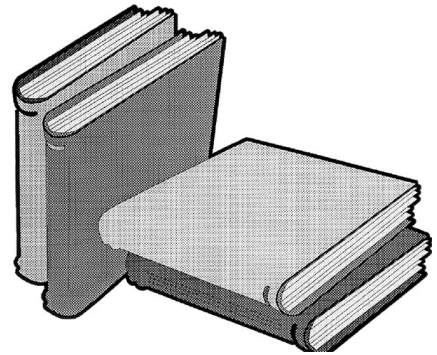


The Rock and Pit

*Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn,
and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.*

Isa 51:1

Selections from the Christian's heritage in print,
collected by Dean Brown



Issue 1038

External Worship. **Singing the Praises of God.**

Next to prayer may be considered singing the praises of God as a religious duty.

What is to be sung is **psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs**, Eph. 5:19, Col 3:16. Hymns and spiritual songs, composed by good men, uninspired, may be made use of, provided care is taken that they be agreeable to the sacred writings.

The matter in which these may be sung is next considered. **It should be:**

Socially [i.e., not alone] **and with united voices**. So Christ and his disciples sung after the Lord's Supper, so did Paul and Silas in prison.

With the heart along with the mouth, as heartily as well as vocally, which is making *melody in the heart*, Eph. 5:19, performing the duty in sincerity and truth.

With grace in the heart. Singing must be done with various graces. **With faith in God**, without which it is impossible to please him.

With strong love and affection for him, and also with reverence and godly fear.

With the Spirit, whose assistance is necessary in this as in prayer, and with our spirits, sincerely, fervently, and affectionately, and in a spiritual manner, suitable for the nature of God who is a Spirit.

With the understanding also, and in such a manner and in such language **as may be understood by others**, for one end of the duty is to teach and admonish others.

With in view the glory of God, for we are to sing unto the Lord.

John Gill, *A Complete Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 1770,
from the 1819 edition, p. 957-964, with slight changes in wording.