

Cherished-Chosen-Challenged – May 2, 2010

Sing! Sing! Sing!

“You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness, to the end that *my* glory may sing praise to You and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to You forever.” Proverbs 30:11-12

As we sat around the table in our grandparents kitchen there were many discussions concerning church and the Word of God. Biblical wisdom for life was imparted and often discussed with great detail and seriousness. On the table sat the Bible and each month’s well-worn Portals of Prayer. A few kitchen decorations adorned the wall, copper roosters as memory serves, and then one day appeared the sign: *“The Lord likes it when I work. He loves it when I sing!”* Our grandparents were simple, hard working, and God-fearing people; traits that were shared and modeled also by our parents. They weren’t flashy people and the walls of their home weren’t overly crowded with hangings and memorabilia: a few family pictures, a simple cross, and a large painting of Christ on the road to Emmaus; a smaller version of which, my wife hung in my study.

It was a simpler and slower paced time for certain. Less conveniences and harder labor in many respects characterized the life of my grandparents, and yet, small were the complaints of life, while great was the joy of a life filled with godly music. Here were people who knew the mourning and sorrow of sin and the gladness of the glory of Christ crucified for them. Sadness became replaced with the joy of singing and making music to the Lord. Fond are the memories of the simple melodies of a grandmother who sang softly to us, *“Jesus Loves Me”* or *“I Am Jesus Little Lamb”* or the privilege of sitting on the organ bench with our grandfather as he played and sang the favorites of old from The Lutheran Hymnal: *“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”* or *“Crown Him With Many Crowns”*. God pleasing music was a staple of life at home and at church. What a grand experience to be able to join with father, grandfather, uncles, cousins, and thirty to forty other Lutheran men to sing the glory of God. What a staunch

and faithful witness was given as they blended the talent of their voices in such pieces as “*Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me*” where harmonic melody swelled in adoration and hushed in humble petitions to their Savior. Who would fail to be moved by such godly use of music? Who could help but hear the story of God’s love in such hymns of devotion?

Godly music has always been a large part of Christian worship and a true treasure of the Lutheran Church; music where the power of the melody submits itself to the message and instead serves as a vehicle for prayers to God and a purveyor of the Gospel; music in which melody beautifies the telling of the story of salvation and helps us grasp the sorrow of sin, the true joy of sins forgiven and the glory of life everlasting with Christ. Exposure to and participation in such music of worship reflects the true joy of our victory in Christ and is a powerful tool in the formation of the faith of the believer. What a blessing it is when children learn to sing the liturgy before they ever learn to read, for therein they learn the story of salvation. How wonderful it is when parents have the hymnal open and instruct children on how to worship in song. Here the faith is revealed to the next generation. Whether in the pew or in the choir, whether with old time Sunday favorite, choir anthem, or simple children’s hymn, what a privilege it is to sing to the Lord! Gathered with your fellow worshipers each Sunday it is as if heaven is opened and surrounded by saints and angels we are invited to join their heavenly song! What a joy it is to carry those hymns of praise with us in our daily lives as we confront the challenges of each day!

The sign read: “*The Lord likes it when I work. He loves it when I sing.*” Truly, it would be hard to prove such a comparison from Holy Scripture, but the sentiment surely reflects the singing attitude of generations of believers who sang with heart and soul the praises of the Lord. “*Then sing your hosannas and raise your glad voice; Proclaim the blest tidings that all may rejoice. Laud, honor, and praise to the Lamb that was slain: With Father and Spirit He ever shall reign.*” C.F.W. Walther, LSB # 480 vs. 5.

- Remember: Scripture does not talk about having a great voice or a minimum level of talent to be able to sing to the Lord. You are God's people and God has done great things for you! Don't be bashful. Join in and sing with your fellow worshipers the praises of our King! Offer your services to the choir...you will be welcome!
- Remember: The hymns we sing are formative for our faith. They are powerful tools to teach and comfort. Let us sing them to our children and in so doing teach the story of God's love for them also!

How blessed we are to be the people of God. He has chosen us to be in this place. He has prepared us for this time. He has equipped us for service to Him. **Don't wait for someone else to do it. If you wait on someone else to do it...it will never get done!** God bless you in the growth of your faith and in service to Him and His people, for your labor in the Lord is never in vain.

Pastor Jacobs

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