

# WITH A WORD AND A SONG

Colossians 3:15-17

What a joy it is to hear beautiful singing, great voices, united in harmonious music. It is always a wonderful experience to hear delightful music that gives praise to the Lord. Our hearts are warmed as our mind and emotions are lifted in the worship of the Lord.

Music has always been part of the Christian faith. The early church was a singing church, because Jesus puts a song in the heart. Music had an important role in Christian worship, even as they met together in small groups in private homes.

As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 14:26, *“When you come together, everyone has a hymn or a word.”*

Paul encourages the church at Ephesus by saying, *“Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord”* (Ephesians. 5:19).

We find similar instructions to the believers at Colosse and to us: *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God”* (Colossians 3:16).

In these passages God gives us clear instructions concerning the role of Christian

or Gospel music in our lives. God gives us a:

1. Plan
2. Process
3. Procedure
4. Product

All this is to show us how to worship Him.

## 1. The Plan:

The expression of the New Life that Christians have in Christ is one that includes the practice of singing. This is because the Lord fills the heart with joy.

We are instructed to let the words of Christ dwell in us richly. Christ’s words were recorded by the Spirit guided apostles. (John 14:26; 16:13; 20:31; 2 Peter 1:2-21) and were to become a natural part of the Christian expression in his daily life (1 Timothy 6:3; 2 Timothy 1:13).

## 2. The Process:

The way this was to come about is found in Col. 3:16...*where Christians are to “teach, instruct and admonish or counsel one another daily.”* The words of the Bible, God’s written words—are to dwell in believers, so that they become a permanent abiding part of one’s life.

We usually think of this as being done by study, meditation and application of the Word of God. Though this is true, we are given a supportive program in these verses in Col. 3:15-17.

## 3. The Procedure:

Colossians 3:16 teaches how we are to carry out this process of adding God’s Word to our lives. It is making our “Hymnology support our Theology.” When we let the Word of Christ richly dwell in us, it produces not only information, but also emotion. We find ourselves singing praises to God from the heart.

Colossians 3:16 points out that we sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. It has been suggested that these three categories of songs were directed to each of the members of the Trinity.

**a) “psalms”** were O.T. odes directed to the Father, as those found in the Psalms themselves, like Psalm 40:1-3.

**b) “hymns”** were new expressions of faith in Christ, directed toward Jesus. Many of which can be found in New Testament epistles - (Ephesians 3:3-6; Colossians 1:15-20; Philippians 2:6-11).

**c) “spiritual songs”** - were from the Spirit, and are those spontaneous songs of the Spirit that lead the heart in gratitude to God for His rich blessings. They are songs that express a personal testimony of salvation or the experiences of living the Christian life.

We see a glimpse of this in Revelation 5:10, *“You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.”*

The Christian sings songs of Salvation (Isaiah 12:2-3). It is only the saved sinner, who like John Newton, could write *“Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now am found; was blind but now I see.”*

Regardless of the style of music - and there are many - when the truth of God is embedded in the heart, there will flow rich melodic lyrics - songs of faith and love.

Since human nature is so emotional, we are instructed in Col. 3:16, that this ministry in music is to be done with much wisdom, to avoid excesses in emotionalism. Some of the “Christian music” today, as in every age, should not rightfully be called “Christian.” Much of the present music gives praise to the singer - rather than to God.

As Johann Sebastian Bach once said, *“The object of all music should be the Glory of God and our pleasant enjoyment.”*

#### 4. The Product:

It has been said, that *“music calms the savage beast, makes the heart grow fonder and increases a healthier lifestyle.”* There is no doubt that the result of an intake of God’s Word, when put to music, will result in a happier person. It is more than just whistling a happy tune! Spiritual music lifts the heart, replaces dark thoughts with the brightness of God’s love. Through songs, we are reminded of His presence that encourages us on the journey of life. Spiritual songs make the weak strong, and enrich and increase our

faith. They are Scripture in song. God always has an ultimate blessing for us in all that He asks us to do. He promises that as we allow our Hymnology to support our Theology, the end result will be a life of joy, peace and purpose, abounding in thanksgiving and praise to God.

If you are a Christian, then I encourage you to dig into some of those great Bible passages of practical truth that mark out the pathway of life. Take time to listen to quality Christian music and join in singing songs of praise to God. I can promise you, your life will be brighter and your days more joyful.

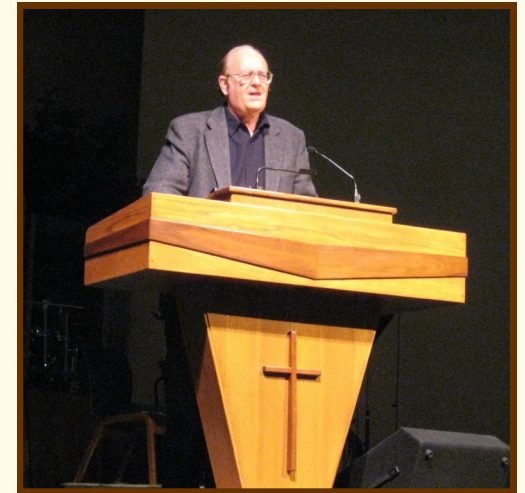
If you are not a Christian, then let me encourage you to personally trust in Christ as Savior and Lord. When you come to know Jesus, you will be *“filled with his supernatural joy”* (1 Peter 1:8). and discover that the *“joy of the Lord gives you strength”* (Nehemiah 8:10).

If you have questions or would like further help, please don’t hesitate to contact me.

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Andy Hollier in Concert

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