

Give to Jesus Glory

by Earle Maxwell

Earle Maxwell's sermon emphasizes the vital role of worship through songs of praise, testimony, and dedication in the Christian life.

Duration: 33:29

Scripture: Psalm 40:2-3, Psalm 71:15, Psalm 96:3, Psalm 138:5, Matthew 6:33, Revelation 15:3

Topics: "Personal Testimony", "Worship Music"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having a song of testimony in our lives. He shares a personal experience of traveling in the Philippines and witnessing the faith and resilience of the people there. Despite the challenging circumstances, the speaker is inspired by an elderly lady who sings a testimony in her dialect, reminding him of the sweetness of being with Jesus every day. The sermon also references Psalm 40:3, which speaks of God putting a new song in our mouths, highlighting the power of testimonies to touch hearts and bring about transformation.

Transcript

I'm sure that as Colonel Aguirre spoke to you, your response would be that you would find it very easy to work with such warm and lovely people. And we have to thank God for eight years now we've been out of the country serving amongst people such as Colonel Aguirre represents. And we're glad that they've accepted us as one of themselves and one of the family.

On the first Sunday of this year, we set out at 4 a.m. in the morning to go and make our several connections for we had a 12-hour trip to go to visit a corps. We caught a bus for the first couple of hours and then we had to wait because they'd changed the timetable for the connecting boat. And then we had several hours on a boat and then off.

And the final five or six hours was in a jeepney. Now, if you've ever known what good transport is like, the jeepneys are a remarkable little vehicle in the Philippines. They came into their own after World War II.

Of course, we have 59 million people in the Philippines. And in Greater Manila, the whole of Australia's population fits into Greater Manila. And so you can imagine with about 10 feet between, that's about as far as they are apart from each other.

At any part of the day, you're trying to wend your way through jeepney after jeepney. They're licensed to carry 14. And my wife and I were crowded into the back of this little jeepney.

26 of us sat close together where 14 should sit. I've ever been grateful that the Lord gave me a Filipino-sized wife. I knew he planned it that way because marriage is made in heaven.

And at the end of our five or six hours journey and we had several blowouts on the way and there were four bags of rice in the middle and there were four people on the hood of the jeepney. They decided they wouldn't make it 30 by joining us inside. We were a little distressed at the end of the journey, worn out, exhausted.

And we said, Oh Lord, what have you got in store for us here at Bulalakau and Nesukum? The first thing I discovered that when I entered Nesukum, this lovely little Salvation Army Corps where we have just purchased the Roman Catholic Church. The Catholics have given way to us and the Army's now got it on its own so we've purchased the Catholic Church. And we're converting it into a Salvation Army Hall with all the purposes that will serve that community.

But on Sunday morning we were at Bulalakau and when it was testimony time there were perhaps 150 people in the meeting. The folk were not hesitant to testify but one lady eventually got up and she was very elderly and she sort of had to hold on to the makeshift forms that they have for seating in the meetings. And without any to do, she started to sing her testimony in the dialect of that part of the country.

And I knew the melody because what she was singing in her 83rd year was, Every day with Jesus is sweeter than the day before. And at that moment God, the Holy Spirit, used that unaccompanied song to reach right into my heart. A song getting into my heart.

And then while I thought of it, I remembered that in Psalm 40 and verse 3, the Psalmist said, He has put a new song in my mouth. Even praise unto God, many shall see it and fear and shall trust in the Lord. A new song in my mouth.

And then I remembered that Romans 10.10 says that when we have the real experience of Christian belief, it's belief in the heart. And what the mouth has to do with it is its confession is made unto salvation. And then when I read the verse a little more clearly and thoughtfully, I thought a new song in my mouth and then the Psalmist says, And many shall see it.

In other words, what the Psalmist is saying, What I sing with my lips will be evident in the life that I live. Many shall see it. And so taking guidance from the Chief Secretary this morning, I feel most comfortable with just staying with three simple thoughts.

What sort of a song do we come to you with this morning? A song in our lips and I want to be identified with the Psalmist because I see that straight away he said that the first song he would sing would be a song of praise. He has put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. And I like to feel that whenever we come into God's house we come to worship Him because praise is a very important ingredient in worship.

Praise is something that speaks of the majesty of God. That's why a chapter or two earlier he says in chapter 34, O magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt His name together. That doesn't mean we have to put God in a position where we want God to be magnified.

God is almighty. He does not need to be magnified. He is the sovereign, the great God that we worship.

But what we need to have is kingdom eyes so that we see the almightiness of God and when we come to worship we say thank you Lord for the privilege of coming into your house to worship you for what you are. I want to praise God for His I have been you every morning. Is that what's happened to you? Can you say this morning as we worship the Lord together that you want to praise Him because His blessing upon your life has come with a freshness every morning? That's why the psalmist says I come into God's house, into God's presence and the new song in my mouth is a song of praise which of course is a song of worship.

I had to do a little paper. We each had several assignments to do and I had to speak at the conference for an hour on worship in the Salvation Army. Worship in the Salvation Army.

And so I put a few questionnaires out to officers in the Philippines and we only have seven reinforcement officers in the country. We are fairly self-sufficient for national officers but some officers replied with different ideas of how worship ought to be in the Salvation Army today and one officer said I pray that the Salvation Army might keep the priority right that we worship God first of all for who He is and what He is and not for what we can get out of Him. We are here this morning as a group of God's children not because we are in need firstly of God's presence but firstly because we have an inward need that needs to confess and express ourselves in worship for He who is almighty.

That's why the writer in Revelation says of our risen Lord Thou art worthy to receive glory and honour. I do pray that at Carina Corps wherever you meet one another that the song that comes from your lips might be a song of praise because praise is a vital ingredient of our worship. And I sometimes get a little concerned that we've been so exercised in evangelism that we've put such an emphasis there we've been strong in evangelism but I wonder sometimes if we've been soft on worship and sometimes worship can be wordless you're just overcome by the presence of God.

I sometimes couldn't understand why the Lord diverted us to the Philippines. We've had some testing experiences as Colonel Aguirre has been a great help to us to share with us. But as I look back I can see that God's used so many experiences to make me aware of the almightiness of His presence and power and the sufficiency of His sovereign grace.

He has never failed. And so can I ask you this morning do you have a song of worship? A song of praise on your lips? Let's sing together Praise Him with melody Praise Him with song Tell of His holiness all the day long Let's sing it as part of our worship Close your eyes Let the song that comes from your lips Let it be seen in your life Because without us together we just come afresh into His presence and we sing softly. There may be someone in this meeting this morning and you answer me and you say Colonel if you knew what was happening in my family you'd find it difficult to praise.

The Bible says that we can be thankful in everything and that gives us a little bit of an excuse that we may not be able to be thankful for everything but in everything give thanks to the Lord. We visited a couple in Sydney or they came to see us last Sunday afternoon at Congress Hall and the lady so very happily introduced her husband who only six months ago it looked as though the curtain was falling very, very rapidly on his life. Very ill.

Having the best treatment surrounding his condition with much prayer. And his wife of only a couple of years went to the Lord in prayer and she said Lord why me? Why is this happening to me? She found it difficult to praise. And then with some marvellous treatment and some prayer in a very wonderful way over

the next few months there was a complete turnaround and her husband greeted us last Sunday afternoon and we have never seen him looking so well and the doctors are amazed but now that this has happened she says God but why me? She asked the question again this time on the other side.

You see it's not always easy to be praising the Lord but let us bring ourselves into submission to his glorious will and let us believe that there is always a purpose in that which God permits. There is always a purpose in that which God permits. Alright the song of praise which is worship.

Now what about a song of testimony which is witness and in verse 10 of this same chapter the psalmist says I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation. Have you come to the meeting this morning with a song of testimony on your lips that is evident in the way that you are living? What are we going to testify about this morning now? First of all I get a little concerned lest we might misunderstand the significance of Christian testimony. Testimony is telling other people not what we are or what we have done but testimony is witnessing to the glorious power of what God has done in and through our lives.

It is he that has given the increase. It is God that has by his grace given us a new life that we can rise up and praise his name together. The song of testimony is a song that focuses on one theme give to Jesus glory.

And so I looked in this chapter and I found out that there was one or two things that the psalmist was very pleased about in verse 5 he said Many, O Lord my God, are they wonderful works which thy hast done testifying to the greatness of God. In verse 2 he says You brought me up out of a horrible pit out of a miry clay and you set my feet upon a rock and you have established my goings. You did it Lord.

A song of deliverance in his testimony. It's all there in the psalm and you can see it for yourself. And in verse 1 he says I waited patiently for the Lord and he inclined unto me and heard my cry.

He's testifying to the wonderful way in which God answers prayer. And so this morning in our holiness meeting we not only come into this God's house and we want a song of praise and worship to be on our lips but we want a song of testimony to be on our lips. We want a song of testimony to correspond with the life that we live.

You know in the Philippines we have three armed group of men. We have the military forces that the government sponsors. We have the military forces that are up in the hills that are communist dominated and we have a religious military force under a Muslim command.

And so we have these three groups of armed men constantly facing each other. Just a few years ago a young man decided to leave the communists in the hills and he came down to the Salvation Army at Wally in the southern part of the Mindanao island and he really came through to the Lord in a wonderful experience. And this young man had a testimony that really thrilled the congregation when he spoke to them of the transformation in his life after he left the communists and found hope in Jesus.

And one day he said to his corps officer I've got a burden for General Santos which is not far away. I feel that God wants me to go down and give my testimony in that great city. I want to go down and help the army get started in General Santos and it's going well now praise God.

But do you know when you leave the communists and they regard you as a scab in Australian language they'll track you down and they'll take revenge against you. And it just so happened this day that the young

man decided to set out from Wally and go to General Santos with this burden of his testimony they caught up with him in a secluded place and they burnt him to death. The song of death.

And I'd like to think that in our chorus section of the song book which I think is number 222 and when we arrive at the end of our journey we'll sing the songs of Zion in the courts above. Let's sing together. As a testimony this morning we'll sing in the morning.

You like to stand and sing it? OK. Let's stand and have the chorus. 222 in the chorus section.

222 in the morning. Verse 8. I delight to do thy will, O my God. It's a beautiful, it's a beautiful song when we sing this song of dedication.

It's a song that has to do with our service. I delight to do thy will, O God. And very often young people say to me but I want to know what God's will is.

I want to know what God's will is before I make a commitment to what I think God's revealed will for me will be. But as I look back on my life I can see that I had to learn a great lesson about singing the song of dedication because in Romans 12 it says there that beautiful segment of scripture I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice and then in verse 2 it says and then you will discover what the will of God is for your life. Don't get it out of order.

Don't say God I want you to tell me first what you want before I will give you my response. Give your response completely to God and trust God to then show you how the will will work out. His good will.

And so when I look at this verse this morning I delight to do thy will. I discovered another little verse in the psalm which is Psalm 104 and verse 33. And I would like to draw our meeting to a climax with this short reference this morning because when we sing the song of praise and when we sing the song of testimony and when we sing the song of dedication it's a lifetime.

It's not a song just for as long as I'm in the songsters. It's a song as long as God gives me breath. And that's why this beautiful verse Psalm 104 verse 33 says I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live and when I arrive at the end of my journey I'll sing the songs of Zion.

But in the meantime I will sing as long as I live. I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. You know the New Testament.

Those of you who are cork-adepts you know the two men, the Jewettists who were put into jail. You know the two men who had their bodies lacerated by cuts, bruised and at midnight they couldn't sleep. You know the story? And what did they do? They sang praises to God at midnight.

My word, I don't know how easily I could have sung a song if my body would have been aching with the pain of that sort of treatment. But it says in the Acts of the Apostles they sang praises to God at midnight and God was perfectly in tune with where they were and what they needed. And he sent in an earthquake to put in a little bit of bass.

He knew. A song. And so this morning I ask you my dear salvationist, my dear Christian friend, what's the song in your life like this morning? Do you come to the close of this meeting and you say, God my song of praise is even rising higher and higher as I just want to thank you for who you are and what you mean to me? Do you come to this meeting closed this morning and you say I'm singing a song of testimony

because deep in my heart God has not only done a great work of grace but he continues to fill my heart to overflowing with his Spirit.

Do you come to this closing moment this morning and you say I am able to sing afresh a song of dedication because I delight to do God's will? And what is the will of God for every believer? That we might be wholly sanctified. What is being wholly sanctified? It means giving God everything that I have and let him take over and work it all out. He doeth all things well.

And so whilst for our song of praise we sang together praise him with melody and whilst for our song of testimony we sang we'll sing in the morning the songs of salvation. I want to draw this meeting to a close this morning and suggest that as a song of dedication we might sing together sweet will of God still hold me closer till I am wholly lost in thee. And when you're wholly lost in the presence of God you will have a song that so thrills you with the majesty of God that you won't ever want to sing another song.

The harmony cannot be bettered because it's under the control of him who is the perfect way. But if there's a person in this meeting who's lost the song and the testimony is gone and the praise is very weak and the dedication has been drawn back from God and you say oh if only God would give me a song once again. He can.

But he can only give it to us when we give ourselves without reserve. And so in this beautiful spirit of worship and prayer let us sing together sweet will of God. You may close your eyes.

There may be one who wants to come to the altar. There may be one whose song is very very low volume this morning and you feel God's spirit has just shown you that something is needed and you say I will give just what he asks now. Then with the psalmist you'll say he has put a new song in my mouth.

In the spirit of prayer let us sing that. Tell God how the song is in your life this morning. Hear what he would say to you.

Let's sing it again in prayer. When we leave this meeting our service commences and yet our worship must also accompany us in our service. For worship without service is incomplete and service without worship is incomplete.

May there be a beautiful blend of God's spirit in our lives. As we sing it again and the way to the altar is open if just there is one who feels God has spoken to you in a special way this morning. Deep devotion and worship.

Heavenly Father we thank you for this time when in response to what the scripture says that we should never despise an opportunity or overlook an opportunity of assembling of the believers together we have come together this morning that we might magnify the Lord. Oh Lord we praise you this morning for your goodness and your greatness. And in the solemnity of our worship we would again ask that you might find us as we bring out the offering of ourselves that you might find that the offering that we present each of us you are happy to accept it and continue to bless us each one.

We thank you for this privilege of worship. We thank you for allowing us to come from another country and to just share in a special way. And so this morning our prayer concern is not only for this core and those who belong to the core and who couldn't meet with us in worship but they've been praying for us in their own homes.

We pray for those who belong to the family of God in other countries. We pray for the missionaries who've gone to other countries and who may not know quite the exhilaration of the worship that we've shared this morning. But thou art with them.

And we pray that you will take of our love and prayer concern and use it for their encouragement this morning. So thank you for Father for all that we have shared together. And now in our final verse may the seal of your spirit be upon all that we've shared.

And may the life that we live be a beautiful testimony and be in correspondence with the message, the song that comes from our lips. We ask for Jesus' sake. Amen.

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