

Song Story #12 – It is Good

When Sandy and I got married in 1984, one of our goals was to do music and ministry together. Ironically, doing music together was our biggest conflict when we were dating and we broke up about 5 times over that issue. Sandy was a classically trained soprano and had a background in musical theatre, choir, etc., and I was more into jazz, folk and rock and was the singer-songwriter guy. As much as we liked each other, we just couldn't seem to make our music work together. But as you now know, we got married anyway and through God's grace and some brokenness on both of our parts, we began to find ways to compromise what we did and sing together and do ministry together. We did our first recording together entitled "Take Time to Listen" in 1985 and we began to get more and more opportunities to do concerts together. I was also working at the Church of the Open Door at that time, but we continued to perform quite a few concerts on the side. We put out another recording called "People Everywhere Just Like You and Me" in 1988 and then another one called "Song of Courage" in 1991.

In 1992, we did a tour with a 200 voice kids choir from our church who sang with us. That tour, on top of all the other singing and recording we had been doing, proved to be the demise of Sandy's voice. At the end of that tour, Sandy began having persistent vocal problems that caused her voice to cut out when she was singing and not to be able to hit high notes. We went to a vocal specialist and they said that she had "elongated hardening" on her vocals chords. But it wasn't something they could operate on and their only recommendation was vocal rest for an undetermined amount of time. Well, if you know Sandy, you know that she's very much of an extrovert and a very sunny person who loves to be around people and talk and laugh – and sing. So for her, to not be able to talk much or sing at all – was devastating. She was also pregnant with our son, Ben, at the time and it was a difficult pregnancy. She began to dive into a deep depression and had a real faith crisis that lasted about a year and a half. We could no longer sing together and Sandy could no longer sing in church.

That was a very difficult time for both of us. Depression is like a black hole that sucks all sense of hope and joy out of your life and life starts to feel like one long, cold rainy day.

I remember during this time leading worship at our church. I'd have to come to church by myself to do three services and Sandy would have to get the kids ready and come on her own. While leading worship in the service that she came to, I would look out and see her, not being able to sing, looking so very unhappy. It was so hard for me to see her that way. We both wondered why God had allowed her to lose her voice and our music ministry together. We wondered if she'd ever be able to sing again and I wondered if she would ever climb out of this depression.

In the midst of that time, I read Psalm 92. The first part of it says, "*It is good to give thanks to the LORD and make music to your name, O Most High, to proclaim your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night, to the music of the ten-stringed lyre and the melody of the harp.*" I had come to understand that worshipping the Lord in times

like these is really a “sacrifice of praise” like it talks about in Hebrews 13:15. It’s not necessarily easy. It’s not because you feel so happy or joyous or that life is going so well for you. But it’s still a good thing to do. I also came to understand that worship is spiritual warfare. When satan is telling you lies about God and about yourself, worship allows us to stand in the face of those lies and tell the truth about God and ascribe worth to Him. That is doing battle in the heavenly realms. I wrote this song as a paraphrase of parts of Psalm 92, but also as a joyous proclamation of truth in the face of the lies that seemed to be overwhelming our lives. I wrote the bridge as a sort of joyous, musical responsive reading (which are usually very bland when spoken) to ask the questions of and give the answers as to why we should thank the Lord.

Sandy did eventually climb out of that depression and came out with a stronger determination to not question God when she doesn’t understand Him but to submit to His sovereignty and cling to the fact that GOD IS GOOD and GOD IS LOVE, and nothing life can dish out changes WHO HE IS. Also, in 1995, she happened across a missionary medical doctor who was in the States briefly who was able to do micro-surgery on her vocal chords. Her voice was stronger after the recovery period from that surgery and she’s been able to sing regularly again. But her voice remains fragile and she has to be careful not to sing when it gets tired. So there are still quite a few events where I sing that she can’t. That’s still disappointing and frustrating for us, but we still feel blessed and are grateful to still be together and doing ministry together in every way we can.

“It is Good” went on to be one of my most successful songs so far. In 1996, WORD Music published our arrangement as a choral anthem and churches started singing it all over the country. Heart of the City recorded it on our “What We Really Need” CD along with students from a Northwestern College Chapel service in 1999. Then in 1999, international worship leader, Ron Kenoly recorded it on a live CD and DVD that was recorded in Italy. That was very exciting except that as I hurriedly opened up his new CD when it came out to hear “It is Good” on it, there in the credits it said “It is Good written by Ron Kenoly, published by Integrity Music” – both of which were wrong. Wow, what a bummer... I was really disappointed and frustrated that I finally had a breakthrough song and then it was credited to someone else. I contacted Integrity and they offered to fix the credits in the next printing, but most of the CD’s and print music were already released internationally. I got the royalties due me, but just not the credit. But even in that, I decided again that it was good to give thanks to the Lord. The song was out there. The ministry of the song was out there and I even got paid for a song I wrote. I just didn’t get credit for it. But that was okay and a good reminder that it’s all about the Lord anyway.

So that’s the long story behind this song. I still love this song and what it says to me and all of us through life’s up and downs. Is it always easy? No, it’s not so easy. But is it good? Yes! It’s good! It is good! It is good!

You can watch a slide show of this song with the lyrics on youtube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SvQe3smyQNk> . If you don’t have the “What We Really

Need" CD yet, you can hear clips from it and order it on our website at www.heartofthecity.org.

It is Good

Words and Music by Dan Adler

Chorus: It is good, it is good, it is good to give thanks to the Lord on High
To sing of Your faithfulness and loving-kindness both day and night
To play on our instruments sweet songs of praise for the things You do
It is good, it is good, it is good to give thanks to You!

1. For though the wicked spring up like the grass and are everywhere,
Soon they will perish!
But all those planted in Your house will grow without end! Sing it again!
(repeat chorus)

2. For through we struggle and trials and troubles still come our way,
You won't forsake us!
Your Word has told us Your promises will never end! Sing it again!
(repeat chorus)

Bridge: Why give Him praise? BECAUSE HE IS WORTHY!
Why should we sing? HE LOVES YOU AND ME!
And why give Him thanks? BECAUSE HE FORGAVE US!
Why celebrate? BECAUSE WE ARE FREE!
And when, when should we thank Him? BOTH MORNING AND EVENING!
In what circumstance? THE GOOD AND THE BAD!
Is it always easy? NO, IT'S NOT SO EASY!
But is it good? YES, IT'S GOOD! IT IS GOOD! IT IS GOOD!! (repeat chorus)

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