

December 31, 2017

Living Your Life as a Song of Worship

Good morning and welcome to the end of the year 2017. As we anticipate what is in store for us in the coming New Year, let's look back and reflect on this passing year. What things, or events took place or stand out at you that had an effect on you? What will you remember from the year 2017? Maybe it was a bad year for you and you want to just get to 2018 and forget 2017, or maybe it was a great year for and everything in your life just worked out fabulous. Whatever the case maybe for you, I am so glad you are here this morning, not because I am speaking to you, but, I believe that God has great plans for you, BMZ church, and our great country in the year 2018. Now, this is just me talking, but it seems to me that the people of this nation have heard enough bad news. We have bad news available to us all day long with the technology we so enjoy. It seems like the bad news is shouted out from the highest heights for all to hear, but the good news is whispered to only a chosen few. As Christians, we have a job to do, and that is to proclaim the GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST to our neighbors, our communities, our nation and our world. I believe that as Christians living in a very dark world, it is of utmost importance that we continue to stand up and live for what we believe, not by shouting out in a picket line or a protest line, although these have their place, but by living a life set apart from the rest of the world. I life that radiates the love of Christ in us the hope of the glory come. We have a vital role to play in God's perfect plan. Are you ready?

Let's pray.

I apologize up front for not being as organized as I should be. As you look at your program you will notice something is missing. I do not have any fill in the blanks for you, so as I go through the message today, I am asking that you jot down the things that pop out at you. I would ask that you write down the scripture verse and go back and study them over the week ahead, and I pray that God will bless you for it.

While preparing for this message I asked God to show me the topic he would have me preach on, and as I would think about it throughout the days and weeks I kept hearing "live your life as a song for Me". Well I decided to start looking up scriptures on the topic of living our lives as a song of praise to God, and there is a lot of scripture about this, as a matter of fact I only used a minimum of the scripture verses so you wouldn't be here all day.

In Eph. 5:15-20, Paul writes, So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts. And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I love what Paul writes in Col 3:16, Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.

I could probably stop right there, these two scripture passages have so much to say, but we haven't even got to today's scripture yet, so sorry we need keep going, to hear some more good news.

When you think of songs in the Bible, what is the first book that comes to mind? If you don't know that's ok, I will give you the answer, it's the book of Psalm.

The scripture today is from Psalm 96:1-6

Psalm 96:1-6 = ¹ *Sing a new song to the LORD!*

Let the whole earth sing to the LORD!

² *Sing to the LORD; praise his name.*

Each day proclaim the good news that he saves.

³ *Publish his glorious deeds among the nations.*

Tell everyone about the amazing things he does.

⁴ *Great is the LORD! He is most worthy of praise!*

He is to be feared above all gods.

⁵ *The gods of other nations are mere idols,*

but the LORD made the heavens!

⁶ *Honor and majesty surround him;*

strength and beauty fill his sanctuary

Life in this world tends to get us into a certain rhythm, and what I mean by that is that we tend to get into a schedule in our everyday lives. We wake up, our feet hit the floor and our day is started. We work hard at our jobs and try to be efficient in all we do so that if we get an opening in our schedule we can add something else in there to get more things done with the time we have. We sometimes get irritated when something comes up and causes us to change our schedules. In my life, I have found this to be true. It came to me one day while thinking about this message, that if we continually say yes to extra things to do in our life, it becomes harder and harder to keep our minds on Jesus Christ and that makes satan happy. These things will happen in life many times, and it's times like these that have an effect on the song in our hearts, if we allow them to. As I mentioned earlier, as a society, we are being bombarded with bad news all the time and human nature seems to be drawn to bad news, but how is it effecting our spirit? How is the busyness of your job and life effecting your spirit? As we allow busyness and bad news into our lives, what kind of song is coming from our heart for God to hear?

1. God wants you to sing to him.

Psalm 96:1 ***Sing a new song to the Lord! Let the whole earth sing to the lord!***

So why do we sing? God commands us to sing. Eph. 5: 18-19, Col 3:16

God loves music!! He loves to hear us sing to him. For 15 years I have been coming to church here at BMZ, and out of those 15 years, 13 years have been spent singing with the worship team. Now there have been many days I just don't feel like getting up front and singing. But when I think of why I am up here and to whom we are singing, it brings great joy to my heart, even though sometimes it may hurt your ears to listen to me, God is receiving our praise to him. And when God is in our singing he is softening our hearts to receive from him. Have you ever had a heavy heart on Sunday morning before church? Have you ever noticed that when you sing, that heaviness on your heart tends to disappear? I have. This is what excites me about coming to a church that is preaching God's word, because our lord and savior Jesus Christ is alive and well,

and no one can prove to me otherwise, because I have seen Him work in my own life. When I sing, I picture in my mind my heavenly Father and all of heaven just rejoicing and celebrating. Not because I have a good voice, but because it is coming from my heart.

2. God wants us to proclaim His good news.

Psalm 96:2 ***Sing to the Lord; praise His name. Each day proclaim the good news that he saves.***

This is our main reason we are on this earth, to proclaim the good news that Jesus saves. I think sometimes it is very hard to share our Faith with the world, but when we can invite unbelievers into our church, and have them join in the worship of our God, their hearts become touched by the Holy Spirit. Maybe they leave with more questions than answers, but at least they will know where to come back to if they want the questions answered. Sometimes I think Singing will open more doors than talking will. The verse says to “each day proclaim the good news”. How can we possibly proclaim the good news when we are at work doing our job and keeping our busy schedules? In Isaiah 26:3 it says “you will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!” by keeping our thoughts on God, we are continually living our life as a song for God. As Christians, we are to be the people who are a little different from the rest of the world. We are to be the joyful ones at the work place. We are to be the ones showing Gods love to all the world. Our actions are to be a representation of Jesus Christ. By living in such a way people will be drawn to you, with questions like, why are you so different.

3. God wants us to publish His great Works.

Psalm 96:3 ***Publish His glorious deeds among the nations. Tell everyone about the amazing things he does.***

What does it mean to publish something? The dictionary tells us it means to make it publicly known. When I hear the word publish, I think of a permanent stamp. Much like the last verse, we are to tell the story of what Jesus Christ has done for us. Get it out in the open for all the world to see. Don't hold back, let people know who you put your trust in.

4. God wants us to praise Him.

Psalm 96:4 ***Great is the Lord! He is most worthy of praise! He is to be feared above all gods.***

How about you today? Could you care less about what I am talking about today? Is Jesus Christ Lord of your life? If not, He is knocking at your heart, waiting to show you how great He truly is. Do you believe he is worthy of your praise? Do we understand that God is all powerful? Nothing compares to Him and if we have Jesus as Lord He is on our side. Every day that we wake up and put our feet on the floor know that God is worthy of all our praise. Thank him for another day to put a new song in your heart for him.

5. God wants us to recognize Him as our creator.

Psalm 96: 5,6 *The gods of other nations are mere idols, but the Lord made the heavens! 6 Honor and majesty surround him; strength and beauty fill his sanctuary.*

Have you ever just laid on your back in the yard and looked up at the stars at night and tried to count them? How many stars are up there? I am so amazed at the how beautiful the sky is and how it is all held together. When I look at creation, and how detailed everything is, I just cannot believe that it all evolved out of space dust. It is so much easier to believe that it was created by our Heavenly Father. I believe that when we get to heaven and see how beautiful it is, it will be hard to remember the beauty of this earth, as beautiful as it is. What do you suppose the idols have created? Not much I am sure. Vs.6 says Honor and majesty surround him; strength and beauty fill his sanctuary. Think about that. Where is His sanctuary? Where does God dwell when you ask Jesus to be Lord of your life? In your spirit!!!

We have a song of praise to sing to our awesome God!! Continue to live your life as a worship song to God during the year ahead. Thank him for each new day and continue to sing in your hearts throughout the day and he will bless you for it.

Before we take up the offering, I have one more item to take care of. I believe we should take every opportunity we get to ask the question, have you ever made Jesus Christ Lord of your life? If not, I would invite you to join me as I lead in a prayer, all you have to do is to say these words and mean them from your heart.

Now with every head bowed and every eye closed I would ask that if you felt a tug on your heart today, or maybe a thought came to mind that I really need to get my life right with God, that is the Holy spirit asking you to follow the King of Kings, I would ask that if that is you, just raise your hand as an act of faith, nobody is looking around but me, pray with me.

As we prepare to take up the offering, I want to share a scripture with you from 2 Corinthians 9:7-9 You must decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure." For God loves a person who gives cheerfully."8 And god will generously provide all you need. Then you will have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.9 As the scriptures say, "They share freely and give generously to the poor. Their good deeds will be remembered forever."