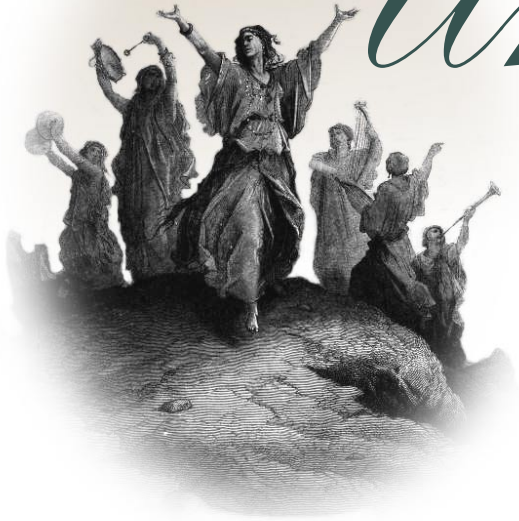


In Unison



The trumpeters and singers joined in unison, as with one voice, to give praise and thanks to the Lord.
2 Chronicles 5:13

Prompting Revival

P*rompt* (prämpt) vt. 1. to urge into action; provoke 2. to remind a person of something he has forgotten.

From the beginning, the choir has held a leadership role in corporate worship. The choir members were more than normal parishioners who just happened to sing, but officers who held responsible roles in temple worship—even dressing the same as the king and the priests.

Now David was clothed in a robe of fine linen, as were all the Levites who were carrying the ark, and as were the singers, and Kenaniah, who was in charge of the singing of the choirs.
1 Chronicles 15:27

God does not take lightly the role of the choir. The order and method of service in His worship is spelled out, organized and purposeful. The choir is there to lead the praise—to encourage everyone in their worship.

The Nineteenth-Century philosopher, Soren Kirkegaard, put forward the “performance” imagery of corporate worship. But unlike what most people think today, that those on the church platform are performing for the audience in the pews, Kirkegaard wrote that the true audience is actually God, and that everyone in attendance is “performing” for Him. In this economy of worship, those on the platform—the pastor, worship leaders, choir members—are not the performers, but *prompters*, leading everyone in a unified and purposeful worship of the Father.

Along with the other leaders, the choir’s service responsibility is to provoke the assembly into a closer, more intimate relationship with God in their praise. There is also a responsibility for the choir members to serve as examples or *demonstrators* for those in the congregation who have forgotten their role in worship.

Toward a Higher Plane

It’s not uncommon for us to arrive for a worship service with our mind clouded with the details and frustrations of the previous week—even the frustrations of getting to the service in the first place. Even though in our heart, and in our vast, cobwebbed memory, we know

what we are to do, for the moment at least we have forgotten our true role in the service. When this occurs, the choir is there as our example, as a visual reminder of how we are to worship the Lord with joy in our hearts.

David told the leaders of the Levites to appoint their brothers as singers to sing joyful songs, accompanied by musical instruments: lyres, harps and cymbals. 1 Chronicles 15:16

There are times, however, when those in the assembly do remember their role in worship, but are simply disinterested. They dutifully show up on a Sunday morning—more out of habit than devotion—thinking, “I just don’t feel like worshiping God.”

It’s the role of the choir to lift the assembly up out of those doldrums, to raise them up and out of the grind of this temporal life. It is the choir that helps lift us up to God—to sing with joy and heart-felt praise to our Lord.

It is from the choir’s example that the congregation takes its cue. Looking up from their orderly rows, they may not see the face of God—but they *will* see the face of every member of the choir.

Tozer on Revival...

What does happen, then, in a Christian church when a fresh and vital working of the Spirit of God brings revival? In my study and observations, a revival generally results in a sudden bestowment of a spirit of worship. This is not the result of engineering or of manipulation. It is something God bestows on people hungering and thirsting for Him. With spiritual renewing will come a blessed spirit of loving worship.

These believers worship gladly because they have a high view of God. In some circles, God has been abridged, reduced, modified, edited, changed and amended until He is no longer the God whom Isaiah saw, high and lifted up. Because He has been reduced in the minds of so many people, we no longer have that boundless confidence in His character that we used to have.

What happens in our *family* relationships when we love each other only out of gratitude? What if I love my father or mother only for those nice things they do for me?

The only substantial, sustaining love is that which loves them for the people they are—a love that is not dependent on them pleasing me with gifts. DL

I once heard Dr. George D. Watson, one of the great Bible teachers of his generation, point out that men can have two kinds of love for God—the love of gratitude or the love of excellence. He urged that we go on from gratefulness to a love of God just because He is God and because of the excellence of His character.

Unfortunately, God's children rarely go beyond the boundaries of gratitude. I seldom hear anyone in worshipful prayer admiring and praising God for His eternal excellence. Many of us are strictly "Santa Claus" Christians. We think of God as putting up the Christmas tree and putting our gifts underneath. That is only an elementary kind of love.

We need to go on. We need to know the blessing of worshiping in the presence of God without thought of wanting to rush out again. We need to be delighted in the presence of utter, infinite excellence. Such worship will have the ingredient of fascination, of high moral excitement.

A.W. Tozer, in *Whatever Happened to Worship?* (Christian publications, 1985), p86f.

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Scripture

"Now write down for yourselves this song and teach it to the Israelites and have them sing it, so that it may be a witness for me against them.
Deut 31:19

"Hear this, you kings! Listen, you rulers! I will sing to the LORD, I will sing; I will make music to the LORD, the God of Israel." Judges 5:3

When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with tambourines and lutes.
1 Sam 18:6

Kenaniah the head Levite was in charge of the singing; that was his responsibility because he was skillful at it. 1 Chron 15:22

After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: "Give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures forever." As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated...
2 Chron 20:21-22

Hezekiah gave the order to sacrifice the burnt offering on the altar. As the offering began, singing to the LORD began also, accompanied by trumpets and the instruments of David king of Israel. The whole assembly bowed in worship, while the singers sang and the trumpeters played. All this continued until the sacrifice of the burnt offering was completed.
2 Chron 29:27-28

...besides their 7,337 menservants and maidservants; and they also had 245 men and women singers.
Neh 7:67

The chief officer of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mica. Uzzi was one of Asaph's descendants, who were the singers responsible for the service of the house of God. The singers were under the king's orders, which regulated their daily activity.
Neh 11:22-23

They performed the service of their God and the service of purification, as did also the singers and gatekeepers, according to the commands of David and his son Solomon. For long ago, in the days of David and Asaph, there had been directors for the singers and for the songs of praise and thanksgiving to God. So in the days of Zerubbabel and of Nehemiah, all Israel contributed the daily portions for the singers and gatekeepers. They also set aside the portion for the other Levites, and the Levites set aside the portion for the descendants of Aaron.
Neh 12:45-47

Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord,
Eph 5:19

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.
Col 3:16

He says, "I will declare your name to my brothers; in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises."
Hebrews 2:12

Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" Rev 5:13

Hymns and Choruses

Sing Praise to God (Schütz)
Sing praise to God who reigns above,
The God of all creation;

Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart (Plumptre)
Rejoice, ye pure in heart,
Rejoice, give thanks and sing;

We Sing the Boundless Praise (Macaulay)
We sing the boundless praise
Of Him who reigns on high,
And of His glorious Son,
The Lamb who brought salvation nigh.
Thine everlasting pow'r
And majesty we sing,
But with our songs of sov'reign grace
We'll make heav'n's arches ring.

O Day of Rest and Gladness (Wordsworth)
...On thee the high and lowly,
Through ages joined in tune,
Sing "Holy, holy, holy,"
To the great God Triune.



In Unison

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