

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

A Fragrant Offering

In the previous article, the question was posed: Why do you sing in the choir? How did you answer that? If God, indeed, reads the heart, as you stand in the choir loft or pew on a Sunday morning, what is in your heart?

For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen. Romans 11:36

As believers, we cannot escape the centrality of God in our lives; as worship leaders, we cannot escape the responsibility to acknowledge His Lordship.

For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. Colossians 1:16

But what (you could reply) does Lordship have to do with singing in the choir?

Most of us have little trouble accepting that Jesus created the world. As the “creation controversy” rages about our ears, we can comfortably rest in the knowledge of His hand in the beginning of everything that has ever existed.

All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.
John 1:3 nasb

Maybe some of us, however, rest a little *too* comfortably in that knowledge. For some, it ends there: God, through Jesus, created the world—including everything around us, including, even, *us*.

But look at the very end of Colossians 1:16:

...all things were created by Him *and for Him*. (emphasis added)

If it is true that we were created by God, then it must be equally true that we were created *for* God. If we accept His hand in our creation, we must accept our responsibility for His service.

God the Father, through Jesus, created you. He made you who you are. He graciously accepted you into His family and gifted you with the ability to sing His praises. He created your voice, your ability to read and make music. He entrusted all these things to you.

But God also made you a free agent. Even as a member of His family, you are under no physical obligation to serve Him. Nothing would prevent you from taking these priceless gifts and using them in the service of another—or to not use them at all. The decision is yours.

So why *do* you sing in the choir?

I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. Romans 12:1 nasb

I gave My life for thee, My precious blood I shed,
That thou might'st ransomed be, and quickened from the dead;
I gave, I gave My life for thee, what hast thou given for Me?

And I have brought to thee, down from My home above,
Salvation full and free, My pardon and My love;
I bring, I bring rich gifts to thee, what hast thou brought to Me?

Frances R. Havergal



Servanthood is not something to be endured, but something to be embraced. Some people spend their entire lives fighting against this truth and, as a result, miss out on all the joy that comes with it.

We can fight against His Lordship tooth and nail, stiffening our backs and refusing to accept His power over our lives, but none of our fighting will make any difference in the truth—the truth that the Lord God has every right to mold and shape us to His pleasure.

So I went down to the potter's house, and I saw him working at the wheel. But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot,

shaping it as seemed best to him. Then the word of the LORD came to me: "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does?" declares the LORD. "Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel." Jeremiah 18:3-6

Christians who struggle with their role under Christ imagine that becoming His servant means that they will have to go without. They imagine certain rights and privileges will be removed when they submit to Him. But in fact, the opposite is true. When we release ourselves from those invisible bonds that hold us back from Christ, our world of possibilities actually widens. When we practice and live servanthood we gain freedoms never before imagined: freedom from worry, freedom from despair; freedom to rest in the arms of someone more wise, more experienced, more compassionate than anyone else we know.

When we refuse to submit to this good and healthy order, we are, instead, submitting ourselves to a life of frustration, anger, and recurring feelings of hopelessness.

Servanthood is an attitude, methodically practiced, that changes our natural inclination toward selfish, protective behavior into a yearning to see and experience every moment of life from God's perspective. It doesn't come naturally; it must be practiced and developed.

Servanthood represents a conscious choice to submit to God's will, and in that, it has a close relationship with lordship. Acknowledging Jesus Christ as Lord—confessing that He, and He alone, is the one in charge of our life—is the key to peace in the midst of a turbulent life on earth. And, in contrast, the key to a life of utter despair and hopelessness, anger over circumstances that come our way, and a life clouded with bitterness is the rejection of Christ's deserved position as Lord.

Scripture

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. John 1:3,10

"Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen. Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Romans 11:35-12:1

For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"), yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. I Corinthians 8:5-6

Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to

make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. Ephesians 3:8-12

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. Colossians 1:15-18

In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his

Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. Hebrews 1:1-3

He also says, "In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands." Hebrews 1:10

"To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation." Revelation 3:14

Hymns and Choruses

A Charge to Keep I Have (*Wesley*)
To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfill;
O may it all my pow'rs engage
To do my Master's will!

O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee (*Gladden*)
Teach me Thy patience! Still with Thee
In closer, dearer company,
In work that keeps faith sweet and strong,
In trust that triumphs over wrong.

Jesus is Lord of All (*McClard*)
Blessed Redeemer, all glorious King,
Worthy of reverence I pay;
Tribute and praises I joyfully bring
To Him, the Life, the Way.

Take My Life and Let It Be Consecrated (*Havergal*)
Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord to Thee;
Take my moments and my days—
Let them flow in ceaseless praise,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

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