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## **Anthems**

### **1 What He's Done**

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Today, we start a brand-new series called *Anthems*. We're going to be studying the purpose of worship, we're going to be looking specifically at worship music. We picked five anthems in our church, and we are going to be looking at those lyrics.

I heard this story years ago from Francis Chan when he was pastoring in California. He said he was leaving church one day and a lady stopped him and simply said "I didn't like worship today." We've heard that from time to time – "It's too loud!" "Didn't like the songs." Or whatever it was. And I thought Francis Chan had the best response to this statement. He simply said, "That's okay, we weren't worshipping you." Let's go home. You notice when I really have something strong to say, I quote another preacher? Have you figured that little thing out? It's like I really want to say something and so a lot of times, I just give attribution to people who never said anything that I just said. But Francis Chan really actually did say that.

You've seen this on the cover of magazines years ago. Twenty to thirty years ago, it was called worship wars. Churches were really dealing with a lot of frustration between members transitioning from traditional to contemporary music. It made some people really angry. And some of you may be in here right not.

When I started in ministry, I was a worship pastor in South Georgia. One of the reasons I was hired was to transition the church from traditional music to contemporary music and we did that slowly and we worked through that. I met several members, and the sole purpose of the meeting was tense, but we did it. One of my favorite songs during that time was by Mark Lowry. Who's heard of Mark Lowry. He was a comedian, and he was with the Gaithers. He sang this song that kind of dealt with the worship wars. In the first service, I tried to say the lines and I couldn't say them, so I had to sing them. This is what we are actually talking about in this series – the power of music. Sometimes to say words is difficult but when they are in your heart in a song, they flow out of you.

This was the song that Mark wrote to deal with worship wars. "You may be Presbyterian, rather proper and severe. You may be Pentecostal, swinging from a chandelier. Episcopal, congregational, or maybe Nazarene, methodist, Assembly of God or somewhere in between, We can count the variations on our fingers and our toes. We got Catholic and Lutherans and lot's more, heaven knows. We have stacks of facts and doctrines in which we could disagree, but if your heart belongs to Jesus, then you belong to me." And everybody said... Amen.

I blew those lyrics in the first service. It was bad; I actually said, “You may be charismatic, rather proper and severe...” I thought *that doesn't sound right*. But then when I started singing it, it just flowed out of me. That's what we're talking about specifically in this series. Music stirs out emotions. It stirs us; something goes on. You know when you hear that song come on the radio and it's your song. It's the song you listened to the night you met. You know it! Some of you are thinking about it right now and it takes you there. And it's why I love country music. I'm not going to do a ton of country music in this series and it's hard for me, but I want to reach other people who haven't figured it out yet. But that song from Rascal flats – *Take Me There...* He's like, “I just want to go back to your home town and learn all about you.” Then I think about Branson. We have patriotic music in this town. That stirs us. I don't know if you remember after 9/11, the emotions we were dealing with, and emotional all over the map. That's what I want us to understand in this series too. We're not just talking about one or two emotions. Music takes us just everywhere with our emotions.

And off of the same event (9/11), Alan Jackson wrote a song called *Where were you when the world stopped turning*. That was a contemplative song. And off of the same event, Toby Keith wrote a song called, *Courtesy of the Red, White, and Blue*. Originally called, *Angry American*. I don't know if many of you remember the controversy, but Peter Jennings wouldn't allow that song to be on the air. I remember Peter Jennings saying, “Toby sounds mad in the song.” Do you know why? He was! He was very angry, and he wrote a song. This is what music does – it stirs our emotions. We are going to talk about that in this series.

I want to start, and make sure when we're clear. When we've used the term *worship*, worship is more than music. Worship is music and we are going to see today and we're going to talk specifically about singing. Worship is music but it's more than music. It's more than a day of the week. It's more than the music we sing on Sunday inside a building. Worship is obedience, worship is prayer, worship is tuning our mind and, as you just heard Tim Keller say in the bumper video, it's filling our hearts and minds with the beauty of who God is, and allowing all else to be crowded out with that worship. And not giving our worship to anyone or anything else. So, yes, worship is more than music, but we want you to know worship is also music and it's something we do on Sunday when we gather together in this space, outside, over at the chapel, online. So, we are talking about music.

Let's start with a couple of things to intro this series before we look at what He's done, the anthem we picked for today. We want to talk about **why** singing matters and what we sing matters. In Psalm 27: 6 we read, ***I will sing and make music to the Lord***. He is the one we worship, and the only one we give worship to.

In Psalm 5: 11, we read, ***We sing for joy***. That's what I loved in Pastor Keller's opener for us. When we worship, we should be filled with gratitude and joy. Now, before we go any further, some of you are going, “Ted, I can't sing. I'm terrible at singing.” I've moved around this congregation for years and I will agree with you. Some of you can't sing, and that's okay. Psalm 100: 1 says, ***Make a joyful noise***. And we want your noise. We want your song. We want your singing.

My kids tell me my voice is too loud. They say, “Dad, when you sing...” I let it out.

I just remember when I went to Dallas Seminary where Chuck Swindoll was the president. I could still hear him from the front row, not mic'd. You heard him all the way to the back singing "A mighty fortress is..." I just kind of took those moments and decided I'm going to belt it out wherever I am. Woodland Hills. Applebee's, Airplanes... Then you know the singing gets even better when you put headphones on. But we want this, for each one of us, we want it to well up inside of us that we can't hold it in anymore.

In keeping with the *why*, Psalm 149: 1 says, ***Praise the Lord, sing to the Lord, a new song.*** Some of you prefer the old songs. The anthems we are looking at in this series are going to be newer songs, and we will talk about that. ***His praise in the assembly...*** I hear this a lot from people. They say, "Well I don't need to be with others to worship." That is true, but you need to be with others to worship. That is true as well. We gather corporately to worship the Lord together and to declare to the Lord our love for him and our desire to sing his praises. So, yes, ***in the assembly of his faithful people.***

Psalm 9: 11 – ***Sing the praises of the LORD, enthroned in Zion; proclaim among the nations what he has done.*** So, you understand when we gather to worship, we are proclaiming the Lord among the nations, we're proclaiming the Lord to those who don't know the Lord. I hear this all the time – "Worship should only be for believers." That is true, believers worship, but when we worship, lost people listen. And we are proclaiming the Lord among those who don't know the Lord.

I shared some quotes last week from Lee Strobel. I've been reading a lot of Lee's stuff lately. His testimony... If you get time to Google Lee Strobel's testimony, he was a journalist for the Chicago Tribune who was an atheist. When his wife became a believer, she started inviting him to church and he was researching it all and trying to figure it out. He just didn't turn to God. He didn't believe there was a God. He started going to church with her... I love this part of the testimony when he said, "One morning I was in the shower getting ready, and I'm singing the music from that church. I'm singing the songs and words." He goes, "I had a moment where I'm like, *stop it, Lee. You don't believe a word of this.* That's the power of music. That's what our worship songs do. Some of you maybe don't know the Lord. You're here today and you've been coming to Woodland Hills for a while. These songs are getting in you and you're now having to wrestle with the question – *Do I believe these words that are in me right now?*

Psalm 59: 16 - ***But I will sing of your strength, in the morning I will sing of your love...*** So, when we sing the why, we sing for who God is and what he has done. ***...for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble.***

Psalm 71: 23 says ***My lips will shout for joy when I sing praise to you— I whom you have delivered.*** So, when we praise, part of the why is we're thanking the Lord for delivering us. We are going to see today, in What He's Done, thanking the Lord for our salvation.

As I read this Psalm this week, it took me to the Book of Exodus. I just want to take you to the end of the exodus to Chapter 14 to give you that picture really quick and then let us look at what they did once they were delivered. The Israelites were delivered from the hands of the Egyptians.

Exodus 14: 29- 31 - **29 But the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. 30 That day the Lord saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians...** Watch this because this is going to end up in the song that they sing. **...and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore.** This is important. So, the Israelites have a visual in their mind of the Egyptians lying dead on the shore.

**31 And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the Lord displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant.** What do they do immediately after this? They have a worship service. And in Chapter 15, we get the worship song that they sing to the Lord. It says in Exodus 15, right after they see the dead bodies on the shore. Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the Lord. **“I will sing to the Lord, for he is highly exalted. Both horse and driver he has hurled into the sea.”** I wonder what Peter Jennings would say about that. Those are strong lyrics. **2 “The Lord is my strength and my defense]; he has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him, my father’s God, and I will exalt him.** So, part of our worship, yes, we praise God for who He is, we praise him for his righteousness, for his character, but we also praise him for what he has done.

Psalm 92: 4 - **For you make me glad by your deeds, Lord; I sing for joy at what your hands have done.** Sing to him, sing praise to him. Tell of all his wonderful acts.

Here’s where we start with the **Why**. We worship at Woodland Hills with songs that praise God for who he is and what he has done. Does anybody remember this song from years gone by? **“Lord, I praise you because of who you are, not for all the mighty things that you have done.”** Let’s remind all of us, you can praise God for who he is and for what he has done. That’s what we do and that’s what this series is going to walk us through as we look at these anthems. So, that’s the **why**.

Let’s talk about the **what**. What we sing matters. The first thing we’re going to look at is music helps us memorize and meditate on words. I’m 49 years old and for 45, 46 years of my life, I’ve had this song memorized. Since I was very young. I heard it for the first time... I can’t get this stupid song out of my head, and it will be in my head until the Lord returns and probably... This is my fear. It’s going to be with me throughout all eternity. The song goes like this. 588,23 hundred... Empire. Does that drive you crazy? That’s the power of music though. You’ve got a phone number memorized for the rest of your life because of music. Oh, I hate it. Think about all the jingles that you’ve heard. That’s the power of music.

That’s why in this series, we want to look at words. Words are important. I can sing for you. I’m not going to do it today. Some of you are like *you can’t*. I think I still have it memorized from high school. And if you give me the first word, I’d have the whole song and I’d rattle it off. Billy Joel – *We didn’t start the fire*. That’s what music does.

My son and I... This first time I gave him this clip.. Some of you have heard this in my marriage talks, but when he was about five years old, I showed him the German Coast Guard Clip. It’s a great clip on YouTube. A guy is being trained day one on the German coast guard and a Mayday comes in. *Mayday, Mayday; we are sinking, we are sinking.*” Hello (in a German Accent) this is the German Coast Guard.

“Mayday, mayday, we are sinking we are sinking.” The German Officer says, “What are you sinking about?” The guy falls over in laughter. My son thinks this is the funniest thing he’s ever seen. A few weeks later, we are driving down the road and I start singing a hymn from my childhood. Why? Because these hymns are in me. I can’t get them out. I start singing a hymn from my childhood that goes like this: “I was sinking deep sin, far from the peaceful shore...” From the back seat, I heard, “And what were you sinking about?”

Mom and dad, we all need to be reminded your children are listening, watching, remembering and repeating.

After the last service, Jared Kolter, our student and young adults pastor said, “Probably one of my favorite things about the anthems is when my five-year-old is singing along, word for word, with me, songs that we sing in worship to the Lord.

Let this be a series of family discipleship as well.

As we talk about words... this is very important in music. We must examine the Lyrics. This one point here is the heart behind this whole series. We must examine the lyrics, as we enjoy the melody, and think about what we are saying in these songs.

A few years ago, I was traveling with Doug Goodwin. We got to O’Hare Airport, and we had a flight delay, and it’s like 10:00 or 11:00 at night. We were told it was going to be a couple of hours. I looked over and I saw John Ashcroft sitting at the gate, headed back to Springfield with us. If you don’t know who John Ashcroft was, he was our Governor at one time, and he was the Attorney General under George W. He was sitting there, late at night at O’Hare looking like he was heading into a meeting. He had a suit and tie on. I’m in a hoodie, shorts, didn’t really feel appropriate to go say hi but I wanted to meet him. I’ve heard some great stories of John Ashcroft.

I went over and introduced myself. I had no idea what I was stepping into, but I was about to get a one-hour lecture... I’m not exaggerating. It wasn’t a 45-minute lecture. It wasn’t a 30-minute lecture. It was one straight hour. Anybody want to know what he lectured me and Doug on? It was worship. I’ll never forget it. He is passionate about worship, passionate about the music we sing in church. He said, “Ted, do you spend time each and every week thinking about the words you are putting the mouths of people?” I said, “Yes.” I think I tagged it with “sir.” He said, “I don’t think churches do it enough anymore. I think we get these new songs that just get us moving, and we’re not thinking about the words. I’ve been in some churches, and the lyrics aren’t good.”

I was just reminded in that moment... I remember coming back and telling our team, “We have got to think through the lyrics.”

We are discerning with the lyrics. We want to be discerning with the lyrics. You probably didn’t know it, but even last week the song that played during baptism, we changed one line in that song because we know a lot of people come to Woodland Hills Family Church and a lot of people want to be baptized. They think that the baptism is their salvation. We have to say, “No, this is your first step of obedience.

You're walking into the water and professing outwardly the inward decision. It's an outward declaration and profession of faith of what Christ has already done in your heart. There was one lyric that didn't back up. We just said, "If we put that in the mouths of people, it's going to reinforce what so many people already believe. We want to teach the gospel clearly.

So, Colossians 3, kind of our verse we're taking through this series. "Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly." We picked anthems... You'll see it in the anthems. It's the ministry of Christ to the death of Christ to the resurrection and then the church being born. I love when the lyrics of the song... I even love when a chorus goes through all of that. But we are going to look at the message of Christ in all of these songs. And how does it dwell in us richly. As you teach and as you admonish one another with all wisdom, through psalms... Speaking here specifically of Old Testament psalms, which, yes, are what the Israelites sang, but it's also the songbook of the early church. So, sing those songs. Hymns, the newer songs of the church... Your translation may read spiritual songs, but songs from the spirit singing to God, as we've already done this morning with gratitude in your heart.

John Piper, speaking of this passage, put it this way. *"A congregation learns its theology and takes it down into the crevasse of their souls by the songs that they sing, not just the preaching they hear."*

That's why we must examine the lyrics.

Augustine is even stronger with this. He says it another way. *"Yet, when it happens that I am more moved by the singing than by what is sung, I confess myself to have sinned wickedly. And then I would rather not have heard the singing."*

We must think through what we sing. Today, we are looking at What He's done. We're going to look at this great song and this great anthem, and we worship more about the what and the why. We worship with songs that praise God for our salvation. That is the theme behind What He's Done, as we will sing and worship together at the conclusion of this message and at the conclusion of our gathering today.

Psalms 96: 1-2 says, ***Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. 2 Sing to the Lord, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.***

Give testimony of what the Lord has done. Some of you will take these anthems as your testimony.

Let's jump into the lyrics of this anthem: What He's Done. It's probably the simplest of the five songs, the five anthems that we'll look at over the next five weeks but it declares a powerful message.

See on the hill of Calvary  
My Savior bled for me  
My Jesus set me free  
And look at the wounds that give me life  
Grace flowing from His side  
No greater sacrifice!

If you have your bibles, turn to Philippians 2. What I'm going to encourage you to do as you listen to worship at home and at work and as you drive, is to be thinking about not just the song and the lyrics, but the passages that correlate with it. In Philippians 2: 8, we get this: ***And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself (Jesus) by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!***

And when you read Philippians 2, starting in Verse 5, it says ***5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:*** What's that mindset? And have this mindset in all your relationships. ***6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped to his own advantage; 7 rather, he emptied himself, becoming obedient to death on the cross for your sins and for my sins.***

We sing this weekly at our church. We sing about Christ and all that he has done for us and for our salvation at Woodland Hills Family Church. Something very important to understand about this text. No one forced Jesus to the cross. He was not coerced. He did this willingly, not begrudgingly. And that's when we get to the chorus as we'll sing. I hope you'll sing it out loud. I hope you make a joyful noise today like you've never made a joyful noise.

*What He's done  
What He's done  
All the glory and the honor to the Son*

These are lyrics that have just been in me. By the way, this is at my funeral. I keep a funeral list of what I want upon my death, and this song is there.

*My sins are forgiven  
My future is Heaven  
I praise God for what He's done* And all God's people said... Amen. Let this be our song.

*Sing for the freedom He has won  
Even death is dead and done  
His life has overcome  
Speak, say the Name above all names  
Over every broken place  
He is risen from the grave*

Going on in Philippians 2: 9-11 ***Therefore God exalted him...*** After he was obedient to death on the cross, God exalted him ***...to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name...*** If you are not a believer in Christ Jesus, listen to this next verse.

***10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father forever.***

Today, if you've never placed faith in Jesus... Maybe some of you did last week. But today would be the first time you sing words about salvation not in just general theme, but you sing this song and you worship because of your salvation, because of what he's done for you that you can put the words in your mouth – my sins are forgiven, my future is heaven, I praise God for what he's done.

*What He's done*

*What He's done*

*All the glory and the honor to the Son*

*My sins are forgiven*

*My future is Heaven*

*I praise God for what He's done*

Let me give you some homework before we worship together. Everybody loves homework. I want to get really practical with this.

**1. Choose a worship song.** I want you to pick a song and maybe this week you just pick *What He's Done*, and you download that onto your phone. I'm actually going to give you the playlist for the next five weeks. Create the playlist on your phone. Again, you don't have to pick from one of these five. You can pick anything. This homework is going to work for any song that you pick. Today, we are looking at *What He's Done*. We are going to worship with this as we close.

2. Next week we're talking about *Battle Belongs*.

3. King of Kings. – Travis is going to give us that one.

4. Thank you Jesus for the Blood on Lord's Supper Sunday here in May, We are going to go through that anthem as we worship, learn, and take the Lord's supper together.

5. *I speak Jesus*. This one is on Mother's day. You know the lyrics of that song if you've been here for a while. I speak Jesus for my family... Just mentioning this song and quoting a few of the lyrics in staff meeting brought all the moms to tears, so I don't know what you're going to do on Mother's Day with a full service dedicated to it. But make that a play list. Choose one this week.

Or some of you over achievers... How many of you were always looking for extra credit because you wanted 100 on everything?

**2. Once you download the song** and you're playing it, hit **view full lyrics** as you listen. So, now you're engaging more than one sense. You're going to read as you listen. You're going to contemplate the words, it's going to help you memorize and meditate, but view full lyrics and think through what you're singing. Think through the words that are coming out of your mouth.

**3. Identify the main theme.** Today, the main theme is salvation. And I want to give you this... Travis Brawner got on me after the last service because I said, "here's what I want you to do. Google the name of the song or a lyric or a line in the song and then just type "Bible Verses" after that and hit enter."



Travis goes, "You just gave them our preaching preparation method." It is part of it. You may go, "I don't really know what this lyric is saying." You're going to find that in a lot of the music we sing. They're just direct scripture quotations. The name above all names, so you can type in "name above all names" and it will take you to the text. Now, you're bringing Bible study into it.

**4. Sing it out loud with all you've got.** Make your joyful noise. I do this. It drives my kids crazy. I sing in the car, I sing at home, I sing in the shower. I sing in restaurants like while I'm waiting. The kids will have to come to me and go, "Dad, you that's not in your head; you're doing it out loud." Give it all you've got. Worship unto the Lord.

As the band comes and they get ready for worship... I told you when I got out of college, I was a worship leader. Actually, I was hired to be a student pastor in South Georgia, Southside Baptist Church. I was hired to be a student pastor and when I got there, the pastor said, "Why don't you do worship as well." He was a 26-year-old senior pastor and I was 22 year old student pastor and worship pastor.

How many of you remember growing up in church that when the band got up from their seats and they came up and got ready, you knew the sermon was almost over and you celebrated. I'll never forget... I'm 22 years old and I don't have any training in music. I don't know how to play any instrument. All I remember was the music minister at our church growing up. He wasn't trained either. All I remember was bid, dramatic movements with his arms. When his hands went up high, everyone sang higher. He would just swing his arms.

I'm up there doing the same thing. I don't know what I'm doing. When the song had a big crescendo like *Blessed Assurance*, it was both hands. We'd hold it out.

I was only doing that for a couple of weeks when this sweet, senior lady came up to me and said, "I'd like to buy the church an organ." I'm thinking I'm crushing it as a worship leader because I had someone wanting to donate an organ. What I didn't know is that she came with the organ. She didn't know how to play the organ. We learned that on the first Sunday we had that organ.

I'm up there giving it all I've got for *Victory in Jesus*. Here's exactly how the moment went, and this is how she played the organ. "*Victory in Jesus...*" two loud booms on the key board. I can still see the whole congregation jumping.

This was a church... I don't know if you remember when the pastors sat in thrones on the stage. We had two big thrones that went a foot and half above our head. Austin was on his throne... this was the mildest mannered, kind, loving pastor you've ever met in your life. He never confronted anybody. And he's sitting there, and I can still see him as we're doing, "*My savior forever.*" Two louds boom on the keyboard. I see everybody getting mad. Austin is over there jumping on every boom. He walks over and says in my ear, "Do something about that." I, in the middle of leading worship, I fly my way over to the organ and I just go, "Stop. Don't move anymore." That woman left our church that day and took her organ with her.

I'm not speaking down to any of us and how we were raised, but I do remember more than one occasion when a music leader would come running in, three minutes before the service, grab a hymnal and just pick three random songs. He didn't even know what was going to be preached that night. Three random songs. I share all that to say I'm grateful for a team that put time into this all week. They thought through what we were singing. I'm going to invite you to stand with What's He's Done today.