

What is Soaking Worship Music, How to Soak, and the Fundamental Challenge Facing Christians in Today's Over-Busy World

The New Psalmists

Many have faced challenges and heavy demands in their lives. King David poured out his heart and cried out to God in the Psalms; and was comforted and strengthened in the presence of the Lord.

David was a man after God's heart (Acts 13:22). To have a heart after God's heart is to go after the Lord, to grow to have a heart more like His by obeying and serving Him.

We are reminded that the Psalms were sung originally with musical accompaniment. We can imagine what amazing power to heal and transport God's faithful experienced listening to the songs, singing them...

Going back earlier in David's life, it is written in 1 Samuel 16:23 (NASB) "David would take the harp and play it with his hand; and Saul would be refreshed and be well, and the evil spirit would depart from him." The anointed music played by David, the future psalmist, was healing and powerfully ministered to the spirit.

Today, there is a new generation of anointed psalmists, birthing music out of their own heart cries and responses to God, music that is fresh and God-breathed. This anointed music has divine power to take us into God's presence, where He ministers to us as only He can.

In 2 Kings 13:15 Elisha says, "But now bring me a minstrel (musician)." And it came about, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the LORD came upon him." Even Elisha, the prophet of God, used anointed music to help him enter into the Lord's presence and receive His Word.

God has given us music as a powerful way to open our hearts to Him, to transport us emotionally and spiritually. There is divine power in anointed music to move us in the Spirit. There is something about the human voice lifted in inspired song that has the power to lift us up and move us in profound ways.

Songs received from God carry God to others. As with King David, the new psalmists share the intimate passion of their relationships with God in their songs, so that others may also enter into His presence, and in that intimacy cultivate their own heart after God's heart.

An anointed psalmist receives music in the secret place at God's feet. She knows the Lord intimately, and seeks to live continually in His presence. She can convey her feelings and connection in the songs that she receives, songs that capture and express the experience of fully sharing her heart in covenant love with the Lord.

We can tell when a singer is walking the walk versus only singing the part, can't we? We can if we stop to listen with our hearts.

That is why much of the contemporary Christian music of today, although impressive and well produced, doesn't resonate in our hearts. It sounds great, tickles our ears, stirs us up and gets us going, but much of the music lacks the divine power, the anointing, to take us into the presence of God and ignite our

spirit in love and worship. Unfortunately, a lot of it has become music of the world, not the simple, divinely inspired music of heaven.

Songs written out of encounters with God move us in ways we can't even explain, because the supernatural power somehow embodied in them re-awakens the heart after God within each of us whenever we hear them.

It is deep calling to deep. It is more than passion. It is intimate communion where tears flow freely, because our heart is yielded and we are touched by the Spirit of God.

Soaking Worship Time Apart with God

'Soaking worship' or 'soaking prayer' as it is sometimes called, is focused time communing with God, facilitated by the new genre of Christian music generally referred to as 'soaking music'; music written, played and sung by the new psalmists, characterized by relaxing, peaceful, gentle tones and harmonies.

We know from experience that a wonderful way to relax is soaking in a warm bath while listening to quiet, soothing music in an atmosphere of soft candles and beautiful aromas. It creates a peaceful, serene interlude.

Physical immersion in the water and the calming atmosphere separate us from the demands of the day, enabling us to let go of tension and stress. It is a soothing, quiet time apart where we can relax, become centered, regain our inner harmony and emerge refreshed.

Soaking worship takes that simple analogy to a higher spiritual experience. It is a time apart with the Lord to become immersed in His presence, to soak in His love, to feel His living water flowing through us and all around us, returning us to peace and well-being.

Soaking worship music has the power to move us emotionally and spiritually in ways that usher us into the presence of the Lord. The music helps us quiet our minds and relax our bodies, taking us out of our heads where we are consumed with everyday challenges, and back into our hearts where we can more easily receive and feel God's love and the joy of life.

In Mathew 18:3-4 Jesus says, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Children have that innocence of showing their feelings and sharing their love. There is no guile in them. As adults, we have learned to protect ourselves and to 'be strong', a result of experiencing the pain and disappointments of life. There is a tendency to harden our hearts, to shut down our feelings and protect the 'self'.

Soaking music inspired by Holy Spirit softens our hearts and takes us into the protective covering and loving embrace of the Lord. His love further softens our hearts so that we can open to Him completely, becoming more like the loving and devoted children of God that we truly are.

Soaking music is more than a mood setter or heart softener, though. It is a vehicle that takes us on a spiritual journey. There is a subtle process of change as we become aware that the Lord is somehow working on us from within as we listen, soaking in His presence.

We begin to feel Him tangibly present in our lives again. We can feel the connection. We feel our faith becoming stronger. We begin to trust again. Our minds find peace. We experience forgiveness, healing, restoration, activation and breakthrough.

Becoming internalized, the music plays back in our minds at different times during the day to encourage and support us, like little prayers...

As we think of the Lord more often, share more, and smile back at Jesus in loving fellowship, we unconsciously grow more like Him even as we reflect Him. We are gradually transformed physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually into His likeness.

Those who have contact with us are brought nearer to Him as His presence is reflected in our lives. His influence flows through us, changing the atmosphere in subtle yet powerful ways, touching peoples' lives in expanding circles of love and positive influence in a ripple effect.

The Lord affirms us and confirms us in our walk with Him. He gives us what we need to fulfill His plan and purposes for us. We just can't do it on our own. We simply can't do it without Him. But there are no limits to what we can do with Him. For the Lord, nothing is too difficult, nothing is impossible.

How To Soak

Soaking time is about clearing our minds and just being with the Lord. Set the atmosphere with the music playing, and get comfortable. Become quiet. It is difficult to hear the still, quiet voice of God if we are chattering incessantly in our minds.

"Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10) is about heart-consciousness of His presence. He renews us. It is not so much hearing Him as just being in His presence. His strengthening and curative powers are beyond what we know. Seek a silence of spirit-understanding with Him. Meet Him in communion.

Open your heart and rest in the Lord's love. It won't be long before you're not so easily distracted, and can gently bring your wandering mind back to being fully present before the Lord.

At first, it may take some discipline to set aside time for God. The practical beauty of soaking worship music, though, is that it can quickly transport us into God's presence any time, in the car on the way to work, or while walking the dog. We have only to look for opportunities to play the music, open our hearts to the Lord, and commune with Him.

Soaking time, for the most part, is not about working on things or developing solutions. We don't have to do anything or make anything happen. We just need to be present, with our heart focused on the Lord and our mind cleared of distractions so that we can talk with Him, listen to Him, and simply be with Him.

It is enough to experience peace and relaxation. Not every session has to bring revelation or breakthrough. Many things may be experienced during a soaking session.

Be patient, and steadfast in giving yourself time apart with God. Ask for His guidance. Through practice, you will find what works best for you.

Let's Go Deeper -- The Fundamental Challenge Facing Christians in Today's Over-Busy World

As Christians, we understand that God wants a relationship with us. That's why He made us.

We know that God loves us, beyond our ability to fully comprehend how much He loves us, and that love is relational.

Clearly, God is about relationship, even in relation to Himself in the persons of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit!

We know that spending time with God, in His Word, in prayer, and in quiet time together, is fundamental to us growing in Him and living healthy, productive lives in accordance with His plan and purposes for us, which brings us happiness, and pleases Him.

But who's got time for that?!!!

Our lives are way too busy and overcommitted. Technology has made things easier in a lot of ways, but it's a double edged sword that also makes us slaves to our cell phones and laptops.

We're learning the hard way that there's a difference between urgent and important. An awful lot of urgent stuff isn't important in the grand scheme of things, against the backdrop of eternity.

So what's the result of all this busyness? How's that working for us?

It's not working!!! Can you say "stress"?!! It's not a pretty picture. We are losing the peace that surpasses all understanding...

Where's our heart for God? Our hearts are everywhere and nowhere. To get through it all, we tend to shut down emotionally to some degree, and escape into diversions. That may feel better temporarily, but we know that it does not satisfy, refresh or fulfill us in the long term.

Over time, we can feel more and more isolated and vulnerable. Despite our good intentions, God gets crowded out of our lives and we just don't feel the passionate connection we used to. There's a distancing that sets in when we're busy all the time, and it begins to feel like separation. Maybe we're still talking with God, but it starts feeling a little one-sided, disconnected, not as fulfilling...

Our Need for Relationship

God made man in His image. To live in fulfillment, we must reflect Him, and that requires maintaining a relationship with Him.

Until we consistently maintain our connection with God, we will always be reaching for something, searching for something to ease the dull ache, the longing of our hearts missing His Life flowing through us (the result of our choices, not His doing).

There is a hole, a void in our souls that only God can fill, in union and communion. Relationship is based on union. The basic concept underlying life is union. Physical life is the union of soul with body, spiritual life the union of soul with God, and eternal life the eternal union of soul with God.

Union with God is the one great necessity!! Everything else follows naturally from that union. It need not involve a lot of effort on our part, but can flow from simply being conscious of His presence.

Communion brings our union to life with the open and intimate exchange of thoughts and emotions, spending time together with God, participating, sharing, and keeping ourselves open to the connection.

We can't have a passionate life of love with our husband or wife if we work all the time, don't talk, and don't spend time together. Why would it be substantially different for our relationship with the Bridegroom?

In John 15:13-16 Jesus says, "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you."

We know that Jesus is our friend. What kind of friend are we to Him?

Jesus in His earthly walk was a man of love, and God -- so wonderfully human, so completely divine. Think of the crowds of people who thronged Him when He was on earth, all eager for something. As He supplied their many wants and needs, think what it meant to Him to find in the crowd one or two who followed Him just to be in His presence, just to be near Him, not for what He did or gave, but in their love for Him.

The longing of our human heart to be loved for ourselves comes from the Heart of God.

We need Jesus. The Lord provides for our needs, but how often do we think of His need -- His need for love and companionship, our hearts drawing near to Him in love just to be with Him?

In Mark 12:30 Jesus says, "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the great and foremost commandment."

Would our husband or wife believe us if we told them we love them, then rarely spent time with them, and talked with them mainly when we wanted something? Going into God's presence and spending time with Him is one of the most important, and oftentimes, most neglected aspects of our lives.

Our Need for Time in the Presence of God

We can lose sight of the fact that real healing and strengthening of body, mind and spirit comes from within, from the close loving contact of our Spirit with God's Spirit.

“He gives strength to the weary, And to him who lacks might He increases power.” (Isaiah 40:29) “Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary.” (Isaiah 40:31)

The Lord rewards us with His presence when we seek Him. He makes Himself available to us. In Revelation 3:20 Jesus says, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.”

We are nourished and regenerated by His love and joy. His power is activated and expressed in our lives through communing with Him.

In Mathew 11:28 Jesus says, “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”

If we become mired in ‘self medication’ and get stuck in the substitutes that abound for trying to fill that empty void in us that only God can fill, we succumb to various forms of bondage that displace God in us.

The Lord is always with us, at the center of our being, but we may not feel His presence or hear His voice so easily in the hyperactive clamor of our stressful lives, consumed and distracted as we are by the many other things we serve, consciously or unconsciously. We spend less and less time entering into the Lord’s presence where we can be filled with His Love, His Peace, His Joy, His Wisdom.

And we may be seeking Him outside of ourselves, rather than going within...

In Ephesians 5:18-20 Paul says, “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father...”

It’s a matter of the heart. Our hearts need daily communion with the Lord, the wellspring of living water that flowing through us makes us alive and well in the Spirit. Christian life, life with Jesus, is after all a love story about the Bride of Christ in union with Christ Jesus in covenant love.

We have heard it said to a beloved partner, “Where you are is home.” So it is in relationship with Jesus, and heaven is His home...

Issues of the heart keep us from flowing in the power of the Lord. To feel complete, secure and fulfilled no matter what our circumstances, we need a heart after God’s heart, continually open to the Lord in love, intimacy and gratitude, the Lord abiding in us and us in Him.

Our Strength or the Lord’s?

Admittedly, it’s hard for us to stop doing, doing, doing and remember that we are human beings, not human doings. Apart from the Lord we are nothing and can do nothing.

While deeds are clearly important, it is less what we do and more who we are that matters most to God. The power of the Lord most effectively works in us and through us when we are a suitable vessel.

To accomplish much, we must be much. Doing then becomes an unconscious expression of our being, and flows naturally from the core of our being, from the source of ultimate inspiration, God abiding in us as we abide in Him.

God's work can be hindered by a mindset of work, work, work. A tired, nervous body is then driving the spirit. We want the Spirit to be the master, naturally using the body as need arises, resting in the Lord.

In John 15:4-5 Jesus says, "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."

We feel that we have to work and put forth effort to be productive, but we've all seen a lot of work and effort come to naught when we depend on ourselves instead of the Lord.

We are reminded that in the Old Testament winnable battles ended in sound defeats when the leaders relied on their own strength instead of seeking the Lord. Many, many battles that seemed hopeless, against impossible odds were won when the leaders consistently turned to and relied upon the Lord.

No evil force can hinder the Lord's Power – only we, His beloved children have power to do that!

Think about all of God's mighty forces arrayed to help us – and poor, little ole us getting in the way of their release and dispatch. Resting in the Lord sometimes means getting out of His way...

True success in life arises from Love, Joy and Peace in the Lord -- the miracle-producing attributes of Jesus Christ. When we make our inner lives all that they can be, then great work can be accomplished outwardly. It is not in our rushing around and striving in the material world, but in our engagement on the battle-field of the Soul that the meaningful, the miraculous, is accomplished, is won.

In a changing world, God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. We do not have to fear change when we dwell in the Lord, when we rest in Him. God's love and trust dissolve the worry and fretting of our lives. In knowing the Lord, our faith grows, and that faith is all we need for His power to work in us and through us.

It comes down to this -- Is the Lord our supply or not? We cannot be anxious if we know that He is our supply.

Our Choice

God doesn't force Himself on us. He has given His children free will. He gives us the opportunity to invite Him into our lives of our own choosing. He waits patiently for us to choose Him, to choose Him first...

In Mathew 11:29-30 Jesus says, "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Are we ready to live a life apart with the Lord, in the world but not of it, going forth from the secret place of communion with Him to rescue and save?

Jesus knocks at the door. Will we Invite Him in? Will we ask Him in to dine with us, to abide with us? Will we make time for Him? Will we humble ourselves, cease our striving, and depend on the Lord, resting in Him?

We want to, but we are 'priority-challenged'. It is difficult to extricate ourselves and set ourselves apart with the Lord. We feel guilty about taking some quiet soaking time when so much needs doing. It is difficult to maintain calm in the midst of hurried days, and easy to become agitated.

When we become agitated, though, we lose sight of our most important priorities. We don't have as much to offer to others, and the enemy can find a way in much more easily.

It is written in Luke 10:39-42 "She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His word. But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, 'Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me.' But the Lord answered and said to her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.'" How easy it is to get swept up into the hustle and bustle of life and with good intentions, push aside 'the good part' Jesus so longs to impart to us...

Time with the Lord is not indulgent or wasting time that could be put to more productive use. The fact is that time with the Lord is the ultimate source of productivity. One insight, one connection, one breakthrough provided by the Lord through faithful reliance on Him can save weeks of effort. It can mean the difference between victory and defeat.

Remember when Jesus touched the hand of Simon's mother-in-law, suffering from a high fever, and she immediately got up, completely healed, and began attending to them? (Mathew 8:15) Just a moment's contact, and all fever left her. His touch is and always will be a potent healer. Feel that touch. Go into His presence, and the fever of work and worry abates.

The Lord rewards devotion, one of the ways He teaches us and reinforces what works in accordance with His plan and purposes for us. We generally fail without Him. So much more always comes from turning to the Lord, loving Him, and seeking His will for us. We know this...

When we spend time with the Lord, stepping back from our own efforts and resting in His presence and love, we find rejuvenation, peace, and healing. We access His supernatural power; to persevere, to overcome and to prevail in the earthly challenges and tests set before us.

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