



**Forest Hill
Church of Christ**

3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd.
Memphis, TN 38125

Office: (901) 751-2444
Fax: (901) 751-9711
Info Line: (901) 392-2449
www.foresthillchurch.org

Elders:

Anthony D. Callahan
Floyd M. Hayes
Harold D. Mangrum
Leonard Watson

Ministers:

Barry M. Grider, Pulpit
Matthew Martin, Associate
Douglas Alvarenga, Hispanic

VISIT US SOON!

Sunday:

Bible Study..... 9:30 A..M.
Morning Worship.....10:30 A.M.
Evening Worship..... 6:00 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

**HOME OF THE
MEMPHIS SCHOOL
OF PREACHING**

www.msop.org

Missions Supported:

Far East/World Evangelism
Gospel Broadcasting Network
Iglesia de Cristo (Getwell)
In Search of the Lord's Way
Kakinada, India
Manila, Philippines
Murmansk, Russia
Truth for the World
Words of the Master

Volume 32

December 06, 2005

Number 49

SING PRAISES TO THE LORD

David Powell

[Editor's Note: Brother David Powell, outstanding evangelist, wrote the following article over twenty years ago! It is still very timely, and worthy of serious consideration.]

John Calvin, the founder of Presbyterianism, once said, "Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting of lamps, and the restoration of the other shadows of the law." John Wesley, founder of Methodism, once said, "I have no opposition to the organ in our chapel provided it is neither seen nor heard." Charles H. Spurgeon, Baptist, when asked why he did not use the organ in worship, said, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. (1 Cor. 14:5). I would as soon pray to God with machinery as to sing to God with machinery."

The statements by these men are given not to prove anything for or against instrumental music being used in worship. Instead, they are used because they all realized the privilege, blessing, and importance of praising God with spiritual songs. This is something many Christians fail to realize. Somehow this importance and uniqueness gets lost in the lives of so many of us.

Jesus praised his Father in song. Matthew, as well as Mark, tells us that "when they [Jesus and his disciples] had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives." (Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26.) Considering our Lord's faithfulness, it is not inconceivable to believe that he often sang praises to his Father.

Our Lord's spirit poured over into the early church. When Pliny, a Roman governor, sent a report of the activities of the Christians to Trajan, the roman emperor, he described the church in these words: "They meet at dawn to sing a hymn to Christ as Lord." If we are going to restore the early church and walk in the footsteps of Jesus (1 Peter 2:21), then worshipping God in song must be in our hearts and on our lips.

Singing spiritual songs to our heavenly Father is important because we communicate our obedience to him. God commands us to sing.

Also, when we sing praises to God we communicate a message to others. The purpose of worship is to "Provoke one another unto love and to good works." (Hebrews 10:24.) As surely as we communicate a message to others our love for God by faithfully attending the church services, or reverently bowing our heads in prayer, we express our feelings for him when we sing.

While Paul and Silas were in a prison cell in Philippi they prayed and sang praises unto God. Luke tells us that "the prisoners heard them" (Acts 16:25.) I wonder if the Philippian jailor heard them and was influenced by their singing?

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

How tragic it is when someone who is prepared to respond to the gospel is so distracted by another person's neglect to sing that he fails to respond.

"Speak to yourselves," "teach and admonish one another," Paul declared. (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:18). We communicate a message to others about the God we confess when we sing or fail to sing. Ezra said, "Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works." (1 Chronicles 16:9).

The opportunity to communicate one's heart to God is another importance of singing. Throughout history, man has expressed his feelings about the object of his love through song. We can express so much of our heart to our Lord through our voices. We can express our gratitude (Psalm 100), we glorify him for his mercy (Romans 15:9), we speak of our joy (James 5:13), and we sing because of our salvation (Isaiah 65:14).

Heaven will be filled with God's singers. (Revelation 15:3.) Are we prepared? If singing praises to God is important in heaven, it better be something that is important to us right now. Are we communicating that message to our God, to our neighbors, and ourselves? If we are not, then we are missing the mark.

(from Gospel Advocate, vol. 125, October 6, 1983, No. 19)

JESUS SHALL RETURN (Part 3)

Matthew Martin

JESUS SHALL RETURN, AND JUDGMENT WILL FOLLOW

Paul, in writing to the young preacher Timothy, charged him to preach the gospel by the authority of Christ, who would someday return, to "judge the living and dead at his appearing and his kingdom." (2 Timothy 4:1). Paul said Jesus is coming, and when he does, he will judge everyone: living and dead.

How sad it is, to live in a time when no one believes he is accountable for his actions; to live in a time when there are seemingly no consequences. Well don't be too dismayed. Jesus is coming. And when *He* arrives, the *consequences* will, too.

Christ spoke of actions having consequences: "But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof **in the day of judgment**. For by thy words thou shalt be justified,

and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." (Matthew 12:36-37).

Another verse concerning judgment, one that should chill the blood of the one who takes it lightly, is found in Galatians 6. Paul said: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (v.7).

Everyone will be judged when Jesus returns. If one is a faithful child of God, however, he has nothing to fear concerning the judgment of Christ. But if you are not a faithful child of God, consider this a warning to correct your life, while "the jury is still out."

JESUS SHALL RETURN, AND THE EARTH WILL BURN AWAY

It seems, sometimes, no matter how plain the Bible is, people still miss the proverbial boat on some things. Maybe it's because they don't want to change. Or maybe they don't want to be proven wrong, even if it is God who is doing the proving. Whatever the reason, I suppose there will always be people who hold some Bible doctrine contrary to Scripture, regardless of how contrary it may be.

Concerning Jesus' return, some hold the view that when Jesus returns, He is going to establish a physical kingdom on earth, rule for 1,000 years, and reign as a king in the city of Jerusalem. Now, the supporters of this view will cite various scriptures as their "proof," but they end up showing their lack of true biblical knowledge. After all, if what they say is true, then the Bible contradicts itself. How so? Peter said that when the Lord returns "the heavens (the sky) will pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be **burned up**." (2 Peter 3:10).

It is going to be hard to reign, if Jerusalem is burned away into nothingness!

JESUS SHALL RETURN, AND THAT WILL BE IT!

No second chances, no last-second changes. When Jesus returns, you won't be able to say, "Wait! Ok, I'll get right with Lord now." By then it will be too late.

There is a reason the return of Christ is compared to a thief in the night. By the time you find out a thief is in your house, he usually is already gone, and it is too late to stop him. The smart thing to do, is get your house ready *now*, so you will be prepared *later*. If you want to be prepared for Christ's return, then you need to get your soul ready *now*-- so you'll be prepared *later*. Because when Jesus does return, that will be it!

