

Musical Worship

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[0 : 00] I'm going to ask you to turn with me to two places in the scripture this morning. So you can mark the one Ephesians chapter five, beginning in verse 18. And then the second Colossians three and verse 16.

So Ephesians five and Colossians three. While you're doing that, we've been concluding our kind of Old Testament flyover that we've been doing this last part of this year.

As we've been picking selected texts throughout the Old Testament and showing you the large redemptive narrative that exists in the Old Testament. Clearly, I'm letting last week be the conclusion of that time together as we look to next Sunday and Advent season and the Advent themes being picked up and preached upon.

I'm doing so because it just seemed as we spent the last two Sundays in Isaiah. As Clay preached and then Zach came and preached. Those texts so, so very helpfully set our hopes to long for the rule of King Jesus.

It kind of leaves off well the Old Testament narrative of a people longing for the Messiah, the promised one, right? The Christ. And that's the season that we're entering into, right?

[1 : 21] We're going to get into the Advent season as we begin to think about the second coming of Christ as a people who are longing for that glorious day. And so we find ourselves now kind of between two times.

And so I was thinking a bit this week about what are we meant to be doing between these two times. And as I've been thinking about our gathering together, I wanted to pick up something that we should do together when we gather together.

So this morning we're going to talk about musical worship. Take a bit of time to see what the Bible has to say about why and how and what we should sing when we come together.

Singing is an activity of a people who are waiting. So our church has a high turnover rate. Lots of young people come through the life of our church.

And so I think it's good that you be reminded of this if you've been here for a while or maybe here for the very first time. Why is it that we do music the way that we do music? I don't mean for this to be a defense of the way we do music, but rather a time of equipping for you.

[2 : 34] And we find ourselves in a day we've got to think even more about music and singing and the importance of it as we've had restrictions on our gatherings together.

And we may have some further and we're anticipating tighter restrictions in the coming months. So we want to think clearly about the gathering of the church and what the church does.

I'm not trying to draw conclusions for you about that. I don't have conclusions, but we should have a good theological foundation for singing together if we're going to think well about what we need to be doing in the coming months and year.

I hesitate to say. So we're going to talk a bit this morning about music together, specifically music together. When we gather together as a church, why do we engage in musical worship?

And why do we engage in musical worship the way that we engage in musical worship? I want to begin with an aside concerning our language concerning music.

[3 : 37] For far too long, the music sung in church has been referred to as worship and the individual leading the music as the worship leader.

Music rightly sung in our church gatherings or otherwise certainly is worship, but it is not the totality of worship.

And the individual's leading music is certainly leading us in worship, but not in the totality of worship. To call our singing together worship and the individual leading the music, the worship leader suggests that our worship of God is reduced to a bit of time during a service on Sunday

morning.

And it excludes our prayers, taking the Lord's Supper, scripture reading and preaching. Paul stated in Romans chapter 12 and verse 1, I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Understand that that word bodies, body is talking about our very being, who we are. God means for all of our lives to be committed to his praise.

[5 : 01] God means for all of our lives to be committed to his life.

God means for all of us to say such a thing. And so that's why we'll speak in terms of musical worship and why we'll call whoever's leading our music, our music leader.

We want to be clear about this. This is a part of our worship of God, an important part, as we'll see.

The subject of musical worship in churches have been a highly contested one in my lifetime.

The past decades have been full of what often people call the worship wars, which contain much heat with little to no light.

The current solution has seems to be for small churches to work to serve a particular demographic. We're going to figure out who we're going to try to gather and we're going to design music for that group.

[6 : 18] And for larger churches to cater to every demographic with multiple services. We're going to divide everybody up into their preferred style of music. And none of this is good for your faith or for the community of faith.

It is not proper for a church to serve preference over purpose in the way that we gather. It is not healthy to meet felt needs at the expense of real needs to promulgate consumerism in the worship of our God.

So, Wes, who was one of our founding elders and our music leader for the first nine years of our church's history, and myself in the very early days of Christ Family Church, were a musician becoming a pastor.

This was the work that Wes was doing as he had some skill that he brought to the task. And I was a teacher becoming a pastor, some skill in explaining things, but learning what it meant to lead a church.

So both of us, with great trembling, opened up our Bibles. We believed in the sufficiency of Scripture. We believed that the text had what it needed in it to help us, to instruct us on how in the world are we supposed to do this?

[7 : 37] Because we were looking at the world out there and seeing all the varied opinion and all the varied things going on. And it felt icky, right? It didn't feel right and proper to be catering to the felt needs of people all the time.

So we said, what does the Bible say about musical worship? So we're going to do that briefly together this morning. Let's begin our study looking at Colossians 3.16 and then Ephesians 5.18 and 19.

Before I read these two texts, beloved, let me remind you that this is God's word to us, written for his glory and our good. So we would all do well to listen to it in order to believe its promises and obey its commands.

Colossians 3.16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

And now Ephesians 5.18 and following. And do not get drunk with wine for that is debauchery, but be filled with the spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart.

[8 : 54] So why do we sing together when we gather? Because the Bible commands it. And the Bible commands it for God's glory and for our good.

See that just in these two texts, the one in Colossians, parallel text found in Ephesians. Elsewhere in the Bible also, Psalm 33 and verse 3, Sing to him a new song, play skillfully on the strings with loud shouts.

We need to be obedient to that. Psalm 47 and verse 6, sing praises to God, sing praises, sing praises to our king, sing praises. Right?

Four times in that single verse, sing praises. The Bible contains over 400 references to singing and 50 direct commands to sing.

The longest book of the Bible by verse count is the Psalms, right? Which is a book of songs for God's people to sing. It is always so wonderful when we don't plan things and they work out.

[10:00] I'm so thankful for God's providence and us pulling together gatherings of our church that Clay decided this morning to read Psalm 46. He had no idea the band was going to sing Psalm 46.

I'm speaking about singing the Psalms for a moment here. And we sang a Psalm even before I got up to preach. It's a wonderful thing. We have the example of Jesus in Matthew chapter 26 and verse 30.

When they had sung a hymn. This is at the conclusion of the Lord's Supper. They went out to the Mount of Olives. We have the example of heaven in the book of Revelation.

The book of Revelation, by the way, has more songs in it besides the Psalms of any other book of the Bible. We ought to pay attention. We ought to peer into what heavenly worship looks like if we're to properly sing.

Revelation chapter 15, beginning in verse 2. And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire. And also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing behind the side of the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands.

[11:03] And they sang the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty.

Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations. We have the example of Paul and Silas in the Philippian jail. Imprisoned for the preaching of the gospel.

Acts 16 and verse 25. About midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God. And we know that the prison doors were opened for them.

James says in James chapter 5 and verse 13. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. John Calvin once said, Wherever faith is lively, holy rejoicing will follow.

This should be true of us. So we should sing when we are gathered. We should sing, the text tells us, psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

[12:07] Psalms are those things coming from, arising from the Psalter, from the book of Psalms. We should sing from God's song book.

It's a helpful and important thing for us to do. It helps us to rightly orient the way in which we should sing. For example, did you know that a third of the book of Psalms are psalms of lament, crying out in anguish to our God?

Our gathering together and singing shouldn't all be raw, raw anthony. Because people who are hurting have no place in a gathering like that. We should sing songs that say, yes, this world is broken and yes, we struggle within it.

But our God. We should sing hymns, which are songs to or about God and what he has done.

Some examples of that could be how great thou art and holy, holy, holy.

And we should sing spiritual songs, songs to or about us in relation to God and what he has done. Amazing grace.

[13:16] And it is well, two wonderful examples of that. Humans are wired to give and receive through song. Musicians have been wildly popular for good and bad throughout history.

We think back to your high school years and think about some band or some individual that you were really into and how foolish it seems that you ever thought that that was a person that you should emulate and follow. Why do we do such things?

There are some crazy musicians out there and we think they're so cool and we want to be just like them, right? We're wired to be led along by music.

Every movement, every uprising, every cultural expression has its music. We are musical beings. Everyone will tap their foot or bob their head to something, right?

There's some kind of music that will get a person to move a little bit, even awkwardly at times, right? So when we sing, when we are gathered, is our hope that our feelings catch up to the truth that we believe.

[14:32] Like it is proper for us to feel the truth together. Jonathan Edwards in his work Religious Affections wrote, The duty of singing praises to God seems to be appointed wholly to excite and express religious affections.

No other reason can be assigned why we should express ourselves to God in verse rather than in prose and do it with music, but only that such is our nature and frame.

That these things have a tendency to move our affections. We don't sing for the sake of emotion simply, but to get our emotions, to get our affections to be bent toward and set upon the truth of God.

So music is important. It's important in the gathering of the church. So we sing, but what and how we sing also matters.

Colossians 3.16 and Ephesians 5.18 and 19 show us that our singing together is the result of the word of Christ dwelling richly in us.

[15:48] There's a striking parallel between much of Colossians 3 and Ephesians 5. This is why we're using these two texts this morning. They both have Paul as their author, which allows for this incredible connection to be drawn from them.

So look back. You'll have to flip at these two texts together again. First Colossians 3.16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Then following that, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. In Ephesians 5. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart.

He seems to interchange this idea of being filled with the Spirit and letting the word of Christ dwell richly in us. They seem to be interchangeable in Paul's thinking.

This is the argument that I'm making to you, that they are in fact, right? That if you are filled with the Spirit, then you will be having the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

[16:59] To dwell means to take up residence, to inhabit. And for it to dwell richly means it is dwelling in abundance. The word of Christ should be filling us.

And this is the primary work of the Spirit of Christ. Work the word of Christ into us so that it comes out of us.

Now, if that connection between the two is too vague for you, I can understand that you're like, wait, that's a jump in logic. I'm not sure. Let me just make the case further to you from the scripture.

Romans 8.5.

Those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh. But those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

So we've got this mindfulness that's going on, right? We're meant to be mindful. If we're going to walk by the Spirit, we're going to have to be mindful. That's what Paul there is arguing. Galatians 5.16.

[17:59] He says, walk by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. So our mindfulness is not going to be set on the desires of the flesh, but then adversely on the things of the Spirit.

What are the things of the Spirit? How are we to know? He wrote a book. He inspired a book. The Word of God.

The Word of Christ. So proper worship of God is spirit-filled worship of God, which is mindful worship of God.

Our singing together must be both head and heart. We're teaching. We're admonishing in wisdom. We're addressing one another, Colossians 3.16 says, in our singing.

John Owen once said, we must not allow ourselves to be satisfied with vague ideas of the love of Christ, which present nothing of his glory to our minds.

[19:05] We shouldn't sing songs if you could replace the name Jesus with the name of your girlfriend or boyfriend, and the song would still make sense. Owen says, these vague ideas of the love of Christ are going to do us no good, right?

We need the glory of Christ presented to our minds. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians chapter 14 and verse 15, I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also.

Both head and heart. And Jesus said in John chapter 4 and verse 23, but the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit, and truth.

But the Father is seeking such people to worship him. So if we're to sing well together, we are to sing. If we're to sing well together, we must sing true things.

The ministry of singing when we gather together as a church is the same as the ministry of preaching when we gather together in the church. They're both ministry of the word.

[20 : 14] In this case, I or somebody else opens up the text and explains it to you. You sit and listen and receive. I hope you're meditating on, you're chewing on it, you're thinking about application for your life, all of those things.

When we sing, we minister the word of God to one another. We come together to do the very thing commanded of us in Colossians 3 and Ephesians 5.

So as a church, we have some parameters. We have some tests that we place on music as we come together and sing. And there are three of them.

Number one, truth. Made the case fairly strongly in that direction, right? Number one, truth. Is the song true? Doesn't contain within it any error.

However, we are discipling one another as we sing to one another. So we ought to be leading one another in the truth. I'm going to pick on a song this morning. Keep hearing me, please, if this is your favorite song.

[21 : 16] So don't shut me off if this is your favorite song. It's written by a guy named Corey Asbury. It's called Reckless Love. So much of that song is great.

So much of it. I can really appreciate and enjoy. I reread the lyrics this morning to it. This is the chorus. Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God.

Oh, it chases me down, fights till I'm found, leaves the 99. I couldn't earn it and I don't deserve it. Still, you give yourself away. Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God.

And I like that as I copied and pasted the lyrics, it includes, yeah, at the end. So. Now, I think you all have been around long enough to know my problem with this song, right?

And it's the word reckless. The word reckless has a meaning to it. Anything that is reckless is dis-aimed, right? It has no intent and purpose.

[22 : 17] It's willy-nilly is the idea of that word reckless. Because placed in the context of the chorus, you could say, well, that's not what he's talking about, is he? It's talking about love specifically for, chasing me down, fighting till I'm found, right?

It's aimed at something, right? This is why that John Piper wrote a really good defense of this song, saying, I'm not sure that that's what Corey Asbury meant by the word reckless.

And he responded in an interview, yes, it is. That's exactly what I meant by the word reckless. God's love is not reckless. God's love is purposeful, right?

It is aimed at. It's going to accomplish exactly the purpose that it sets out to accomplish. Now, the song itself, if that was the, this word appeared one time in the song, you know what I would do?

I'd just change it, right? I feel the creative freedom to do that. Our music leaders, I would say, just put a better word in that place. Put abundant in that place. That's a good replacement word for it.

[23 : 21] I was at a meeting one time when I sang this song, and I just filled in synonyms for the word every time the word came up. And I came up with like 50 words that would have been better than the word reckless.

But the song is called Reckless Love, and it repeats it, and it repeats it, and it repeats it, and it repeats it. And beloved, God's love is not reckless, right? If you are his, it is aimed specifically at you for your good and his glory.

It is aimed at the church, redeemed and called out as a people for his praise. It is anything but reckless. So we don't sing that song on Sunday mornings. Is it as precise as it should be?

Did you say this changed the song? Oh, never mind. We should sing it and change it. Okay.

Rewrite the song all together. Is the song as precise as it should be?

So we sing a song here together called How Deep the Father's Love for Us. You've been around. You've heard us sing it. We sing it quite often. We sing part of the chorus. Nope, part of the verse.

[24 : 27] It was his love that held him there. It was written. It was my sin that held him there. Now, it's a great song.

I'm going to give a lot of latitude to the writer of the song. I think that what the author meant is fine, but we don't know exactly the intention. And what that seems to be saying is that we in some way had a power over Christ, like that we actually kept him powerfully.

Now, I don't think that's what the author meant by it. But you can see how that could be misleading to somebody, right? They're sitting in here. We're singing this song. And they're beginning to think about their sin being the force that kept Jesus on the cross.

Well, Jesus said in John 10 and verse 18, no one takes my life for me, but I lay it down of my own account. A chord, excuse me. A chord. Right? So, we just changed the lyric.

It was his love that held him there. I've been to a conference where we've sung this song, and I have no problem singing the lyric as that was originally written, because I think I understand what it means.

[25 : 31] But we want to be careful. Is the song being precise in the way it communicates truth to you? I hope, as you hear us saying that, we don't do this with perfection. We are all laboring in the truth together.

But that it will give you some comfort that we are thinking. We are vetting. I want our singing together to shape the way you think and understand the truth.

Like, you should reflect on the songs that we sing together. You'll be helped by that. Also, we ask the question, is the song tied to any false teaching movements?

So, it could be an entirely true song, right? Praise God. He still works, even in spite of us sometimes. But is it tied to false teaching movements, right?

Beautiful songs express the truth, but are so tied up to particular church or particular teaching, because we don't want to give tacit approval of false teaching.

[26 : 30] We don't want anybody here to think, like, oh, I hear this song all the time. And who is it that sings this song? And they get connected off into, right? So, if you're discerning and you're clear about some of the fans I'm about to mention, and you like one of their songs, that's fine.

Just do it on your own time, right? Just let them whoa, whoa, whoa for 11 minutes in your car.

Totally cool, right? But we're not going to give this vague approval that might lead somebody off to start believing false teaching, right?

Start listening to preaching that's not beneficial to them. So, examples, these aren't all of them, but these are three popular that we don't do. Elevation worship, Hillsong United, Bethel music.

We're going to stay clear of those movements, pray for those movements, for sure. But until we can say, yes, we can unite with them, we're not going to sing that music.

So, truth. Number two, depth. Does a song merely skip a stone off the surface of the truth, or does it sink deep into it?

[27 : 36] This is a practical application, right? Does a song teach us something about God and his work? Is it content rich, right?

That's why we tend to sing wordy songs together. We tend to do songs that don't repeat a lot, although we do some that do that, you'll note. And that's just because we have limited time together in our congregational gathering, right?

If singing is discipleship, we've got to pack as much in as we can, right? To really be a help to God's people. We're going to sing together this morning five songs. Yep, five songs, right?

So, let's pack it in, right? Let's let it be content rich and have depth to it. Again, some great songs out there that you can listen to on your own time that might be wonderful and good and shaping for your heart.

But together, we think we ought to sing rich songs together. And then third, singability. Is a song congregational? There is a difference between a rock concert, right?

[28 : 37] And Sunday morning, Lord's Day, congregational singing. At least there ought to be in our gathering together, right? Again, this is a discipleship thing. We are singing to one another, right?

We ought to be teaching and admonishing one another. Have you ever read that and thought, is Paul really saying that I should walk up to somebody and start singing a song to them?

You could. But I'm going to go, what is happening right now? If you sang a five-minute song while I stood there and went, oh, I mean, I love this song, okay.

I'm probably not going to sing with you when you do it because I don't have a good singing voice, right? So, what is he talking about? He's talking about us, our togetherness, right? He's writing two letters to churches, right?

When you come together, you should be doing this work, which means you should be able to sing it, right? So, does a song have a recognizable rhythm and a range designed for an average human?

[29 : 37] Like, can it be sung? And there's a lot of people who lead music who really want to show how impressive they are and they leave everybody behind in their dust, right?

I mean, praise the God for talent, right? That's a wonderful thing, but have everybody sit down. Say, this isn't for you to sing. Just listen. Just enjoy because I'm going to hit some notes that nobody should be able to hit.

But I'm going to do it with excellence, right? The glory of God. But we ought to be able to come together and we ought to be able to sing songs together. Like, can a song be played well by our musicians?

Some of you have suggested songs to us that we love, but as we try to sort it out, it's a bit difficult to do. A Mighty Fortress Is Our God is one of my favorite songs. We don't have an organ.

It sounds best to that. I've heard some guitar renditions that were painful to me. If you know a good one, feel free to send it on. I'd love to hear a good arrangement for that song that we could sing well together.

[30 : 33] Like, it matters, right? That we can actually play it and do it with joy and giftedness as we come together, right? Style is not the question here. As older pastors find out that I pastor a church with a lot of young people, they often ask the question, What style of music do you do?

How are you getting those young people to come and be part of what you're doing together? And I never talk about style. That's what they're asking, but I never talk. I say, it's content driven. They're always like, what are you talking about?

I go, we just sing true songs. And we do it with whatever musicians we have. So they come together and they put themselves together. And what comes out is what comes out, right? We take the gifting that we have in the life of our fellowship.

If all we had was a little old lady and a piano, guess how we would do music, right? That would be what we would do together, right? We gather, though, to sing true songs with one another.

We are discipling one another in the work. It's why we have windows and lights, right? It's why the volume is not so blaringly loud that you can't even hear yourself sing.

[31 : 41] At the very least, you ought to be able to hear the rackets you're making, right? But we want to hear everybody around us singing, right? I will tell you, I love to preach the word. I love to hear the word of God preached.

My favorite thing we do is sing together. You all encourage me, right? As you rejoice in truth together. But I need to hear it. And the Sundays that I can't be with you, I desperately miss it.

So real quick, I know we're getting close to noon. I want to run through two songs really fast. And I just want to show you, these are songs that we sing together. And I want to show you the richness of them.

I can't tell you that they're singable. I think we sing them. And we sing them well together. And I want you to see that there's both depth and there's truth contained in these. So, number one, come behold the wondrous mystery.

Verse one, come behold the wondrous mystery in the dawning of the king. He, the theme of heaven's praises, robed in frail humanity. In our longing, in our darkness, now the light of life has come.

[32 : 45] Look to Christ who condescended, took on flesh to ransom us. There is more in there that we can talk about. But let me just point out two things to you. First, the incarnation of Christ, John 1, 1 through 5.

In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. That's in that verse. The purpose of his incarnation is also mentioned. Luke 19 and verse 10.

Verse 2. Come behold the wondrous mystery. He, the perfect son of man, in his living, in his suffering, never trace nor stain of sin.

See the true and better Adam. Come to save the hell-bound man. Christ, the great and sure fulfillment of the law. In him we stand. Talks about both his active and his passive obedience.

[33 : 50] He perfectly obeyed the law. He died in our place. 2 Corinthians 5, 21. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Romans 5, 17. For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Verse 3. Come behold the wondrous mystery. Christ, the Lord, upon the tree. In the stead of ruined sinners hangs the Lamb in victory. See the price of our redemption.

See the Father's plan unfold. Bringing many sons to glory. Grace unmeasured. Love untold. We see the substitutionary atonement of Jesus.

1 Corinthians 15 and verse 3. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures. Verse 4.

[34 : 47] Come behold the wondrous mystery, slain by death the God of life, but no grave could e'er restrain him. Praise the Lord, he is alive. What a foretaste of deliverance. How unwavering our hope.

Christ in power resurrected as we will be when he comes. What a foretaste of deliverance.

Deliverance. How unwavering our hope. Christ in power resurrected as he will be when he comes.

We see the resurrection of Christ. 1 Corinthians 15 and verse 4. He was buried, he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures. And the glorification of the saints. Colossians 3 and verse 4.

When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Right? So we sing that song. And I'm just going to say it takes somewhere between 3 and 5 minutes.

And you get instructed in all of that. All that those verses have to teach. You get these pieces of it. You're picking it up. It's getting tied together to you in a systematic way.

[35 : 45] This is why when we sing old hymns, we sing 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th verses. I grew up, loved many of the churches that I grew up in.

But very Baptist. We sang 1st, 3rd, and 5th. Or 1st, 4th, and 5th. Or 1st, 2nd, and 5th. And you know what we missed so often?

What we left out was all the sanctification verses. All the this life now verses. We sang a lot about sin. We sang a lot about heaven. And forgot where I'm at right now.

And where I'm doing right now. And the hope that is in the gospel for me today. There's so much good in those middle verses. Alright.

Second one. Great is thy faithfulness. Which we're going to sing here in a moment together. Verse 1.

1. Great is thy faithfulness. Oh God, my Father. Is the tune already in your head?

[36 : 41] I hope it is. I hope that it's already running through your head. By design. Right? By design. Great is thy faithfulness. Oh God, my Father. There is no shadow of turning with thee.

Thou changest not. Thy compassions, they fail not. As thou hast been. Thou forever will be. Man. What a day to sing that verse.

Just roll that around in your head. Again, and again, and again, and again. It speaks of the immutability of God. The unchanging nature of God. Malachi 3, 6. God says, For I, the Lord, do not change.

Therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. Our God does not change. And it speaks of his steadfast love. 1 Chronicles 16 and verse 34.

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. For his steadfast love endures forever. Forever. Because he is unchanging. And so we sing the chorus.

[37 : 39] Great is thy faithfulness. Great is thy faithfulness. Morning by morning, new mercies I see. All I have needed, thy hand hath provided. Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.

Speaks of God's new morning mercies to us each and every day. Lamentations chapter 3, verse 22 and following. The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. His mercies never come to an end.

They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness. And speaks of his provision. Philippians 4, 19. And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Great is thy faithfulness. Great is thy faithfulness. Morning by morning, new mercies I see. All I have needed, thy hand hath provided. Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.

Verse 2. Summer and winter and springtime and harvest. Sun, moon and stars and their courses above. Join with all nature in manifold witness to thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

[38 : 44] The witness of creation cries out the glory of God. Isaiah 6, 3. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory.

So, the author is helping us to look around us at the creation and to be reminded of God's steadfastness toward us. Verse 3.

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth. Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide. Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow. Blessings all mine with ten thousand beside.

We find in this verse of justifications. Romans 8, 1. There's therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. We find in it sanctification is ongoing work. Philippians 1, 6. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Christ. And we see in it our glorification. Ephesians 1, verse 11 and following. In him we have obtained an inheritance, have been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who are the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

[39 : 52] And again, in three to five minutes, you're being instructed in these ways. And you ought to be helping instruct others. God has given us music for his glory and for our good.

It is good that we come together and sing. It is good that we come together and sing true, deep, and singable, because we have to be able to sing, songs. This is a good activity that we do together. And I hope that you will throw your energy into it when we gather. Let us be a people who sing to one another and who know why we sing to one another and who know what and how we should sing to one another.

This is a work given to us for the glory of our God and for our good. Let's pray together. Let's pray together.