

When the Entertainment God Comes to Church

by Don Currin

The sermon emphasizes the importance of preserving the sacredness of the Lord's song in worship services, focusing on a holy God rather than the individual worshiper.

Scripture: Psalm 137:1

Topics: "Worship Music", "Sacred Praise"

Description

Don Currin preaches about the importance of the Lord's song in the lives of believers, emphasizing that praise characterizes the song of God and is a notable aspect of Christ's composition in the heart of a redeemed sinner. The Lord's song calls for an everlasting preoccupation with Him, leading to a sense of being out of tune when believers fail to show forth His praises. Currin highlights the sacredness of the Lord's song, warning against compromising with worldly entertainment in churches and stressing the need to protect the sanctity of worship from music that appeals to the flesh over honoring the Creator.

Transcript

Are we amusing the mixed multitude?

And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.

Psalm 40:3

Only Christianity affirms the relationship between its founder and followers with a song. Where there is an absence of song, there is an absence of the Son. One of the assurances of conversion is the song that Christ places in the heart of the believer. The nature of the Lord's song is revealed in the character of His children.

In David's inspired testimony, he says, "he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Praise characterizes the song of God. There is nothing more noteworthy of Christ's composition in the heart of a redeemed sinner than adoration. Christians have a sense of being out of tune with God when their walk ceases to show forth the praises of Him Who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. While the lyrics may vary from life to life, the outstanding note of Christ's song is praise.

William Cowper expressed his heart of undaunted praise for God when he penned the words-

The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only thee.

The Lord's song has called us to an everlasting preoccupation with Him and we will not be content until we yield to its influence.

Another characteristic of the Lord's song is sacredness. In Psalm 137:1-4, the harpists of Israel were required to perform His song before a people who were bent on entertainment. Desiring to be amused, they commanded these musicians to sing them a song of Zion. Esteeming the Lord's song sacred, these harpists refused to play before these idolaters.

Tragically, in the process of accommodating the demand of contemporary culture that would rather be amused than confronted about their sin, these churches have become more concerned with entertaining the goats than feeding the sheep. This ecclesiastical compromise has led to grievous repercussions in the Church. A.W. Tozer warned in his book *The Root of the Righteous*:

For centuries the Church stood solidly against every form of worldly entertainment, recognizing it for what it was—a device for wasting time, a refuge from the disturbing voice of conscience, a scheme to divert attention from moral accountability. For this she got herself abused roundly by the sons of the world. But of late she has become tired of the abuse and has given over the struggle. She appears to have decided that if she cannot conquer the great god Entertainment she may as well join forces with him and make whatever use she can of his powers. So today we have the astonishing spectacle of having millions of dollars being poured into the unholy job of providing earthly entertainment for the so-called sons of heaven. Religious entertainment is in many places crowding out the serious things of God. Many churches these days have become little more than poor theaters where fifth-rate "producers" peddle their shoddy wares with the full approval of evangelical leaders who can even quote a holy text in defense of their delinquency.

Sadly, much of the contemporary music that is presented today does not promote the loftiness of the Creator. Rather it humanizes God, magnifies self, and paves the way for a feel good religion. Of the tragic consequences that have resulted, contempt for the Lord's song heads the list. Many church leaders seem to go to any extent to make the song of the Redeemer more palatable to the sensual taste of the lost. John Chrysostom warned, "Everything must be banished which recalls the cult of pagan gods and the songs of actors." While noted hymnwriter Fanny Crosby admonished, "It is never right to take the lyrics of Zion and put them to the tune of Babylon".

In his article *Music in Worship: Demanding a Distinction*, Lenny Seidel wrote, "The church has capitulated to a reversal of emphasis in worship: the focus is now on the individual worshiper rather than on a holy God who is the object of worship. The result is a flood of music characterized by weak theology and designed to make people feel good. The issue is that the gospel should not be presented in an entertainment mode. The reason is that the gospel is about a person—the Lord Jesus Christ—and nothing about His like was entertaining."

With the increased temptation to lower God's standard in music, let us wage war against the God of this age who would seek to bring contempt upon the Lord's song. Let us resolve to guard the sacredness of that holy song by protecting our worship services from music that appeals to the flesh and "serves and worships the creature" more than the Creator. Let us strive to preserve the sacredness of the Lord's song that Christ may receive the preeminence that He rightly deserves.

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