these dancers and dishwashers showed up. Smell of Cheeseburgers and Cigarettes doesn't remind most people of the holidays.

People shook off inhibitions. Whole place was pulsating to "Shake it up, Baby, Twist and Shout" Passing motorists slowed down.

The pastor of the church received a phone call from a local Psychiatrist.

Are you the church that was dancing at the Waffle House on Christmas Eve?

Yes sir. Umm...were sorry.

No, no. I think it's great. Two of the people there that night were patients of mine. Usually during the holidays they slide deep into depression. Not this year. You gave them something special. Thank you.

What is the song of your life?

May the vibrations of your life reflect the song of Christ living in your hearts.