

This is of primary importance. But let us not forget the importance of giving our best to the Master. Music need not be pleasing to the ear to please God; *but it does need to be our best effort.*

As we offer songs of praise, let us lift up our hearts to the throne of God. Let us teach and admonish one another. And let us also give diligence to offer the beauty of our voices (whether great or not), that our God may be glorified in our gathering through His Son.

# The Carriage Drive Messenger



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NEWSWORTHY NOTES:

*This section removed to preserve member's privacy*

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## TIMES OF SERVICES

**Sunday:** Bible Study 10:00am  
Morning Worship 10:50am  
Evening Worship 6:30pm  
**Wednesday:** Bible Study 7:30pm

## MAKING MELODY IN YOUR HEART

by Bob Pulliam

The old adage says, "Music hath charms to soothe the savage beast". And indeed, the beauty of a melody can melt the heart and lift the spirit. And who among us does not realize the power of music to teach? Some of the most fundamental, and *seemingly* mundane, of memory exercises, has been made easy and fun by music. How many of us learned the books of the Bible in order by use of a song? What about the names of the apostles? Meter and melody work on the heart for edification in disposition and rote learning. These aspects (disposition and learning) were evidently in God's mind when He commanded that such be engaged in by Christians.

**Today, we will be asking the members here at Carriage Drive to let us know what they think about changing our Sunday and Wednesday evening service times. The two men taking the tally will be announced this morning.**

As Paul was commanding the Colossians concerning the use of songs of praise, he wrote, "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." (Col 3:16). This aspect was also clear as he wrote to the Ephesians, "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph 5:19).

#### *The Learning Aspect...*

These passages make it clear that our singing is to be a learning and teaching process. Great importance is to be placed on the words, for in them lie the truth of the song. The same words might be set to five or six different musical compositions and still be filled with error. At the same time, the "dullest" of melodies might accompany the highest and most noble of verses written in praise to God. It is easy for us to forget the words and sing by memory, or emphasize the melody to the end that thought of wording is sacrificed. But in all of this, it is the intention and thought of the mind that makes a song "worship". The will of the individual exercises the words of the songs with focus and dedication. Without this exercise of the will, and focus of the mind, the words are offered in vain (with emptiness).

#### *The Aspect of Disposition...*

The phrase "making melody" is from a word that means "to pluck or twang at the strings of an instrument." Some have suggesting that this authorizes the use of instrumental music. I agree that this authorizes *the use of the instrument named in the passage*. The Ephesians were to be "making melody in your hearts". The plucking and twanging is to be done on the heart. That which arises from the vocal chords is initiated by the heart (not memorized rendition without thought). The voice and heart are to play in unison that the creator might hear the beautiful harmony created between the two. No other will hear this harmony between heart and voice; but it is enough that He for whom we render such will hear it!

#### *The Silent Voices...*

At times, one might observe a member not singing during services. "Why?", the question is asked. "Well, my voice just isn't good enough", or "If you had ever heard me sing, you would be glad I didn't" are the answers most commonly received. But now I must ask, "What does the modulation

and intonation of your voice have to do with obeying God's command? If you can teach and admonish with your voice, do so!" Don't be intimidated by the pretty voices you hear around you. Your offering will be greater than theirs if your heart is involved, and theirs' isn't! Along this line, I usually point out that God said "singing and making melody with the heart". You may not be able to make melody with you voice; but you can do so with your heart!

There is also the response for not singing, which goes something like this: "I am making melody in my heart, and God can hear it." That sounds good (excuse the pun), but it's only partial obedience. The command is to "**sing** and make melody in your heart...". What if you were to believe, but not repent (Lk 13:3); or repent, but not be baptized (Acts 2:38)? Would you be pleasing to God? Is the command in Ephesians 5:19 any different?

#### *Apathy Toward Details...*

I've heard it said, "It doesn't matter how we sound as long as we're thinking about the words as we sing." That is true, but not necessarily accurate in every case. I agree that a group *might* be so bad that they peel the wall-paper with their singing, and still be pleasing to God; but not if they are not trying to give their best to God! We sometimes sing the song, "Give of Your Best to the Master". It is a beautiful song. But wouldn't it's sentiment apply to our singing as well? I wonder how concerned we are about our *singing as worship* when we totally discount the idea of improving the sound. We have some good singing here, but we should beware lest we be overwhelmed by an apathy toward aesthetics. Our song leaders should ever remain conscious of their responsibility to lead a song, and thus the hearts of men. As much as we might hate to admit it, pitch, tempo and selection have a bearing on the audiences' participation. Pitch it too low, and everyone may be thinking of how they are going to get their voice to the next note, rather than the word they will be singing with that note. Sing it too slow or too fast, and you may destroy the mood created by music and words together (e.g. A march time sung at the pace of a dirge; or a song of sorrows sung rapidly).

We wish to show the world that God can be worshiped without the use of instrumental music. Do we help them to see this when they come and discern within our song services deficiencies... Matters that we *could* correct *if* we would just be concerned about them?

#### *Conclusion...*

Let us give our hearts to careful consideration of the words we sing.