**The Music of Your Heart**

Colossians 3:16

**Introduction**

Upon receiving Christ, your life has been made new. Accordingly, it is not appropriate to have the ways of the old man in your new life; the ways of the old man do not properly represent who Christ is or who you are in Christ. Paul taught in verses 5-7 that sexual sin is inappropriate and destructive, and in verses 8-11 that sinful anger is unfitting and damaging. That which is true individually is also true corporately in our church family; therefore verses 12-15 give instruction regarding relationships among believers. How do you put off the ways of the old man? You let the peace of God rule in your heart (v. 15) and you let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly (v. 16a).

Paul exhorted the Colossian church to make the message about Christ to be prominent in the church through God-honoring music. One of the last “kingdoms” in our life to fall is often music. What does your music say about you? What does your music say about Christ? What does our music say about our church? What role does music play at Hillcrest Baptist Church? What role does music play in your life?

1. **Paul exhorted the Colossian church to make the message of Christ prominent in their church.** 
   1. The term “Word of Christ” is used only here in the New Testament.
      1. It could be subjective, referring to the Word or message that has come from Christ.
      2. It could also mean the word or message about Christ; the message that proclaims Christ.
      3. The latter fits the context of Colossians, since Paul is presenting the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ.
   2. The message of Christ should be prominent in the life of a church.
      1. The word “dwell” means to live in; to dwell among; to remain in a place; to dwell in one and influence him for good. (2 Timothy 1:5, 14) Let the message of Christ be at home!
      2. The word “richly” means abundantly; in a material sense, wealthy or well-to-do; that which exists in a large amount, with the implication of its being valuable.
      3. “The gospel is the word of Christ, which has come to us; but that is not enough, it must dwell in us, or keep house, not as a servant in a family, who is under another's control, but as a master, who has a right to prescribe to and direct all under his roof.” (Matthew Henry)
      4. We cannot make too much of Christ; we can’t mention Him too often. Honoring Him should be our priority.
      5. A lack of Christ-centered preaching and teaching leads churches into a weak state.
      6. If you study the preaching and ministry of the early church you will quickly see that their ministry was Christ-centered. It was not man-centered, growth-centered, issue-centered, comfort-centered, or entertainment-centered. It was unapologetically Christ-centered.
2. **Central Idea: Paul exhorted the Colossian church to make the message about Christ prominent in the church through God-honoring music.** 
   1. He exhorted them to teach and admonish one another with godly music, sung with a right heart.
      1. He used three participles to describe a way in which they could collectively fill their church services with the message of Christ.
      2. Teaching means to impart instruction; to instill doctrine into one.
      3. Admonishing means to warn, or to give instructions regarding correct belief and behavior; to counsel; to put in mind.
      4. Singing could be either the result of the Word’s rich indwelling or a means by which it may help the rich indwelling, or a mixture of both. As they are filled with the message of proclaiming Christ, they will sing; as they sing, they will encourage others to be filled with the message of Christ also.
   2. He mentions a variety of types of music that are God-honoring.
3. Psalms – a song of praise, either the Psalms as we know them or a psalm produced separately.
4. Hymns – a sacred song; a song of praise to God, especially one used to express thanksgiving; a song about Christ, written by Christians.
5. Spiritual songs – a religious song sung by a community gathered for worship; a particular melodic pattern with verbal content; as distinguished from secular songs, these are songs produced by the Spirit, written by people who have knowledge of God.
6. “Perhaps this ‘poverty of Scripture’ in our churches is one cause of the abundance of unbiblical songs that we have today….Many so called ‘Christian songs’ today are written by people with little or no knowledge of the Word of God. It is a dangerous thing to separate the praise of God from the Word of God.” (Wiersbe)
7. “Much of the Christian music of today is light and frothy (superficial). A great deal of this music is utterly contrary to Scripture and still more is so similar to the world’s ‘pop’ and ‘rock’ that it is a discredit to the name of Christ.” (Believer’s Bible Commentary)
8. It doesn’t make sense that we would praise Him with a worldly song since He saved us from the world.
   1. He describes the way in which we are to sing.
      1. “Singing with grace ...” Grace in this context most likely has to do with gratitude.
      2. “In your hearts.” It must be from the heart. We may have it all backward. We often hear, “The song service is to prepare your heart for the preaching.” While that may be a by-product, it actually is the other way around. The preaching of Christ prompts us to sing!
      3. “To the Lord.” He is the worthy recipient of our praise.
9. **Relevance:** 
   1. Question: Why do we sing?
      1. Why do we sing in all of our services?
      2. Why do we sing in Sunday school?
      3. Why do we have special times of music, such as the Christmas cantata?
      4. Why do you sing in your home?
      5. Why do you sing when alone?
   2. Answers:
10. Christ is worthy of our praise.
11. We have been saved by His grace. It is only right that we would joyfully sing about it. Songs such as *Redeemed, How I Love to Proclaim It* give expression to the joy of salvation.
12. We sing to present the message of the gospel of Christ. Songs such as *Rescue the Perishing* teach lost sinners the way of salvation.
13. When you sing, you remind Christians of His great salvation.
14. When you sing, you encourage Christians to be faithful to Christ.
15. When you sing, you correct wrong thinking: ““O what peace we often forfeit. O what needless pain we bear. All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.”
    1. Implications:
       1. Singing praise to God must not be reduced to a talent show. Skillfulness in singing and playing ought to be used for the greatest good: Praising Christ and making Him known.
       2. There is no reason for a Christian not to sing.
       3. Hillcrest Baptist Church should give careful attention to the ministry of music.

**Conclusion**

Put Christ first by honoring Him in your music. Music should be God-honoring. It should teach the message of Christ. It should admonish on the basis of the message of Christ. It should have the right content. It should be Spirit produced. It should be prompted by gratitude. It should be heartfelt. It should be to the Lord. What is the music of your heart?