“Is anyone happy? Let him sings songs of praise.” - James 5:13

Sing, too:

In certainty and in confusion

In victory and in defeat

In wholeness and in brokenness

In great joy and in profound sorrow

In anticipation of God’s work and in reflection upon it

MUSIC IN WORSHIP: FROM OUR HEARTS TO HIS

Ephesians 5:19-20

WHEN ARE WE TO SING?

The greater context reminds us that "the days are evil." (Eph. 5:16) And so, sing??

But isn't that counter-intuitive?

In battle (Chap. 6), how smart is it to give away your position? Not very.

Nature teaches us here. In the glory of Springtime when the forest is alive with the songs of all Creation, what happens when a predator enters the scene?

Silence. Stillness.

Yet we are commanded to sing when the days are evil, even while our "enemy, the Devil, prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." (1 Pet. 5:8)

But isn't that dangerous? Nope. It's brilliant!

See 6:14

Singing rehearses truth, instilling it in our hearts/minds and in those of our comrades. It speaks over the deception of the "father of lies" and fixes our eyes instead on the Victor.

WHERE DOES THIS SINGING TAKE PLACE?

Corporately: In the course of normal interaction with other believers

Privately: "make music in your heart." Some of us need to make room, btw. The cares of life take up a ton of space (See Matt. 6:25-34)

Before God's Throne: "make music…to the Lord"

WHAT TYPES OF MUSIC?

Psalms - Consider the book, which keeps the focus on God, not people. The psalms became a vehicle to tell the story of God's deliverance or to commemorate mercies received

Hymns - "A song to honor God. A magnificent proclamation of how great someone or something is."

Augustine said:

"It must be sung. It must be praise. It must be to God."

Spiritual songs "To sing. To confess. To praise." A harmonius song.

Don't get stuck in a style/genre.

Different styles are useful for different days and seasons of life.

SO WHAT MAKES A GREAT WORSHIP SONG?

TRUTH. SOUND DOCTRINE.

Is the music I/we sing teaching the truth OF God and truth ABOUT God, according to the Scriptures?

Music is a powerful tool to teach both sound doctrine and horrible theology. Be discerning.

And one cool fact about music that perhaps helps us understand the importance of its value in teaching truth:

The areas of the brain that store and process music are some of the last affected by diseases like Alzheimer's. Truth tucked away in musical form in hidden away for safe-keeping, where it may continue to strengthen the heart 'til the end of life's journey

"I have hidden Your word in my heart…" - Ps. 119:11