

What should we Sing in Worship

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Turn with me in your Bibles, please, to John's gospel 4. John's gospel 4 and we're going to read together there just a few verses, a small few verses from verse 19 to verse 24 as we look at a very important subject. The subject that though I have practiced this for a number of years as some of us have and others less than that, and I've never actually dealt with this as subject in the form of a sermon and that is the subject of exclusive psalmody. I have been looking at this the last two or three weeks with a view of preaching on it, so we will look together at John 4 and read from verse 19 to the 24th verse. The Samaritan woman is speaking in John 4:19,

19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. 20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. 21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. 22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. 23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

From my conversion in 1985, I have been familiar with what is called hymn singing. In fact, it is all I knew for the first six years of my Christian life. No one had ever mentioned to me the biblical imperative to sing the psalms in the worship of God, neither indeed were the psalms sung. The words of men had completely replaced the word of God in worship,

Man, by nature, will always choose his own ideas of God before he will submit to what God says of himself. In fact, in those six years, I do not think I even ever heard the question raised what is biblical worship. This was one of the first questions asked at the Reformation. The modern Evangelical church has lost the importance of this question and, hence, is descending back into the darkness that existed in Romanism prior to the Reformation. Much, if not all, of what is happening in today's church can be described, I

believe, as will-worship or as the margin in Colossians 2:23 says, self-imposed religion. In looking at the subject of what we should sing in the worship of God, we must endeavor to strip away all preconceived notions and all that we have been accustomed to and trained to accept merely by experience and ask the simple question, and yet the timeless question what does God require at our hands. May God help us as we look at this subject.

We have a number of points to look at together and we will take them carefully and slowly. First of all, God is. That's where we must start. God is and therefore God is to be known, and therefore he has given us the Scriptures to know him by. If anyone asks what is the greatest physical evidence that we have for the existence of God, it must be the existence of the word of God. God is. He is to be known. And he has made himself known by his revealed word. In fact, we do not and cannot know God apart from his own revealed will and word.

We would never go to an unbeliever with human writings in order to establish the character of God. In fact, we would never do that to ourselves. Now if we cannot know God apart from his word, why do we think it is appropriate to worship him apart from his word? Let us ask the question: what is worship? The English word derives from the ancient Anglo-Saxon word "worthship," therefore worship is the declaration of the worth of God.

Now surely only God's word can sufficiently convey and communicate his own worth. Just look at one verse in Psalm 138:2. It's a well-known verse. I've mentioned it to you a number of times. Psalm 138:2, "I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name." Now if that is true, and it is true, we can confidently say that the psalms are exalted above the name of God. The psalms being the word of God, God has exalted his word above his name, therefore the psalms are exalted even above God's name. This, at the beginning, shows us the importance not only of the word of God in general but of the psalms specifically.

Now could we say the same about the words of men? Of course, we could not. Of course, we could not say that the words of men are exalted above the name of God, but that shows us as we begin our study tonight, how foolish it is for men to exchange the word of God for the words of men. Calvin states in his service book, "What Augustine says is true, namely that no one can sing anything worthy of God which he has not received from him. Therefore after we have carefully searched everywhere, we shall not find better or more appropriate songs to this end than the psalms of David inspired by the Holy Spirit."

God is to be known and therefore he has given us the Scriptures to know him by and, indeed, to worship him by. Secondly, God has not remained silent on the issue of how we are to worship him. Our opening text is very clear on this. God must be worshiped in spirit and in truth. Notice regarding our text in John 4, this declaration was spoken to a humble Samaritan woman and therefore it is not to be regarded as a high theological issue but as the most basic and fundamental principle in our dealings with God. Now that's a very important point. Let me emphasize that. If the Lord Jesus had of said the

words in John 4 to some theologian, people could explain that away, "Well, that's a high theological issue." But he said it to an ordinary Samaritan woman. This is basic. This is fundamental. We must worship God in spirit and in truth therefore we cannot invent our own methods and our own ways to worship God.

Thirdly, God has in time given to us not only material for praise but also inspired men who have given that material to us. Look at 2 Samuel 23, just the first two verses, please. 2 Samuel and chapter 23 and verses 1 and 2. "Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." Notice here in our text a number of things are said. First of all, David, this man who was raised up on high, then he was anointed of the God of Jacob. Why? To be the sweet psalmist of Israel. How? The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. God has given not only the material but God has given the men by which and through which these words can be by the power of his Holy Spirit. But also notice he is called here at the end of verse 1 the sweet psalmist of Israel. Now the word of God tells us in the New Testament that we are the new Israel, we are the Israel of God. New Israel is the wrong phrase, we are the Israel of God. Now if we are the Israel of God, David is our sweet psalmist and therefore the psalms are to be sung by us. There has been no change.

Fourthly, God has commanded us to sing his psalms in his worship. Turn with me to 1 Chronicles 16:7-9. 1 Chronicles 16, and verses 7 through 9. "Then on that day David delivered first this psalm to thank the LORD into the hand of Asaph and his brethren. Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works." Note a degree of freedom is given in the talking, but when we sing unto him, it is to be the psalms. Do you see that in verse 9? We can talk about his wondrous works and, of course, there is liberty in the words we use when we converse, but when we sing unto God in verse 9, it is specifically stated that we are to sing the psalms unto him. Sing psalms unto him. This is an important point. I'm going to address this a bit later on. In one area there's liberty, in the other area there's prescription. When we talk we can use our own words, but when we sing we are to sing God's word, especially when we are singing unto him. Sing unto him is the emphasis there, sing psalms unto him. That is what God wants. That is what God has required. And again, that is so important to emphasize that.

Also look over at 2 Chronicles 29 and verse 30, "Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the LORD with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped." Notice here in verse 30 that we just read, it is a command. Hezekiah commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord with the words of David and of Asaph the seer. Notice also, and again for the point of emphasis, it is with the words of David, not based on them. One of the excuses that is used today is that we'll base the hymns on the psalms and quite often that's not even done anyway. It's said it's done but it's not done.

Fifthly, the psalms were not just given for the Old Testament church but were given for all the people of God for all time. Look at Psalm 89:1-4. "I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations." Now stop there. Read verse 1 carefully, "I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations." Now if this psalm was only for a period of time, then this wouldn't apply. But this, and again we emphasize the word "sing" here, most people in the modern church are only familiar with the psalms as a prose, not something to sing, but the psalms repeatedly are said to be sung. They are not meant primarily to be read. They can be read, of course, they're the word of God, but primarily their function is to be sung, and therefore this verse, again, even in what it says in its content, emphasizes to us that this is to be sung through all generations. It's with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. "For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens. I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations."

Notice the Old Testament saints sang the psalms, and again we're just going over now the point here, of all generations. The exiles in Babylon sang the psalms, Psalm 137:4 actually refers to the Lord's song, and the psalms are the Lord's song. Only the psalms are the Lord's song. No other song can be called or given that name.

The Lord Jesus Christ sang the psalms. Turn with me to Romans 15. You might be surprised that we're going to Romans, but Romans 15:8. Romans 15:8, and in verses 8 to 11, two psalms are quoted from, it's Psalm 18 and Psalm 117. But just read here with me Romans 15:8, "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause," speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ in the context of verse 8, "For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name." Now this is crucial. The Lord Jesus Christ here is prophetically spoken of as singing in the congregation among the Gentiles and singing unto God's name. Now let me ask the question: can we conceive of the Lord Jesus Christ singing the words of men? Can we conceive of him responding to the church's will in singing whatever hymns we decide to sing? The obvious answer is no. Christ can only sing the word of God because he is God, and God will not descend to sing the words of men, what men think we should sing.

Verse 10, "And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. And again," this is Psalm 117, "Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people." Why that's so important is that back in 117, the emphasis of that just very short psalm, two verses, is to bring the world into the praising of the psalms. It's not just for the Jews. It's not just an Old Testament hymnbook. All the people of the world are commanded to praise God and in the context of his psalms.

Hebrews 2 :11-12. Hebrews 2 and verses 11 and 12. "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." Again, the same point we would apply to those words. The Lord Jesus Christ sang the psalms and he still, here's the amazing point, the Lord Jesus Christ is still singing the psalms with his people even tonight.

Then also the apostles sang the psalms. How do we know this? James 5:13 states, "Is any one of you merry? Let him sing a psalm." The apostle recommends the singing of the psalms.

The early church sang the psalms. Hughes Oliphant Old in his book "Worship" printed in 2002 wrote, "Psalms were preferred by the early church and used almost exclusively until the end of the fourth century." Just when Rome began to exert its power in the church, and the more Rome exerted its power, the less the psalms had predominance. The Reformation restored psalm singing and the Puritans sang the psalms.

Psalm singing began to decline in the 18th century, especially under the influence of Isaac Watts who was a dispensationalist, and that was his basis or reason for replacing the psalms of David with modern compositions, because he believed the psalms of David were no longer applicable. By the way, I probably will repeat this later but I think it's important to say, many people who are arguing against the psalms show a lot of ignorance in some of the things they actually say. One example comes to mind. They often say, "Well, it's all about the old covenant." Well, if you read the psalms, the predominant emphasis all the way through the psalms is new covenant, not old covenant. In fact, in Psalm 51, we have that contrast made with sacrifices of animals and so on, they are not what God desires, in fact, what God desires is a broken and contrite heart. So the new covenant is the dominant idea in the psalms.

Sixthly, the New Testament epistles exhort the singing of the psalms. We've already referred to James 5:13, turn with me now to Ephesians 5:17. Ephesians 5 and verse 17. I'm just going to read a couple of verses here. "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Now there's a number of things we want to point out here. First of all, we are told in verse 19 to sing the psalms, to speak and to sing the psalms, in fact. There is no argument here even among non-psalm singers. Now I purposely put it that way because many in the church today do not sing the psalms so therefore we're calling them non-psalm singers but they will even agree here this is what the word of God is telling us to do. Therefore a church that does not use the psalms to be sung in its worship of God is in direct disobedience to the word of God. I'm not saying that to be condemning but this is quite clear here. The word of God tells us, we've already read James or we've referred to James 5:13, and here clearly we are told to speak and to sing the word of God, spiritual songs and so on.

We are to sing the psalms. Secondly, we are told not just to sing these but to speak them to ourselves. Now here's a very important question: do non-psalm singers speak the words of uninspired hymns to themselves? The Greek word can be translated "preach," and so it is in some Scriptures. We are literally to preach the word of these songs to ourselves. These words are to have authority to us. You see, sometimes we are too superficial even ourselves in how we deal with these verses, but let us challenge them, those who don't sing the psalms and sing the words of men, are they going to take this to its natural conclusion and make the words of men the authority, and preach that word to them? I don't think so.

Thirdly, the context in verse 17, it says "understanding what the will of the Lord is." Whatever these psalms, hymns and songs are, the apostle says that it's to do it to know what God's will is. That's the purpose. Now can we apply that to uninspired compositions? Can I look to humanly-inspired hymns and say this is the will of the Lord? Am I going to preach these and speak these to myself so I will know what God's will is?

Fourthly, verse 18 exhorts us to be filled with the Spirit, and then verse 19 gives us the means. Are we filled with the Spirit of God by the words of men or of God? The obvious is the answer. We cannot be filled with the Spirit of God by the words of men but only by the word of God. Much modern Christianity seeks to separate the Spirit from the word. We must not succumb to this dangerous trend. There is a trend, that experience in the Spirit, but in the biblical sense we can only communicate with the Spirit of God through the word of God. There is no other way. Not the best books of men, not even the Puritans, can do for us what the Bible can do, and the only benefit of the Puritans is that they bring us back to the word of God. The words of even the most holy men outside of the inspired word of God cannot fill us with God's Spirit.

It's interesting, actually, the word is used, the Greek word is used twice more in Ephesians, one in chapter 1, verse 13, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." There's the idea. It is our relationship to the word of truth that brings the Holy Spirit as the seal into our lives. But then even better in Ephesians 6:17, "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." There cannot be a separation between the Spirit and the word, therefore if Paul exhorts us to be filled with the Spirit in verse 18 and gives us the means of being filled with the Spirit, we cannot say that these are the words of men. The words of men cannot fill us with the Spirit of God.

Then verse 20 says we are to give thanks, "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Can we give to God humanly-inspired words in the name of Christ who is himself the Word of God? Of course, we cannot. We cannot give something that man has inspired to God in the name of Jesus Christ, especially in place of the very words of God that have been given to us to be giving thanks to God in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sixthly, what about the words "hymns and spiritual songs" here? First, let us consider the phrase "spiritual." What does it mean, spiritual? Well, according to Strong in his Greek, it means supernatural or non-carnal. This word "spiritual" means supernatural or non-carnal. Can we apply especially the first word to the words of men? We cannot say that a humanly-inspired hymn is supernatural. That's what the word means. It doesn't mean just religious. That's one possible way of understanding it, but it means so much more than that. A spiritual song is a supernaturally-inspired song therefore the argument is not between psalms and hymns but between inspired and uninspired or noninspired, to be more gracious.

Secondly, the word "song or songs" is used repeatedly in the psalter for the psalms. The word "psalm or psalms" is used 86 times in the psalter, and the word "song or songs" is used 48 times in the book of Psalms. Many psalms are called a psalm and song, for example, Psalm 18, Psalm 30, 48 and 65. Some are called a psalm or song, 66 through 68, 75, 76, 83, 87, 88, 92, 98 and 108. So this idea that spiritual song must be something outside the psalter is just not the case. The psalms are called songs. In fact, from Psalm 120 through 134, they are all called songs of degrees or songs of ascent.

Thirdly, the word "hymn." The English word is only found four times in the KJV and the Greek word is found six times in the Greek New Testament. It contains the idea of singing praise, hence we have in Acts 16:25, Paul and Silas praising God. They're hymning to God, hymning God. They're praising God. And the same in that text we read in Hebrews 2:12, "I will sing praise to thee in the midst of the congregation."

In Matthew 26:30 we have the phrase that after "they had sung an hymn, they went out." There's no room for argument here. This is clearly referring to the psalms. We must not read our 21st century understanding of "hymn" into the text of Scripture. We cannot say, "Well, because it says in Matthew 26:30 that the Lord Jesus Christ and the apostles sang a hymn that this must be something other than the psalms." It's clearly not the case.

A lot of Bible teachers tell us and scholars tell us that what is referred to here is more than likely the Hallel which is from Psalm 113 through Psalm 118. John Gill notes the Hallel which the Jews were obliged to sing on the night of the Passover, for the Passover, they say, was bound to an hymn. This Hallel or song of praise consisted of six psalms, the ones we just mentioned. Now the interesting thing about that, if that is true and we don't know for sure, we can't say for absolute certainty, but if that is the case, the last words the Lord Jesus Christ sang before he went to the cross with his disciples were at the end of Psalm 118, just as he's going to the cross, and we read if you turn there with me to Psalm 118, it says in verse 22, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes." It also says in verse 27, "God is the LORD, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar. Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee." If they are the words that the Lord Jesus finished with, we don't know for sure, but we have every reason to believe that was the case, what words to be sung with his disciples just before he goes to the cross.

What about Colossians 3:16? Turn there with me, please. Not many surprises tonight but isn't it good for us to go over the things that we know, at least most of us? Colossians 3:16, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Now we must observe the immediate context. Whatever these compositions are, they must fall into the following requirements according to the Apostle Paul. First of all, they must be the word of Christ because he says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in your richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." Whatever they are, they must be the word of Christ.

Then secondly, we must be able to teach and admonish one another from these. Now who is going to, in their right mind, bring the words of John Newton or Isaac Watts to another believer and say, "Well, this is what Newton says, or this is what Watts says so this is how you're to live your life"? That makes no sense. So whatever these are, we believe it is talking about the collection of psalms or songs or hymns of the psalter. These have the authority of the word of God and therefore they enable us to teach and admonish one another with these things.

The word "admonish" that we have in that verse is translated "warning" back in chapter 1 and verse 28. It's the very same Greek word, chapter 1, verse 28, "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom." Now again, the basis of that is not the word of man but the word of God, therefore we can only warn and admonish and teach each other with God's word.

Seventhly, there is no command, exhortation or example of new compositions in the New Testament. Now this is a very important point. The Old Testament is, the biggest book of the Old Testament Canon is the Psalm book, the hymnbook or the Psalm book. Not one in the New Testament. That is a substantial point, isn't it? Not one hymn written in the New Testament. Now some try and rescue the idea that from the books of Colossians and one or two other places there's an allusion, but the best like Philippians 2, for example, the best you can say about them is that they were possibly sayings or poems. Yes, but there's no way you can prove from those obscure references that they were actually psalms or hymns sung in the New Testament church.

Now also under this heading, when you look in the New Testament at Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12-14, and Ephesians 4 where the Apostle Paul goes into some length regarding gifts for the church, never once is the gift of psalmody or hymnody mentioned. Why? Why among all the gifts that God gave to his church, why was there not a gift of hymnody or psalmody, somebody to write hymns for the church? Because it was not God's will. That's the simple answer, isn't it? It was not God's will for the psalter to be replaced. The apostles didn't write one psalm or hymn, neither was anybody else to write one psalm or hymn.

Eighthly, it is our duty as Christians to worship God from his word. The Westminster Directory for Public Worship written in 1645 states, "It is the duty of Christians to praise God publicly by singing of psalms together in the congregation, that the whole

congregation may join therein, everyone that can read is to have a Psalm book." Good, clear exhortation but maybe some of you are saying in your heart, "Well, that's the words of men. I'm not bound by that." Exactly. You're not bound by that but you are bound by the word of God. That is the foundation for such a statement. God's word, as we have seen, does command us to sing his word in his praise.

Now let me deal with some objections. Objection 1, people say, "What," and this is probably one of the biggest ones, one of the biggest arguments that's used, "What matters is theological accuracy. That's all that matters." That's the big one, you know, once a hymn is theologically correct. Well, that does matter but it's not all that matters. It matters that something be theologically correct. Let me give you an example. A woman may preach and get up here tonight and do a far better job than I do, and far more theologically correct, but is that the only thing? It's important but it's not the only thing. If a woman stands up here and preaches in the church, it doesn't matter how theologically correct the sermon is, the very foundation is wrong. So it does not matter how theologically correct a hymn is. Now I'm going to say a hymn, I mean an uninspired hymn. It's not the only issue. It's not the only thing that matters.

Secondly, people say, "What about prayer? We are allowed to pray our own words." Absolutely. God has given us a hymnbook. He has not given us a prayer book, and yet isn't it strange that in so many churches that go away from God's hymnbook, they are the ones who make the prayer book. Strange, isn't it? You see, God hasn't given us a prayer book, hence we are to pray our words, but he has given us a songbook.

Also, what is forgotten is that there are different rules for different aspects and types of worship or parts of worship. Every man is to sing but not every man is to preach. Now if we were to take one rule and say, well, if every man can sing or for that matter, every woman can sing, but not every one of them is to preach. In other words, you can't use one rule for one part of worship and then transport it over into another part of worship. You see, that's, let me be very frank about this, they're all red herrings or, at least, people when they say those things don't understand the issue. They just raise these things. You know, sometimes you're talking to people and you hear the same things repeated all the time and you say, "You know, you just haven't thought that through."

Thirdly, "The New Testament," they say, "does not forbid the singing of other compositions." The fact that it doesn't mention it is one thing but neither does the New Testament forbid the lighting of candles, incense, vestments, and other inventions of Rome which came in with the normative principle. "Now if the New Testament doesn't condemn it, then we can do it." The New Testament doesn't condemn the singing of other compositions but it does command the singing of God's word and that's enough, isn't it? It only commands the singing of God's word. If we go down the normative principle road and not the regulative principle, we will end up in Rome. That's the point.

Fourth objection, the psalms are not sufficient for today's worship, and this is one of the most horrible arguments that is used. The word of God is not sufficient for today's worship? There's something missing in the word of God? William Romaine who was an

18th century scholar, Hebrew scholar, puts it well, in fact, one of the greatest Hebrew scholars, if not the greatest, of the 18th century. He says this, "I lack a name for that man who should pretend that he can make better hymns than the Holy Ghost. It is just the same as if he was to write a new Bible; not only better than the old, but so much better that the old may be thrown aside." That's exactly what's happened, isn't it, with the psalms? You see, initially many said, "Well, we'll have psalms and hymns," but eventually what happens is we'll have the uninspired hymns and no psalms. Romaine goes on to say, "What a blasphemous attempt! And yet our hymn-mongers, inadvertently I hope, have come very near to this blasphemy."

One Reformed Baptist pastor has argued, and I'll include a couple of his arguments, Bob Gonzalez is his name, he gives this argument. "We are to sing about the Lord Jesus Christ and we are to employ the content of New Testament revelation in our singing," and he quotes Colossians 3:16. He goes on to say, "The psalms never mention the name of Jesus. When they allude to Him, they do so in the form of type or shadow." And I'm amazed that a Reformed Baptist pastor could use this type of argumentation. First of all, he's wrong in saying that what Colossians 3:16 says is that we are to sing about the Lord Jesus Christ. That's not what it says. It says let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. It's different. I'm not saying we're not to sing about the Lord Jesus Christ but that's not what Colossians 3:16 says. You see, that's very superficial the book of Colossians 3:16 to say we're to sing about the Lord Jesus. That's not what it says. It says the word of Christ is to dwell in us richly.

In fact, the Bible never tells us to sing the name Jesus. Isn't that interesting? The Bible never says anywhere, "Sing the name Jesus." We are to preach the name Jesus. In fact, it's interesting, isn't it, that again that many of the churches that sing the name of Jesus over and over and over again won't preach him. Isn't that interesting? They like singing his name but they don't like preaching it. We're never told to sing the name Jesus in the New Testament but we are told to preach it.

Secondly, Colossians 3:16 does not say we are to use New Testament content. The Old Testament is the word of Christ. 1 Peter 1:10-11, "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

Thirdly in response to this objection, the types and shadows are unclear to unbelievers but not to believers. We see Christ, don't we? Luke 24:44, I believe it is, the Lord Jesus Christ shows the disciples all the things in Moses and the prophets and in the psalms concerning himself. We don't have a difficulty with that. We see the Lord Jesus Christ all the way through his word. The types and the shadows, that's why I'm greatly concerned that a Reformed Baptist pastor could make such a point. When believers know and see these things, it is the joy of our heart. In fact, it almost emphasizes Christ more when we don't see the name, but we see the character, and we see the soul, and we see the life and

death of Christ in the word without him being mentioned by name, it gives greater emphasis to his person.

In fact, I would say, fourthly, often the psalms go more into the heart of Christ than the New Testament does. It doesn't always but often. One example of this is Psalm 22. Read and sing Psalm 22. Where in the New Testament do we see such depth of the sufferings of Christ as in that psalm? Or Isaiah 53, though we don't sing that? The Old Testament is filled with the soul and the heart and the passion of Christ's life and death.

Sixthly, or the sixth objection, I should say, is this: if it is wrong to sing uninspired hymns in worship, it is wrong to preach uninspired sermons and to pray uninspired prayers in worship. Again, this is such a, you know, simplistic argument. This is to confuse the elements of worship. In preaching, we preach to men not God, and in prayer we pray to God not men. We can't choose the same rules in those two things. They are completely different. They are both a form of worship but they are completely different. We cannot confuse the parts of worship, in fact, such an argument shows how weak people's arguments against the psalms are, if that's the best that they can give against an exclusive psalms position.

Finally, the same pastor notes, "The New Testament calls," listen to this, "The New Testament calls for a variety of Christian songs for worship so let us avail ourselves of all our rich heritage, let also compose and avail ourselves of new songs of praise. There's no reason why good hymns and songs cannot be written today." You see, that's where it leads to, isn't it? And the more we write, I mean, you know where Ecclesiastes says that the writing of many books there's no end. Of the writing of hymns there's no end. And what happens, what's the net result? The psalms are forgotten. The psalms are forgotten.

May God help us to rely on him and his word alone in the singing of his praise to the glory of his name. Amen.

Well, in that context we should sing together a psalm. We'll sing Psalm 118 as we close to the glory of his name. Maybe, Katherine, will you lead, please. Psalm 118. Or Faith, please. We'll stand to sing Psalm 118 and we'll sing verses 1 to 14 and remain standing for closing prayer.

"O praise the Lord, for he is good;
His mercy lasteth ever.
Let those of Israel now say,
His mercy faileth never.

Now let the house of Aaron say,
His mercy lasteth ever.
Let those that fear the Lord now say,
His mercy faileth never.

I in distress call'd on the Lord;
The Lord did answer me:
He in a large place did me set,
From trouble made me free.

The mighty Lord is on my side,
I will not be afraid;
For any thing that man can do
I shall not be dismay'd.

The Lord doth take my part with them
That help to succour me:
Therefore on those that do me hate
I my desire shall see.

Better it is to trust in God
Than trust in man's defence;
Better to trust in God than make
Princes our confidence.

The nations, joining all in one,
Did compass me about:
But in the Lord's most holy name
I shall them all root out.

They compass'd me about; I say,
They compass'd me about:
But in the Lord's most holy name
I shall them all root out.

Like bees they compass'd me about;
Like unto thorns that flame
They quenched are: for them shall I
Destroy in God's own name.

Thou sore hast thrust, that I might fall,
But my Lord helped me.
God my salvation is become,
My strength and song is he."

Let us pray.

O Lord our God, we rejoice that we have the very word of God in the Scriptures, that we have that word to read, to preach, to sing as the very basis of godly prayer. O Lord, we thank you that you've shown us the importance of the sufficiency of Scripture in every aspect of our lives but principally in that way that we worship our God. O Lord, we pray that we would be those who would apply the word of God to all our lives so that we would not only be educated in our theology but in the practical outworking of these things in every area. O Lord, grant us, grant us the power of thy Holy Spirit to live in the good of thy revealed will and word. Lord, we give thee thanks for those things that we

*shall receive in the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and the love of God our Father and the fellowship and communion of the blessed Holy Spirit be with you all.
Amen.*