
Judges: R-rated Redemption

“Singing Salvation”

Judges 5

Thoughts to Shape and Spark Discussion:

“Hymns are not only powerful, they sneak into our soul. As William Cowper sings, “Sometimes a light surprises the Christian while he sings; it is the Lord who rises with healing in His wings.” William Cowper was well aware of the power of hymns, as he wrote in a letter to a friend, “It is a noble thing to be a poet. It makes all the world so lively. I might have preached more sermons than even Tillotson did and better, and the world would have been still fast asleep. But a volume of verse is a fiddle that puts the universe in motion.” Hymns have this ability to sneak in undetected and surprise us! And we desperately need the truth of the mercy of God to break through, to reform us, to restore our sanity, to open our eyes to help us see Jesus as beautiful and believable—in short, to shape us as a people of God.” - Kevin Twit

“Words and music did for me what solid, even rigorous religious argument could never do, they introduced me to God, not belief in God, more an experiential sense of God.” - Bono

“Worship is the strategy by which we interrupt our preoccupation with ourselves and attend to the presence of God.” - Eugene Peterson

Themes and Questions to Guide Reflection and Response:

- What from the Scripture passage or the sermon made an impression upon you? Are there lingering questions to be answered or rabbit trails to be followed for you?
- Judges 4 and 5 tell the recount the same event from two different perspectives: one, a historical narrative and the other, a lyrical and poetical song.
 - How do the two relate? Why is each necessary?
 - Which resonates with you more? Which pushes you more?
- What do you make of William Cowper’s assertion that “a volume of verse is a fiddle that puts the world into motion” as opposed to preached sermons?
 - How has music and song helped you grow as a Christian?
 - Why is singing salvation such an essential practice of the Christian life?
 - Kevin Twit and Bono give a good plug for singing salvation. How do their words intersect with you?
- Eugene Peterson suggests that “worship is the strategy by which we interrupt our preoccupation with ourselves and attend to the presence of God.”
 - How does singing salvation in worship give us a context to do battle with our hearts and the idols of our hearts?
 - What selfish preoccupation do you want God to interrupt?
 - How have you experienced worship as a time of doing battle with idols?
- James K.A. Smith writes, “Worship is the arena in which God recalibrates our hearts, reforms our desires, and re-habituates our loves. Worship isn’t just something we do; it is where God does something *to us*. Worship is the heart of discipleship because it is the gymnasium in which God retrains our hearts.”
 - Why is it so crucial that we experience worship as a gymnasium in which God is training and recalibrating our hearts?
 - How does worship allow you to savor, linger over, and enjoy salvation?
- Singing salvation in worship is formational. It is fortifying us for the next battle, the next temptation, the next experience of life in a fallen world by reminding us of who God is and what he loves.
 - What does God love that you are tempted to hate? And what does God hate that you are tempted to love?
 - What does God want you to let go of that you are tempted to grip on to, and what does God want you to grip on to that you are tempted to let go of?