

SINGING FROM THE HEART

Hebrews 13:15-16

October 21, 2007 Sunday a.m.

INTRODUCTION

- A. In the middle of a soloist's song at church a little boy leaned over to his mother and said, "She can't sing very well, can she? His mother replied that the lady sang from her heart. Later when the congregation sang a hymn the boy leaned over to his mother again and said, "Mommy, you sing from your heart too."
- B. Another name for singing from your heart is "Praise".
 - 1. Last week we learned that the definition of worship is "loving God."
 - 2. This week we will see that one expression of our love for God is called "praise".
 - 3. Hebrews 13:15-16 talks about praising God (READ).
 - 4. Let's notice a few things today about praising God.

I. FIRST, NOTICE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PRAISE.

- A. Our first responsibility is to praise God "correctly".
 - 1. Our text says, "through Jesus"...we offer a sacrifice of praise--v.15.
 - 2. In other words, only those who approach God through Jesus can correctly praise God. That is, only Christians can truly and correctly praise God.
- B. Our second responsibility is to praise God not only correctly, but also "consciously".
 - 1. Praising God does not refer to some ecstatic, unconscious or uncontrolled expression, like speaking in "tongues".
 - 2. The text says "let us" which indicates personal control and consciousness.
 - 3. Therefore, we Baptists should never be fearful of praising God.
- C. Our third responsibility is to praise God not only correctly and consciously, but also "continually."
 - 1. Most Christians do a pretty good job of praising God at church, but what about at home, school, and on the job?
 - 2. Psalms 34:1 says praise is to be an every day event.

II. SECOND, NOTICE THE REQUIREMENTS OF PRAISE.

- A. The first requirement of praise involves our "lips"--v.15.
 - 1. True praise involves singing and talking about God, not just sitting in silence.
 - 2. Although worship in general can either be in private or public, praise is always public.
 - 3. Why? Because praise is not only for us, but also is our testimony for others of the goodness and greatness of God.
- B. The second requirement of praise involves our "lifestyle"--v.16.
 - 1. We must back up what we say with our lips with what we do in our lifestyle.
 - 2. Praise isn't just a feeling. Its an action.
 - 3. In the Broadway musical, "My Fair Lady", Eliza is courted by a man named Freddy. Freddy writes her love letters every day. But Eliza responds to his letters in frustration, "Words, Words! I'm sick of words! Don't talk of stars burning above. If you're in love with me, show me. Don't talk of love lasting through time. If you love me, show me now."

III. THIRD, NOTICE THE RESULTS OF PRAISE.

- A. The first result of praise is to focus on the "person" of God.
 - 1. 2 Chronicles 20:21-22 is an example.
 - 2. The Israelites focused on their Savior instead of their situation.
 - 3. Praising God helps us take our focus off of our problems and put the focus on God instead.
- B. The second result of praise is to focus on the "power" of God.
 - 1. The moment they began to praise God, God began to take control of their situation.
 - 2. They made a conscious decision to praise God in spite of their hopeless situation and God responded to their praise with power!
 - 3. Psalm 22:3 reminds us that God inhabits the praises of his people.

CONCLUSION

- A. Praise is an indispensable ingredient of worship.
- B. Somehow, though, about 40% of churchgoers seem to have picked up the idea that "singing in church is for singers." The truth is that "singing is for believers". The relevant question is not, "Do you have a voice?" but "Do you have a song?"