



## **WORSHIPPING THROUGH SONG**

Christianity is simple. God exists as Christians' spiritual Father. Jesus Christ exists as our spiritual oldest brother. Christians exist as God's family.

From the beginning, God planned to save people from evil. He planned to make the opportunity for salvation available to all people. God promised Abraham (Genesis 12:3) that a blessing would come through Abraham's descendants (Genesis 12:3). He promised a blessing would come to all families of the earth. Paul made it plain that Jesus Christ was the blessing God promised Abraham (Galatians 3:16). Through Jesus Christ all families of the earth would be blessed.

It is difficult to teach people in one's own culture. People who share our practices, traditions, values, and thoughts learn new things slowly. When we try to share new things with many people of different cultures, it is extremely difficult. God's plan was to share a blessing with every people who lived on earth. God's plan to share a blessing among all people in all nations is very ambitious!

In God's plan, worship is simple. In Israel in Bible times, worship used animal sacrifices, a temple, a high priest, and priesthood, singers, and musical instruments. Sacrificial worship had to be offered at one holy place and only at that place (Deuteronomy 12:5, 11, 13, 14). In many forms of idolatry and spirit worship, worship is complicated. Many involve special religious rites, images, sacrifices, priests, and special days. In Africa, spirit worship often involves special societies, dances, taboos, and secret rituals.

In Christianity, worship is simple. All that is required for Christian worship are the bodies, minds, hearts, and voices of men and women who belong to Jesus Christ. The human voice is all that is needed to praise and glorify God and Jesus Christ through song. Christians can worship God in song in any place under any conditions. If they are few in number or many in number, they can use their voices in song to praise God. The music God hears comes from believers' hearts (Ephesians 5:19).

The Christian music that honors God comes from Christian hearts through Christian voices. Because Christ's peace rules their hearts and Christ's word lives in them, they use the wisdom of Christ's teachings to teach and encourage each other in song. Their thankful hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs in thanksgiving to God (Colossians 3:16).

Worshipping in song allows each Christian to participate in the praise. Each voice lets his or her heart sing praise and honor to God. Each can give voice to his or her dedication and loyalty. Each voice can tell of his or her love and commitment. Each can come close to God and encourage others to come close to God.

For Christians to honor and praise God with their voices in songs of worship, three things need to happen. (1) Christians need to sing with understanding. When they sing, they must know what they are saying in the song. (2) Christians need to mean what they sing. God is not honored by singing meaningless words. He wants the words to express the Christian's true mind and heart. (3) The song must be sung with true feeling. The song must come from hearts that voice their love and faith.

Singing praises God and encourages Christians.

#### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. In Christianity, who is the spiritual Father? Who is the spiritual oldest brother? Who is God's family?
2. From the beginning, what was God's plan?
3. Is it difficult to teach people in our own culture? Explain your answer.
4. What was necessary for Israel to worship God in Bible times?
5. What is necessary for worship to occur when people worship idols or spirits?
6. Explain why Christian worship is simple.
7. In Christianity, what is the source of the music that honors God?
8. What should Christian worship in song allow each Christian to do?
9. State and explain the three things that must happen for Christian voices to honor and praise God in song