

Matt. 26:30: And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Intro: Jesus just instituted the Lord's Supper: it's the fulfillment of the Passover meal. Focus: Remember Jesus' body, broken for you, trust in Him, delight in Him, & live for Him. Remember Jesus' blood, poured out for you for the forgiveness of all your sins, so that you may enjoy God forever!

Remember - we sing about THE Blood! 1) There is power, power, wonder working power, in the blood, in the blood; There is power, power, wonder working power in the precious blood of the Lamb!

- 2) There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Immanuel's veins, & sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains! The dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day, & there may I though vile as he wash all my sins away!

- 3) What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus!; What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus! Oh! precious is the flow; That makes me white as snow; No other fount I know, Nothing but the blood of Jesus!

Why do Christians sing? Why did Jesus' sing? Sing for joy in the LORD for His glory! (Oh God, make us sing!)

1. Christians Sing Because God Sings

a. Jesus sings: Jesus is God, & Jesus sings in our text!

Sinclair Ferguson: Amazing, at the end of the Passover meal, as He was about to go to the garden of Gethsemane, He & His disciples, we're told in Matthew's Gospel, sang a hymn. We know what it probably was because Passover was one of those occasions when the same praise was sung year after year. It was called the Hallel (like the word hallelujah), from the first lines of Psalm 113, with which it began: "Praise the Lord!"

b. God sings: Zeph. 3:17: The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one Who will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness; He will quiet you by His love; He will exult over you with loud singing.

c. Jesus sings with us now: Heb. 2:11-12: That is why He is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying, "I will tell of Your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing Your praise."

Sinclair Ferguson: The upper room was not actually the last time our Lord Jesus would ever lead the praises of His children. Do you remember the words of Ps. 22:22? Ps. 22 is the one that begins with an anticipation of Jesus' cry of dereliction on the cross: "My God! My God! Why have You forsaken Me?" But it concludes looking forward to the resurrection & to another cry – this time a cry of delight, in which our Lord Jesus says, "I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you." It's really a lovely description of what happens when we meet together in worship. He preaches His Word, & He stands in the midst of the congregation & leads our praises. Those words are quoted in Heb 2:12. They're not only a picture of what Jesus was doing with the Apostles in the upper room but a statement about what He is doing now when He's present with us in worship, & we are with Him: "Where two or three are gathered in His name," He says, "I will be with them, & I will lead their praises." So, think of it this way: when we lift our voices & praise together & are helped by the Spirit to praise our Lord Jesus Christ, we're brought into the presence of God. We're actually sharing in the worship of heaven, & Jesus is with us. Or better, we are with Jesus. He's in the midst of us, or better, we surround Him, & He's leading our praises. If anything should make you want to sing in worship, it's knowing that He is the real praise leader.

2. Christians Sing To Rejoice In Victory

a. The first & last song in the Bible: The Song of Moses: Exod. 15:1-6: Then Moses & the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD, saying, "I will sing to the LORD, for He has triumphed gloriously; the horse & his rider He has thrown into the sea. The LORD is my strength & my song, & He has become my salvation; this is my God, & I will praise Him, my father's God, & I will exalt him. The LORD is a man of war; the LORD is His name.

"Pharaoh's chariots & his host He cast into the sea, & his chosen officers were sunk in the Red Sea. The floods

covered them; they went down into the depths like a stone. Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power, Your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.

Rev. 15:1-4: Then I saw another sign in heaven, great & amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished. And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire & also those who had conquered the beast & its image & the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. ³ And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, & 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! ⁴ Who will not fear, O Lord, & glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come & worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed." **[We look forward to final victory: heaven!]**

b. Other songs of victory: 1) The Song Of Deborah in Judges 5: again the defeat of God's enemies!

2) David's defeat of Goliath: **1 Sam. 18:6:** As they were coming home, when David returned from striking down the Philistine, the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with songs of joy, & with musical instruments.

c. Islam has no singing because there's no ultimate victory in Islam (or in any other religion): John Folmar (Why Christians Won't Stop Singing): Every Friday, you can see men pouring into the mosque down the hill from where I live in the U.A.E. They recite their prayers, go through rituals, & hear Qur'anic messages. But one thing they won't be doing is singing. There's no corporate praise in the mosque. Singing doesn't feature in their worship. There are no congregational hymns & no instruments. The same goes for Eastern religions – they may have occasional festival chanting, but in the ordinary course of religious life, there's no congregational singing. As W. M. Clow notes, "A Buddhist temple never resounds with a cry of praise. Mohammedan worshipers never sing. . . . [Their prayers] are never jubilant with the songs of the forgiven." On the other hand, Christians can't seem to stop singing: in catacombs, in cathedrals, everywhere throughout church history. In Saudi Arabia, the underground churches soundproof the walls & windows, sometimes with mattresses, so they can lift their voices in praise without detection. As Jesus said of the rejoicing multitudes, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out" (Luke 19:40) . . . Islam has its five pillars, Buddhism its eightfold path. Sikhism prescribes patterns of self-salvation, and New Age offers spiritual techniques. But none of them can "perfect the conscience of the worshiper" (Heb. 9:9). There's no assurance of salvation accomplished. There's only dreadful duty and a "fearful expectation of judgment" (Heb. 10:27). No wonder jubilant song doesn't characterize their worship.

3. Christians Sing To Rejoice In God's Good Gifts

Gen. 2:23: Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones & flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." [The Song of Solomon]

Sing for joy in the LORD for His glory!

4. Christians Sing To Rejoice In God

- **1 Chr. 16:7-11:** Then on that day David first appointed that thanksgiving be sung to the LORD by Asaph & his brothers. ⁸ Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples! ⁹ Sing to Him, sing praises to Him; tell of all His wondrous works! ¹⁰ Glory in His holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice! ¹¹ Seek the LORD & His strength; seek His presence continually!

- **Ps. 95:1-2:** Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise!

- **Ps. 42; Ps. 63:** I earnestly seek You , my soul thirsts for You, my flesh faints for You!; **Ps. 73:25**

Keith & Kristyn Getty: Our singing should sound like Him, look like Him, & lead our hearts to Him . . . Don't sing primarily because you love singing, or keep quiet because you do not. Sing because you love [God]!

5. Christians Sing To Rejoice In What God Does

- **Ps. 9:11:** Sing praises to the LORD, Who sits enthroned in Zion! Tell among the peoples His deeds!

- **Jas. 5:13:** Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise.

Sinclair Ferguson: I remember a minister friend telling me about a young man who had no church background, but who started coming around their church & eventually said he would like to become a member. And when the elders met with him & asked him about his spiritual journey, he told them how dramatically their church had changed since he started coming to it. The services, he said, were much livelier than when he had first come, & the hymns were much better as well, & he enjoyed singing them much more than the ones they had sung when he first came. He even said to my friend, the minister, that his sermons had become much more interesting in recent weeks. Well, you know what had happened to him, don't you? And the elders were too kind to embarrass him by telling him they were still singing the same old hymns, & my friend was far too wise to get upset about the fact that his sermons apparently had dramatically improved. The real truth, of course, was, the young man had been born again. The old had passed away, & the new had arrived. The tunes were just the same. What had changed was that he now understood the words & realized they matched his own experience, & his experience matched what the hymn said. There was music now in his soul, & that music matched the music of the hymns of the church.

6. Christians Sing To Consecrate Ourselves To God And To Instruct One Another

a. We sing to consecrate ourselves to God: We set ourselves apart for God by singing: **2 Chr. 29:28-31:** The whole assembly worshiped, & the singers sang, & the trumpeters sounded. All this continued until the burnt offering was finished. When the offering was finished, the king and all who were present with him bowed themselves & worshiped. And Hezekiah the king & the officials commanded the Levites to sing praises to the LORD with the words of David & of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, & they bowed down & worshiped. Then Hezekiah said, "You have now consecrated yourselves to the LORD."

b. We sing to instruct each other: **Col. 3:16:** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching & admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms & hymns & spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Jonathan Leeman (Folmar article): "Singing is a God-ordained means for echoing God's Word back & forth to one another in a way that engages the whole person – heart, mind, affections, & will." It should "echo out the church doors" & into our friendships & homes.

7. Christians Sing To Worship God

2 Chr. 30:21: the people of Israel who were present at Jerusalem kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with great gladness, & the Levites & the priests praised the LORD day by day, singing with all their might to the LORD.

John Folmar: A non-Christian from the Basque region of Spain once commented on how heartily our church was singing in Dubai. He was struck by the diversity of the worshipers – black & white, rich & poor, Eastern & Western – but also by the volume & joy of the singing. It made the hairs on his arm stand on end. He said, "I didn't believe what they were singing, but they sure did!" Not long after, he was converted & joined our church.

8. Christians Sing To Lament And Grieve Over Loss And Death

2 Chr. 35:24-25: So his [Josiah's] servants took him out of the chariot & carried him in his second chariot & brought him to Jerusalem. And he died & was buried in the tombs of his fathers. All Judah & Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. Jeremiah also uttered a lament for Josiah; & all the singing men & singing women have spoken of Josiah in their laments to this day. [Other laments: Ps. 88]

9. Christians Sing To Cry Out For Justice And God's Judgment

Psalms 58:3, 6-8, 10: The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray from birth, speaking lies . . . O God, break the teeth in their mouths; tear out the fangs of the young lions, O LORD! Let them vanish like water that runs away; when he aims his arrows, let them be blunted. Let them be like the snail that dissolves into slime, like

the stillborn child who never sees the sun . . . The righteous will rejoice when he sees the vengeance; he will bathe his feet in the blood of the wicked. [*War Psalms Of The Prince Of Peace: Lessons From The Imprecatory Psalms: James Adams*]

10. Christians Sing When We Suffer For The Name Of Christ

Paul & Silas sang in prison: Acts 16:16-25: As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination & brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. She followed Paul & us, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." ¹⁸And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned & said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour. ¹⁹ But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul & Silas & dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. ²⁰ And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These men are Jews, & they are disturbing our city. ²¹ They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice." ²² The crowd joined in attacking them, & the magistrates tore the garments off them & gave orders to beat them with rods. ²³ And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. ²⁴ Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison & fastened their feet in the stocks. ²⁵ About midnight Paul & Silas were praying & singing hymns to God, & the prisoners were listening to them

Sing for joy in the LORD for His glory!

11. Christians Sing Because The Prophets Sing

- **Jer. 20:13:** Sing to the LORD; praise the LORD! For he has delivered the life of the needy from the hand of evildoers
- **Zeph. 3:14-15:** Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice & exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away the judgments against you; He has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil. [*Servant Songs of Isaiah*]

12. Christians Sing Because All Of Creation Sings

Ps. 98:4-9: Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song & sing praises! Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre, with the lyre & the sound of melody! With trumpets & the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD! Let the sea roar, & all that fills it; the world & those who dwell in it! Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together before the LORD, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, & the peoples with equity.

13. Christians Sing Because Of The Person And Work Of The LORD Jesus Christ

Rev. 5:9-10: they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the scroll & to open its seals, for You were slain, & by Your blood You ransomed people for God from every tribe & language & people & nation, & you have made them a kingdom & priests to our God, & they shall reign on the earth." [*Gettys: Compelled to sing/Calvin Hunt*]

John Folmar: Singing aligns our feelings with the sheer greatness of Christ & His Gospel. Every Sunday, we reprogram ourselves to what has ultimate value. We hear the truth, & we respond in praise. We sing a new song to the Lamb Who was slain to ransom a people from every tribe, tongue, & nation. We praise Him because we'll one day reign with Him . . . I once owned a rock & roll album by the Canadian trio Rush. On the reverse side of the album, it said, "For best results, play at maximum volume." This is what the new song of Rev. 5 calls for: exuberant singing by the redeemed to the Redeemer. I'm not specifically talking about the instruments. Anyone can turn up the volume on the guitar. The pagan world can do that – & probably a lot better than we can. I mean elevated human voices exulting with praises & joyous song. William Tyndale, who was killed & then burned at the stake for his witness, once said the Gospel "signifies good, merry, glad, & joyful tidings, that makes a man's heart glad & makes him sing, dance, & leap for joy." This good news of Jesus is why Christians will never stop singing, not even in eternity.

14. Christians Sing Because We Are Commanded By God To Sing

- **1 Chr. 16:23-25:** Sing to the LORD, all the earth! [*Over 400 references to singing/Over 50 direct commands to sing*]
- **Ps. 149:1:** Sing to the LORD a new song, His praise in the assembly of the saints.

- **Eph. 5:18-20:** do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms & hymns & spiritual songs, singing & making melody to the Lord with your heart
- **Col. 3:16:** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching & admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms & hymns & spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

15. Christians Sing To Prepare For Battle With God's Enemies

a. God's people prepared for battle with song in the O.T.: 2 Chr. 20:1-22: After this the Moabites & Ammonites, & with them some of the Meunites, came against Jehoshaphat for battle. Some men came & told Jehoshaphat, "A great multitude is coming against you from Edom, from beyond the sea; &, behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar" (that is, Engedi). Then Jehoshaphat was afraid & set his face to seek the LORD, & proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. And Judah assembled to seek help from the LORD; from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD. And Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah & Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, & said, "O LORD, God of our fathers, are you not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. In Your hand are power & might, so that none is able to withstand You. Did You not, our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, & give it forever to the descendants of Abraham Your friend? And they have lived in it & have built for You in it a sanctuary for Your name, saying, 'If disaster comes upon us, the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house & before You – for Your name is in this house – & cry out to You in our affliction, & You will hear & save.' And now behold, the men of Ammon & Moab & Mount Seir, whom You would not let Israel invade when they came from the land of Egypt, & whom they avoided & did not destroy – behold, they reward us by coming to drive us out of Your possession, which You have given us to inherit. ¹² O our God, will You not execute judgment on them? For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on You." Meanwhile all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, & their children. And the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly. ¹⁵ And he said, "Listen, all Judah & inhabitants of Jerusalem & King Jehoshaphat: Thus says the LORD to you, 'Do not be afraid & do not be dismayed at this great horde, for the battle is not yours but God's.

¹⁶ Tomorrow go down against them. Behold, they will come up by the ascent of Ziz. You will find them at the end of the valley, east of the wilderness of Jeruel. ¹⁷ You will not need to fight in this battle. Stand firm, hold your position, & see the salvation of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah & Jerusalem.' Do not be afraid & do not be dismayed.

Tomorrow go out against them, & the LORD will be with you." Then Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, & all Judah & the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshipping the LORD. And the Levites, of the Kohathites & the Korahites, stood up to praise the LORD, the God of Israel, with a very loud voice.

²⁰ And they rose early in the morning & went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. And when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood & said, "Hear me, Judah & inhabitants of Jerusalem! Believe in the LORD your God, & you will be established; believe his prophets, & you will succeed. ²¹ And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed those who were to sing to the LORD & praise him in holy attire, as they went before the army, & say, "Give thanks to the LORD, for His mercy endures forever." ²² And when they began to sing & praise, the LORD set an ambush against the men of Ammon, Moab, & Mount Seir, who had come against Judah, so that they were routed

b. Jesus prepared for battle with song in the N.T. (He sang with His disciples): Matt. 26:30: And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

- **Ps. 118:1-17:** Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; for His mercy endures forever! Let Israel say, "His mercy endures forever." Let the house of Aaron say, "His mercy endures forever." Let those who fear the LORD say, "His mercy endures forever." Out of my distress I called on the LORD; the LORD answered me & set me free. The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me? The LORD is on my side as my helper; I shall look in triumph on those who hate me. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes. All nations surrounded me; in the name of the LORD I cut them off! They surrounded me, surrounded me on every side; in the name of the LORD I cut them off! They surrounded me like bees; they went out like a fire among thorns; in the name of the LORD I cut them off I was pushed hard, so that I was falling, but the LORD helped me. ¹⁴ The LORD is my strength & my song; he has become my salvation.

¹⁵ Glad songs of salvation are in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of the LORD does valiantly, ¹⁶ the right

hand of the LORD exalts, the right hand of the LORD does valiantly!" ¹⁷ I shall not die, but I shall live, & recount the deeds of the LORD. [Cross: Ps. 22; Ps. 31:5: Into Your hand I commit My spirit]

c. God's people today still prepare for battle with song: Author: After months of flying above the [Waadani] tribe's land & dropping gifts of goodwill, on the morning of Jan 3, 1956, Nate Saint, Ed McCully, Jim Elliott, Roger Yoderian, & Peter Fleming gathered to pray before setting out to finally meet the Indians face-to-face. Jim Elliott's wife Elisabeth later wrote, "At the close of their prayers the five men sang one of their favorite hymns, *We Rest on Thee* to the stirring tune of Finlandia. Jim & Ed had sung this hymn since college days & knew the verses by heart."

We rest on Thee, our Shield and our Defender! We go not forth alone against the foe;
Strong in Thy strength, safe in Thy keeping tender, we rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go

Yea, in Thy name, O Captain of salvation! In Thy dear name, all other names above:
Jesus our righteousness, our sure foundation, our Prince of glory and our King of love

We go in faith, our own great weakness feeling, and needing more each day Thy grace to know:
Yet from our hearts a song of triumph pealing, "We rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go"

We rest on Thee, our Shield and our Defender! Thine is the battle, Thine shall be the praise;
When passing through the gates of pearly splendor, victors, we rest with Thee, through endless days

Christ Jesus Is The God Who Sings
Prepares For Battle, Darkness Flings
From Him All Joy And Gladness Springs
Vict'ry In Every War He Brings
We Praise His Name Who Works All Things
For Our Good, His Glory Rings
Christ Died And Took God's Wrath And Stings
Then Rose, Killed Death, Gives Life Its Wings
For Joy In God Each Nation Sings
New Songs The Slain Lamb To Us Brings
Even When We've Lost All Things
Our Voices Worship, Each Heart Clings
To Christ Our God The King Of Kings!

Sing for joy in the LORD for His glory!