

2 Chronicles 20

Singing: Expressing Our Confidence in the LORD (Join the Choir!)

One of the expressed ways that we worship is by corporate singing. Have you ever considered our singing? Not only what we sing, that is important, but why is it that we sing? Have you ever considered these thoughts about singing? We sing more than songs that we like or don't like (preference). We confess as we sing great truths. The greatest truth that we confess when we sing is our complete and total confidence in God.

Think about singing. In all the evil in the world, in all the tragedy, the body of Christ comes together and in the midst of it all one of the ways that we worship is we lift our voices to heaven to sing. IN all the trouble and chaos if you listen you will not hear screaming but singing.

When we sing we are expressing our confidence in the LORD. Turn to 2 Chronicles 20 so that we can learn this lesson together.

READ TEXT

Did you notice what happened? Battle lines have been drawn and what is the king's first line of action? He calls for the choir to sing! Set the singers out front verse 21. What a day to be a member of the choir! This is a dramatic showing of confidence in God.

Two major truths about the way that we express our confidence in the LORD through singing

1. By Singing We Confess our Complete Confidence in God

Look at what is going on in Israel. David has long been in the grave, the kingdom of Israel is now divided North and South. The Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Both have had more kings who did not follow the LORD than they had kings that did follow him. In that backdrop stands this imperfect but better king, Jehoshaphat.

Notice verse 1, *After this*. What is the *after this* referring to? In chapter 19 we get the story of Jehoshaphat's reforms that he brought to the kingdom. The substance of the reforms were to fear the LORD and do actions in faithfulness to him. In the midst of light, darkness tries to overcome the light.

Jehoshaphat here shines like few kings when the first thing that he does is call the people to gather before the LORD. He doesn't say, 'meet at the Temple so that we can count our troops and get a battle plan.' Look at verses 3-4. He was afraid, he set his face to seek the LORD, proclaimed a fast so that all the people would seek the LORD, and then gathered the people to join him in seeking the LORD.

The people of God are in trouble and are facing a threat and what do they do? They look to him who is the same yesterday, today, and for forever for help! God had been faithful to them in the past and he will do it again. Look at the confession of verse 12. *We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you*. That is stable ground. Such a confession may be the safest place to be. Some people wait until they are in the midst of the battle with the wounds of battle on their body,

while their strength is exhausted and they look to heaven and say, I have done all I can do now God you take it. Such is not the case for those who fear the LORD. The response of we who truly depend on the LORD God will be saying in the midst of great adversity like Jehoshaphat, Psalm 121:

*I lift up my eyes to the hills.
From where does my help come?
My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot be moved; he
who keeps you will not slumber.
Behold, he who keeps Israel will
neither slumber nor sleep.
The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is
your shade on your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.
The LORD will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.
The LORD will keep your going
out and your coming in from this
time forth and forevermore.*

Think about the Psalms for just a moment. The Psalms start with a world filled with trouble and in the midst of that trouble is a picture of trust in God. God takes the hurts and pains of this world and in the midst of screaming chaos God gives us lyrics of his faithfulness and notes of his splendor to fill our lungs with praise.

Look at verse 13, *Meanwhile*. While the assembly has gathered to worship the LORD answers by calling his prophet to prophecy. God says through his prophet, *do not fear*. Did you know that the Bible uses this phrase *do not fear* 365 times? This is why our LORD when teaching on the Mount says *Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.* (Matthew 6:34)

After hearing that the LORD would deliver them King Jehoshaphat, King of the Jews, bowed his face in the dirt before the King of Kings, and behind him arose a chorus of praise. The next day they put their battle armor on and go preparing for battle and it's the way that they prepare for battle that is most significant.

Usually a battle cry and not a choir is what is heard in battle. The battle cry was intended to rally the troops, but instead of a battle cry there is a melodious chorus from a choir arising from the front of the ranks. These men who are not arrayed in battle attire, no shields, no swords, no armor, our right on the front lines and commanded to sing.

Number 2:

2. By Singing We Confess Victory Has Been Won

The victory song is sung before the battle has even begun. Why? Because of verse 15-17. And look at the song that they sing, they sing a summary of the faithfulness of God. If his steadfast love endures forever, forever at least covers this day, the day of extreme adversity and for ever.

This is exactly the same reasons that we sing as a community. We gather and remember his faithfulness, confess his faithfulness. The weapons of our warfare are singing. We march into battle fighting from victory not for victory because the battle cry for us has already sounded, the battle has already been won. The battle cry for us was sounded by our champion King, Jesus, who cried while hanging to death on the wooden beams of a cursed old rugged cross - *IT IS FINISHED*. Now we sing because he has cried. We sing because he is alive! It is finished and so we live, the victory won! He has fought the enemy that was raging against us and triumphantly conquered. This is why we sing!

There is just one more thing that we have to see from this text before we finish. Look at verses 32-33. Jehoshaphat was a great reformer but as one commentator points out, "A reformer at the top cannot guarantee that the common people would truly repent, and no general revival occurred there." (Thompson, *NAC*) These songs are great but you still have to sing. I can't sing them for you. Your neighbor can't sing them for you. The most godly person you know can't sing for you, you have to sing.

One of the most awesome experiences I have ever had in signing was my time at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Here we are over 1K strong, mostly men all singing great truths, confessing with our voices our dependence upon God, confession with our voices that victory has been won for us. Most of us not really great singers but all singing something great. I won't ever forget one of my pastor friends the aisle next to me, hands raised and voice going farther than he could reach. My friend's heart was singing so loud that his voice couldn't keep up, and ever so often he would sing so strong that he would cough, and then catch back up with the song. When is the last time that you have sung like that, over the top of your voice in praise to God? Here is your chance today. Kevin DeYoung recently tweeted (@RevKevDeYoung, May 13, 2016) this truth, "Show me a congregation that loves the gospel and loves each other, and I'll show you a congregation that loves to sing."

Let's prove that we love the gospel and each other. Let's sing!