



## What's in a Song

Each Sunday for forty-six years (give or take a few weeks here and there) an integral part of my worship experience in church was listening to and singing songs filled with words of praise, honor, and glory to God. With the recent interruption to our regular pattern of worship and now the gradual return to gathering again, I have been thinking about the songs that we sing.

A little while back I was sharing a meal with a friend and one of our conversations about life and faith led us into a short discussion about the purpose and power found in the songs that we sing in church. With our generational differences and personal biases in check we agreed that many of the songs we sing (old & new) speak powerfully the words of scripture and its message of salvation.

Consider for a moment the purpose of the worship songs we sing together. In many of the older hymns that we sing the words were written to communicate the incredible truths of scripture. As we sing, we need to ask ourselves questions like, to whom is our worship directed? What is our hearts desire as we sing? What scriptural truths are being revealed in our worship through song? Do we sing because it makes us “feel good” or brings back nostalgic memories? Are we truly and humbly giving praise, honor and glory to our God who loves us through our worship?

In 1910 John Wilbur Chapman wrote the mighty words of the hymn titled “One Day” (Living He Loved Me). Over the years these words have been used by contemporary Christian artists like Casting Crowns to continue spreading the incredible timeless truth of what Jesus did for us.

“Living he loved me, dying he saved me,  
buried he carried my sins far away.  
Rising he justified, freed me for heaven.  
One day he's coming back, glorious day.”

The beautiful words of this hymn tell the incredible story of why God sent his perfect son into a world plagued by the power of evil and the grip it continues to hold in the lives of his people. Read the words of this verse again. He loved us so much, he died to save us. He took the sins of the world upon his shoulders so that our lives could be set right (justified) before God. Let's not forget about that glorious day when as promised Christ comes back and we can all live into the incredible promise of eternal life with him.

Songs like this present us with the transformational message of the gospel found in the pages of scripture. The next time you are singing along to your favorite worship song ask yourself, what is in this song? When you find the answer to your question, I challenge you to share that song with someone. Don't keep it to yourself as the message it holds is for everyone to hear.