



Let's Sing It!

By Jeff Bedwell on June 22, 2022

TODAY'S READING: Romans 16

Charles Colson, former White House counsel to President Richard Nixon and founder of Prison Fellowship ministry, tells a remarkable story of a doxology in an unusual place and for an unusual reason. It seems that a young man named Fred, a convicted thief and heroin addict, had been led to Christ in prison by the family of one of his robbery victims. They visited him and showed the love of Christ so consistently to him that he was won to the Lord. The impact of his conversion on his conscience was so dramatic that, at a parole hearing, Fred confessed to other robberies for which he had not been caught or convicted. As a Christian, he felt that it was his obligation to be completely honest about his sins.

Because Fred's original conviction was overturned based on a legality he was released from prison. He joined a church, got involved in an ex-prisoner fellowship group, and continued to grow in Christ. At his retrial for the crimes he was originally accused of, he again confessed, this time to the trial judge, to the additional wrongs he had committed. He told the judge he was willing to accept whatever punishment was appropriate. An awkward silence ensued while the judge considered what to do with Fred and his previously known and newly confessed crimes. When the judge announced the sentence, it reflected a wisdom that gave Fred back his life: ten years for each robbery—suspended (no jail time)—and restitution to his victims for their losses with 50 percent interest.

For a moment no one in the courtroom moved. Then Fred's pastor jumped to his feet and shouted, "Let's sing it!" and proceeded to lead the entire packed courtroom in the singing of the doxology. The *Seattle Times* newspaper captured the scene: "Everyone stood up, little old ladies in spring dresses, ex-cons, girls in jeans, men in business suits, a biker with his motorcycle jacket and helmet, prison guards—and they began to sing: 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow....'" Officials later said that it was the first time a Seattle Superior Court case had ever closed with the Doxology.

Paul ends this most powerful letter with a doxology of praise to God (vv. 25-27). He praises God who is able to strengthen and establish us by His grace. God does this through the proclamation of the gospel – the mystery hidden but now made known – so that all nations might believe and obey God.

May we likewise be focused on bringing glory to God through proclaiming the gospel. May we continually be in awe and praise God for His work of grace that continues in our lives. How about bursting out in song today?

PRAYER: Today, pick a favorite hymn or chorus and sing it to the Lord today as you worship Him and celebrate His goodness and grace in your life.

TOMORROW'S READING: Acts 20

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