

# The Warrior-King

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[ 0 : 00 ] It's a joy to be with you this morning. And we are in Exodus chapter 15. Please turn with me to Exodus chapter 15, verses 1 to 21. And let me pray for the reading and preaching of God's word.

Father, there is no one like you. And we ask that this morning you would renew our sense of awe and wonder at who you are and all that you have done for us.

So that we may truly make that profession of faith that there is no one like you. Not only with mental assent in our heads, but from the bottom of our hearts.

Reveal your glory to us from your word. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Please stand with me for the reading of God's word from Exodus chapter 15, if you're able.

I'm going to read verses 1 to 21. Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the Lord, saying, I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously.

[ 1 : 18 ] The horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation. This is my God, and I will praise him.

My Father's God, and I will exalt him. The Lord is a man of war. The Lord is his name. Pharaoh's chariots and his host he cast into the sea, and his chosen officers were sunk in the Red Sea.

The floods cover them. They went down into the depths like a stone. Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power. Your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy.

In the greatness of your majesty, you overthrow your adversaries. You send out your fury. It consumes them like stubble. At the blast of your nostrils, the waters piled up.

The floods stood up in a heap. The deeps congealed in the heart of the sea. The enemy said, I will pursue. I will overtake.

[ 2 : 23 ] I will divide the spoil. My desire shall have its fill of them. I will draw my sword. My hand shall destroy them. You blew with your wind.

The sea covered them. They sank like lead in the mighty waters. Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?

You stretched out your right hand. The earth swallowed them. You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed.

You have guided them by your strength to your holy abode. The peoples have heard. They tremble. Pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia.

Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed. Trembling seizes the leaders of Moab. All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. Terror and dread fall upon them.

[ 3 : 28 ] Because of the greatness of your arm, they are still as a stone. Till your people, O Lord, pass by. Till the people pass by whom you have purchased.

You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain. The place, O Lord, which you have made for your abode. The sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established.

The Lord will reign forever and ever. For when the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his horsemen went into the sea, the Lord brought back the waters of the sea upon them.

But the people of Israel walked on dry ground in the midst of the sea. Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing.

And Miriam sang to them, saying to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously. The horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. This is God's holy and authoritative word.

[ 4 : 36 ] You may be seated. Many of us just celebrated Independence Day this past July 4th.

And if you went to see fireworks someplace, you most likely heard our national anthem, the Star Spangled Banner. And I don't know if you've ever looked up the origin of the song on Wikipedia or

not, but the lyrics for the song come from a poem entitled Defense of Fort McHenry. And written by lawyer and poet Francis Scott Key on September 14, 1814. It was in the middle of the War of 1812 between the United States and the United Kingdom. The war was a culmination of a long-standing feud between two countries.

As the U.S. colonial settlements were expanding to the northwest, the U.K. obviously was not happy about that, and they opposed the territorial expansion by arming some of the Native Americans. And they also meddled in U.S. international trade, and at times impressed American citizens into their service as British subjects.

And because of these rising tensions, it brought the sovereignty of the United States as a new nation into question. And that's why some American historians call the War of 1812 the Second War of Independence.

[ 5 : 55 ] And in August 1814, the British troops burned Washington, D.C. And in September, the Royal Navy had formed a blockade, and they were bombarding Fort McHenry in Baltimore all night long.

People, some people were watching and wondering whether the fort would survive the night, whether the U.S. would survive the war. And Francis Scott Key, who happened to be a witness on a boat, observing what was happening in the bombing, saw an oversized U.S. flag, the Star Spangled Banner, fluttering in the wind, waving, as the bomb was beginning at night.

And in the morning at dawn, he looked again in that direction, and he saw that the flag was still standing and gallantly streaming. And from that, he was inspired to pen the poem right in that moment.

That's what he wrote. He says, O say, When the smoke dissipated and the dust settled and the darkness faded as the sun peeked over the horizon, and Francis Scott Key glimpsed the stripes and stars of the U.S. flag still flying triumphantly over the fort, and he was awestruck.

And so he wrote this poem because just narrating and writing in prose such an event is not enough. It doesn't adequately capture the moment. He could only write about it in verse, in poetry, in song.

[ 7 : 50 ] How much more, then, if that were the case in that war, is it the case with the passage this morning, after God's great deliverance of his people at the Exodus, and at splitting the Red Sea, that people are to praise the Lord in song?

We have seen in Exodus 14, the recount of God delivering Israel. He split the Red Sea. He created a wall of water on either side so that the Israelites could walk through on dry ground.

And then he routed the Egyptians with the pillar of cloud and fire, and then he collapsed the wall of water upon the Egyptians and drowned them. And Israel really was at the edge of disaster, of national disaster.

Before them stood the untraversable Red Sea, and behind them pursued this unassailable Egyptian elite army.

And people were wondering whether this fledgling nation who had just won freedom recently would survive the onslaught. But it says, In the morning, the Lord God fought for them, and when the last man and woman and child and livestock of Israel had crossed the Red Sea on dry ground, they turn around and look, and they see the dead bodies of the Egyptians washing onto the shore.

[ 9 : 11 ] They had survived. They had actually won. They had been saved and delivered. And the Lord had triumphed. And so there, as they stood in awe, still free to worship the Lord and serve the Lord, the Lord, just tell them that it wasn't enough.

And so they erupt in poetry and song. It says in verse 1, Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the Lord, saying, I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously.

The horse and his rider He has thrown into the sea. This song can be divided up into two main parts. First is remembering our redemption. It has a retrospective perspective.

And then the second half is anticipating our coming. It looks into the future. And the main lesson of this song that it preserves for us is that the Lord is the warrior king who redeems us and leads us to His dwelling place.

So we're going to first look at how we should remember our redemption. With the redemption that the Red Sea fresh on their minds, the people of God sang in verses 1 to 3. The Lord is my strength and my song.

[ 10 : 35 ] This is my God, and I will praise Him. My Father's God, and I will exalt Him. The Lord is a man of war. The Lord is His name. The Lord is my strength and my song.

He has become my salvation. That's a refrain that you hear over and over again in the Old Testament. It's first heard here in the Exodus, but then it's taken up again later in Psalm 118.14 and in Isaiah 12.2 as well.

And it's such an intimate and beautiful way to praise God. The Lord is not only my strength, someone who sustains me and saves me and keeps me going, but He's also my song, the object of my love, the object of my adoration and affection, the one I delight in, the person I love to sing about.

So then we sing to the Lord, but the Lord is also our song. We sing to Him, but we also sing of Him. He's both our audience and the content of our song because that's what He deserves for all that He has.

And Moses says that the Lord is my Father's God. This is very meaningful for him because if you recall, Moses was exposed as an infant, an orphan picked up by the Egyptians from the Nile River and then raised in the Egyptian court.

[11:59] And God had said to him when he first called Moses in Exodus 3.6, I am the God of your Father, singular. And in doing that, God was connecting, reconnecting Moses to the history of God's people and saying, you are not an orphan, you are not a no-name nobody, but instead you are one of my people.

I am your God. I'm the God of your Father. And that's the same thing that God does for us. He has taken spiritual orphans and he has adopted us as his sons and daughters, as his own, and he says, I am your God.

The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses is the same God that we worship today also. But note that Moses does not merely call Yahweh my Father's God, but he also calls him my God. There's an intensely personal dimension to the profession of the song. Notice all the first person singular pronouns in verses one to three. I will sing to the Lord.

The Lord is my strength and my song and he's become my salvation. This is my God and I will praise him. My Father's God and I will exalt him. What is the significance of that?

[13:14] God is not an abstract idea or a philosophical principle or some spiritual force. No, God is a person whom we know and love and worship.

He is my God. He is not only the song of God's people, he is my song. He's not merely a savior of the world, he is my salvation.

There is an important aspect to worship that is communal that people often miss, but we also must not miss the personal individual aspect of worship. Do you know the Lord as your God?

Or do you know the Lord as your God? Or do you know the Lord as your God? When you hear of God and his love and his saving deeds, does your heart well up with love and joy and gratitude for him so that you can't help but burst into song?

Do you come to the church gathering to worship my God or the church's God or to worship your God? I hope every single one of you can say, the Lord is my strength, my song, my salvation, and my God.

[14:33] Having professed that the Lord is my God, in verse three, it begins to describe what the Lord is like and what he has done. It says, the Lord is a man of war. The Lord is his name.

The expression man of war is simply another way to say that the Lord is a warrior, which is exactly how some other translations have it. The CSB, the Christian Standard Bible, and the NIV, New International Version, translated that way.

And if talking about God as a warrior makes you feel uneasy or fidgety, then you are likely missing a critical aspect of the way you perceive and relate to God.

Yes, God is our loving Father. Yes, God is our good shepherd. And yes, there are other images in Scripture that emphasize God's tender care.

We need all of those images and metaphors as well. We don't want an imbalance and only talk about God as a warrior either. However, we must not forget that the Lord is a man of war. He is a warrior.

[15:41] In the peace and security and comfort of 21st century United States, it's easy for us to say, oh, let's dispense with this talk of God as a man of war. That sounds so militant, so masculine.

But for victims of injustice and oppression, like the Israelites who were enslaved in Egypt for 400 years, the fact that the Lord is a warrior is not a liability or a fearful thing.

It is a wonderful comfort. When evil enemies are getting their way and enslaving God's people and slaughtering them, we need not only the divine counselor, we need a divine warrior.

It's precisely because the Lord is a man of war that we can be peacemakers in this world. We Christians are never to repay evil for evil. We are never to avenge ourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, vengeance is mine.

I will repay, says the Lord. It's precisely because the Lord says He will see to justice. Precisely because the Lord has said, I will fight on behalf of the oppressed.

[16:52] Precisely because the Lord has said, I will return to judge the earth and the living and the dead that we can rest assured, trust in Him and promote peace in this world and even suffer unjustly in this world because we know He'll put it all to rights.

Verses fortified and describe how the Lord is a warrior. Pharaoh's chariots and his host He cast into the sea and His chosen officers were sunk in the Red Sea. The floods cover them and they went into the depths like a stone.

I love how, you know, Moses keeps rubbing in the fact that Pharaoh sent his elite forces, the chosen officers, not just everyday infantrymen.

He sent his navy seals out to get these Israelites running away from without weapons and yet the Lord defeated the strongest army of that ancient world.

And then in verses 6 to 12, the Israelites transitioned telling of God's mighty deed to addressing and praising God directly. And this section is structured in a fascinating way. Right in the middle of it in verse 9 we see the enemy's presumptuous boast.

[18:08] The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil. My desire shall have its fill of them. I will draw my sword. My hand shall destroy them. It's very repetitive.

A lot of I's, the first person singular pronouns, and the short kind of staccato sentences convey the enemy's overweening sense of pride and confidence and egotism.

His victory to him is a foregone conclusion. Oh, I will do these things. Yes. And he expects to make quick work of the Israelites. But then, that boastful statement in the middle is framed by verses 6 and 12 which both mention the right hand of God.

He says in verse 6, Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power. Your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy. And at the end of the section, verse 12 says, You stretched out your right hand and the earth swallowed them.

Now, this is in contrast with the enemy's hand which was mentioned in verse 9. The enemy said, My hand shall destroy them. But instead, it's the power of God's right hand that shatters him and humbles him.

[19:19] And so, on either side of verse 9, the enemy's boast, you see praises of declarations of God's glory and might.

And those statements kind of like squeeze that middle boast like a vice grip. You know, so it's a really wonderful way to write about this. Verse 7 speaks of the greatness of God's majesty.

Now, the Lord sends out his fury which consumes his enemies like stubble. You've seen stubble burn, right? It's instantly incinerated by fire. Poof.

Right? And verse 11 says, Likewise, that the Lord is majestic in holiness and that he stretched out his right hand so that the earth swallowed his enemies. And then verse 8 says that at the blast of the Lord's nostrils, the waters piled up, the floods stood up in a heap, the deeps congealed.

And verse 10, it matches that and it says, the Lord blew with his wind, the sea covered them, they sank like lead in the mighty waters. So the boastful enemy sinks into the sea like lead, like stone that sinks instantly to the bottom of the ocean.

[20:32] And that's how large the gap is between the power of the Lord and the power of the enemy, between Egypt and the Lord. The mighty winds that piled up the waters and split the Red Sea is amazingly described as due to the blast of the Lord's nostrils.

Just imagine that. I can't blow my nose that loud, but imagine just blowing my nose. And that's how God defeated the Egyptians.

He just blew his nose. It's an amazing statement of God's power. And this deliverance becomes a paradigm, a pattern that all subsequent deliverances of God follow.

And so in Psalm 18, where David is writing about how God delivered him from his enemies and from King Saul in particular, he says this in verse 15, then the channels of the sea were seen and the foundations of the world were laid bare at your rebuke.

Oh Lord, at the blast of the breath of your nostrils. David's deliverance didn't have anything to do with the sea. It didn't have anything to do with the splitting of the Red Sea.

[ 21 : 48 ] It didn't have anything to do with the blast of the Lord's nostrils. And yet, David appropriates the language of the Exodus and uses it to describe his own deliverance in his life.

Because the Exodus is the pattern that subsequent deliverances follow. And so it is not inappropriate then as David did for us to apply this salvation to ourselves as well.

And I think it's actually intended by the New Testament writers to be applied that way because we see the way the Gospel of Matthew makes the connection between the Exodus and the life of Jesus. Just like Pharaoh who ordered all male Hebrew children be killed, King Herod at the time of Jesus' birth seeks to kill all male Hebrew children in Bethlehem because he wants to kill Jesus, the Messiah.

Just like Israel which had to sojourn in Egypt for a time, Jesus sojourns in Egypt for a little while to escape Saul's murderous search. And just as Israel had to go through the Red Sea which is described in 1 Corinthians 10 as a baptism into Moses, so in Matthew 3, 13-17, Jesus goes through the waters at baptism.

And just as Israel right after going through the Red Sea goes into the wilderness, Jesus right after his baptism goes straight into the wilderness to be tempted. Israel wanders the wilderness and is tempted for 40 years Jesus wanders in the wilderness and is tempted for 40 days.

[ 23 : 16 ] But unlike the Israelites who fail every single one of their tests in the wilderness and grumble against God as we'll see in the immediately following passage next week and have refused to believe in him and disobey him, Jesus passes every single test.

And so this deliverance is ultimately foreshadowing and is fulfilled by Jesus' deliverance of redemption of us.

In the same way that it's later in verse 13, it speaks of God's people here in the Exodus as the redeemed. And it's the Lord Jesus who redeemed us. Ephesians 1-7 says that in Christ, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses.

Jesus is the ultimate divine warrior who has conquered sin and death. Just as God purchased Israel from their slavery with the blood of the Passover lamb, Jesus purchases us from our slavery to sin with his own blood on the cross.

And so this is ultimately, it's fitting therefore to apply it to ourselves. And in the same way then, we had an enemy that we could not put away in our own strength. Egyptians that we could not cast into the sea.

[ 24 : 33 ] And likewise, our sin, the debt of it, the weight of it, the burden of it, the shame of it, was too much for us to bear. We could not shake it off. And yet, it's Jesus who through his victory casts all of it into the sea.

And when we remember this great redemption, we can't help but sing out like verse 11, who is like you, O Lord. Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods?

This is not to say that there are other gods besides Yahweh. He is without a peer. But there are many false gods that the nations throughout the world worship, but none of them is like the Lord. Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? Moses and the Israelites in the song do not supply an answer to that question because no answer is needed. It's a rhetorical question and the answer is obvious. There is no one, no one like our God, no one like the Lord who saves with his mighty hand and an outstretched arm.

[ 25 : 42 ] There is no one like our God who is merciful and gracious and compassionate and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. There is no one like our God who gave his only son, Jesus, to redeem us from our sins.

And after remembering our redemption in verses 1 to 12, we turn to anticipating our homecoming in verses 13 to 18. Again and again throughout the book of Exodus, whenever God reiterates his promise to bring Israel out of Egypt, he also promises to bring them into the promised land, canon. And that's what the second half of the song speaks of, how God would lead them into the promised land and ultimately to the mountain of God, God's dwelling place. But interestingly, even things, even though this hasn't happened yet, God has not yet led them into the promised land, verse 13 speaks of it like it's already happened.

He says, you have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed. you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode.

We know from verse 17 that this hasn't happened yet. God's going to lead them into the promised land. But verse 13 is using what Hebrew grammarians call the prophetic perfect.

[ 27 : 05 ] Past tense is used to describe something that will happen in the future, that is prophesied of in the future, to convey the definiteness, the certainty of its fulfillment.

Because the Lord has decreed it, it's as good as done. You can count on it. It's as if you have already entered the promised land.

And so he says in verses 14 to 16, the peoples have heard, they tremble. Pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia. Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed?

The trembling seizes the leaders of Moab. All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. Terror and dread fall upon them because of the greatness of your arm.

They are still as a stone till your people, O Lord, pass by, till the people pass by whom you have purchased. Again, it's using the prophetic perfect.

[ 28 : 03 ] News travel fast, but not that fast. But it's as it's done. All the nations that lie between Israel and the promised land, they have heard of the greatness of the Lord's deliverance, his right hand, his strong arm.

And their courage will melt away. They will writhe in pain and they will fall, the terror and dread will fall upon them. They'll be paralyzed like stone. It still is stone, just like the Egyptians were at the Red Sea.

And we see the fulfillment of this prophecy in Joshua 2.9 where Rahab, the resident of Jericho, says this to the Israelite spies. I know that the Lord has given you the land and that the fear of you has fallen upon us and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you.

Exactly as this prophecy is said. Passing through these nations, the Lord will bring Israel into the promised land and verses 17-18 tell us why God is doing that.

It says, you will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain. The place, O Lord, which you have made for your abode. The sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established.

[ 29 : 20 ] The Lord will reign forever and ever. This is the wonderful thing about our God. God is not someone who saves sinful, dirty, wicked people and then keeps them in isolation and quarantine somewhere far away while he dwells on high on a lofty mountain, safe from our defilement.

The Lord saves us and he sanctifies us and he cleanses us and his design in saving us and this has been his design from the very beginning of creation is to have fellowship with us, to dwell with us, to make us make a home with us in his family so that he can reign over us in his gracious lordship, kingship.

And this bringing of Israel into the land of Canaan is also a pattern that points to our ultimate deliverance into our heavenly kingdom. Hebrews 11, 10 to 16 tell us that the patriarchs live by faith in the land of Canaan, looking forward to the city that has foundations whose designer and builder is God desiring a better country that is a heavenly one.

That's what the Israelites being led into the promised land points to. All of God's saints, all of us being led into his heavenly kingdom and ultimately to the new heavens and the new earth.

We Christians are still sojourners on earth. We are pilgrims in a foreign land but we are journeying toward our homeland, our father's land, his house, our heavenly city.

[ 31 : 09 ] Many of you have experienced what it's like to travel to a foreign country and to feel like an outsider. If you're traveling for like a few days for fun, you know, I mean, it doesn't really bother you but if you're there and you're trying to fit in and you're trying to live there, it could be very alienating and isolating when no one speaks the language you speak, no one dresses the way you dress, no one eats the stuff you eat and you don't know how to get anywhere and you're lost all the time.

That's, in some way, that's the life of pilgrims, the life of Christians here on earth because our purposes and priorities are set by the Lord and because of that, it's at odds with the purposes and priorities of the world, the sinful world.

Satan, the prince of this world still has power over the people who are living in sin and he opposes us. He fights against us.

His desire is to do what the enemy says in verse 9, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, my desire shall have its fill of them, I will draw my sword and my hand shall destroy them.

He's seeking to destroy us but the Lord has defeated our enemy. He has overthrown the prince of the world through his death and resurrection. The Lord has redeemed us and he will lead us home.

[ 32 : 40 ] And that homecoming is gonna be glorious. Instantly, we will be fully known, fully loved. we will know this is what we've been waiting for.

And it is for that reason we gather together for worship, week in and week out and we sing our hearts out to the Lord, remembering our redemption and anticipating our homecoming. at the end of this passage in verses 19 to 21, the lyrical reprise of the song of the redeemed and the Lord's deliverance of Israel is again recounted in prose in verse 19 and then in song in verse 20 to 21, it says, then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing and Miriam sang to them, sing to the Lord for he has triumphed gloriously.

The horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. So you could tell this is not just a one-time rendition of the song. They sang it once and now they're done and let's start marching. No, they're celebrating again and again after the entire congregation of Israel has sung.

Here comes the choir and the dance troupe and they repeat the song again and it's not uncommon in the Old Testament for the woman to welcome and celebrate the men who are returning victorious from war with tambourines and dances.

[ 34 : 15 ] We see that in Judges 11:34 when Jephthah returns home from defeating the Ammonites and we see it in 1 Samuel 18-17 when King Saul and David return from defeating the Philistines.

It says the woman came out of all the cities of Israel singing and dancing to meet King Saul with tambourines, with songs of joy and with musical instruments. The same thing is happening here with one notable difference.

The women are not praising or welcoming the men. They're praising the Lord, the warrior king because the men didn't do any fighting but the Lord fought our battle for us.

Did you notice that in the entirety of this song that not even Moses is mentioned? Moses' name is not mentioned once in this entire song but again and again I will sing to the Lord.

The Lord is my strength and my song. The Lord is a man of war. The Lord is his name. Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power.

[ 35 : 23 ] Your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy who is like you, O Lord, among the gods. The Lord will reign forever and ever.

This song is an unabashed, unbridled, irrepressible overflow of enthusiasm for Yahweh, the Lord alone.

It's all about him and all glory is to him and that's going to be what it's like at the end of our days, brothers and sisters. brothers. No one's going to be talking about Sean.

No one's going to be talking about you. No one's going to be talking about John Piper. No one's going to be talking about any of these people but we will sing about the Lord.

Can't wait. And it says, we have a picture of that actually in Revelation 15, two to four. after the wrath and judgment of God, God's people, it says, harps of God in their hands, they sing the song of Moses.

[ 36 : 39 ] Isn't that amazing? This song's going to be sung but not exactly as it is because then what follows is this. They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb saying, great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord, God the Almighty.

Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations, who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name for you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you for your righteous acts have been revealed.

The song of Moses, it's a reference to this song in Exodus 15. That song of Moses is fulfilled by the song of the Lamb and we're going to sing that song for eternity.

And until that day, in this present day, we sing, remembering God's redemption, anticipating our homecoming. And that's why Miriam's response in verse 21.

In verse 1, it says, I will sing to the Lord. Verse 21, it's changed to an imperative. Sing to the Lord. It's an instruction to future generations. Sing this song again and again.

[ 37 : 56 ] Sing to the Lord of how he has delivered you. Remember that. And the people of God have not stopped singing since then. And I will talk about that briefly as I close.

As Christians, we're so familiar with the experience of gathering together and singing songs that we forget what an odd thing it is that we do. I remember four years ago that a non-Christian neighbor that visited our worship service a few times, she was eating with us at our home and then she asked me, why do you guys sing on Sundays?

And I was kind of taken aback by the question because I'd taken our time of singing for granted, but the experience was so foreign and surreal to her that she kept commenting on how beautiful and special it is that Christians gather together to sing together among other things.

That's when I realized what a unique experience our musical worship time is. People don't normally do that kind of thing. Yeah, you might go to Fenway Park and sing Take Me Out to the Ball Game, but people who go to Fenway Park are not going over there to sing.

They go over there to watch a baseball game, so a lot of people actually don't sing. Similarly, you know, some people go to concerts and they sing along, but people buy concert tickets to hear the band, not some tone-deaf stranger blaring out the songs behind them with jumbled-up lyrics.

[ 39 : 29 ] In certain moments, they might invite you along, but most of the time, the song is probably going to be in a key that's too high for you to sing.

They're going to rap at a speed that you probably can't follow, and they're definitely not going to project the lyrics for you on the screen because those songs are written not to be sung by you, but to be performed by the artist.

But when we gather, we sing songs that were written for us to sing along to in keys that we can reach, and the band's volume is not overwhelming intentionally because the intention is for all of us to sing together to God and to one another.

The band does not perform. They lead us in song. It really is a peculiar thing that we do together on Sundays, but why do we do it?

Because we can't help but sing of how great God is and how wondrous it is what he has done for us. I did a quick research on Google for songs entitled How Can I Keep From Singing or I Can't Help But Sing, any song kind of along those lines.

[ 40 : 43 ] I'm aware of only four songs in the English language with titles like that or similar to that. How Can I Keep From Singing? And every single one of them is a Christian worship song because it is Christians who can't keep from singing.

And one of my favorites is this one by Robert Lowry from the 1800s. It says, What though my joys and comforts die, the Lord my Savior liveth. What though the darkness gather round, songs in the night he giveth.

No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that refuge clinging. Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing?

Here's why the people of God have been singing from the very beginning. Here's why we have never stopped singing. Because we cannot keep from singing when we think of how glorious and gracious our God is.

Let's pray together. Oh God, it is true as we sing sometimes when we think about the Lord, we can't help but shout hallelujah.

[ 42 : 11 ] Praise the Lord. Lord, when we think about you, Father, all we have is love.

When we think about you, all we have is gratefulness. When we think about you, all we have is worship, all reverence. and it is the greatest, the deepest desire of our hearts to see every person in the world worship you because you are worthy of it.

Fill our hearts with the songs of the redeemed this morning. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.