

Discussion Questions

Preparation:

Do you like to sing? What about singing in church? Is it as important or more important than the sermon?

Passages:

*Sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous;
it is fitting for the upright to praise him.*

*Praise the Lord with the harp;
make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre.*

*Sing to him a new song;
play skillfully, and shout for joy. Psalm 33:1-3*

"Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Ephesians 5:18-20

1. Why do we as humans need or feel compelled to put prose into poetry and then add music to it to turn it into a song? What is there about music and singing that moves us in a way that saying the same information didactically doesn't?
2. Are worship and singing synonymous? What about praising and singing, are they synonymous?
3. How is singing an offering to the Lord? How is it a sacrifice to the Lord? (See Hebrews 13:15)
4. Share a song that you cherish, that moves you emotionally and share why it is so special to you. (By share, I mean play the song for the group. This can be a very meaningful experience for all.)
5. Start singing tunes or jingles that are stuck in your head. See how many people join in with you. See how long you can go singing tunes you still remember. Why can we remember songs better than sermons or didactic teachings, and meaningful quotes?
6. Is there a song that helps you connect experientially to God, so that you feel his presence? What are your favorite worship songs and why?

Practicing the Christian Life: Singing

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7. What role has music and singing played in your salvation and Christian growth?
8. *"Do not get drunk on wine... Instead, be filled with the Spirit..."* Ephesians 5:18 It's an odd metaphor to use to teach Christians what being filled with the Spirit is like. How is it like being drunk or tipsy and how is it different from being drunk or tipsy? (If you don't drink then defer to those who did or do!)
9. Share a time when God filled you with both joy and courage.
10. Read 2 King 6, the story of the Arameans surrounding Elisha and his servant. What comfort does the passage bring? Have you ever been overwhelmed by a situation and God brought forward a truth in your mind that helped you cope with the situation?
11. Read the parallel passage to Ephesians 5, Colossians 3:15-16: *"Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts."*
Does it help you get a better understanding as to what being filled with the Spirit is?
12. *"...the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies."* Romans 8:22-23

Is this an honest description of your experience with life: It's good with many joys but it is also filled with groaning? Share ways we groan.
13. Read and reflect on the future of music.

"All glory to Him who loves us and freed us from our sins by shedding his blood for us. He has made us a Kingdom of priests for God His Father. All glory and power to Him forever and ever. Amen!" Revelation 1:6

"Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting:

'Hallelujah!

For our Lord God Almighty reigns.

Let us rejoice and be glad

and give him glory!

For the wedding of the Lamb has come,

and his bride has made herself ready." Revelation 19:6-7

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*"The lion will lie down with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.
They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea." (11:6, 9)*

14. What difference does it make in life now to know that one day God will restore music to the universe?

15. Final thoughts.

P.S. Just a reminder. I try to brainstorm a broad range of questions and practices in order to stimulate conversation. Do not try and discuss all the questions. That will take too long and there are things just as important as Bible Study to do at your small group gatherings like fellowship, breaking bread, sharing and caring for each other, praying and serving together.