

Song Story #8 – We Choose to Bow

I wrote this song before we started Heart of the City when I worked at the Church of the Open Door. But we recorded it on our first Heart of the City CD in 1999. I remember sitting through one of Pastor Dave Johnson's sermons around Easter time when he was talking about the scourging of Jesus before His crucifixion. Not unlike the movie, "The Passion of the Christ", he spoke in detail of the mocking and torture of Jesus. He quoted the scripture that described them pulling out his beard and covering Him with spit. He spoke of how they mocked Him and degraded Him and told Him, if really was a prophet, to prophesy as to who just hit him and they were raining blows upon Him. As I sat and listened to that I felt something rise up in me that wanted to say "No!" to all of that. I wanted to stand in the face of their mockery and abuse and declare Him to be who I know He really is! I wanted to honor Him and declare Him to be King of Kings and Lord of Lords and the most precious One that I know! I wanted to worship Him for being willing to endure such abuse for my sake and that sake of a rebellious world. I wanted to write a song of worship that many could sing that would contain strong, substantive declarations of truth and worship in the face of such lies. So later on, as a I pondered that, these words rolled out in a song..."Though a million voices choose to deny You, we choose to bow!.."

In that period of time, Shirley McClaine, the actress, had helped to popularize the New Age movement – which is a combination of Eastern Buddhism and Hinduism and American narcissism. She spoke of standing on a mountain in Peru and declaring "I am God!" Not many humans say that out loud, but lots of us live that way. So the first verse includes the lines, "Though they deny that we all are sinful. Though they proclaim God is in us all. Though we are told we don't need a Savior. Humbly now, at Your feet we fall." And the chorus of the song goes on to say, "We choose to bow! We choose to sing! We choose to crown You the King of Kings! We are not God! We say out loud, "Only to You do we choose to bow!"

I wrote this song over a couple of weeks and while I was writing I remember doing something that I knew was sinful. And as I went back to writing this song, my words mocked me. "Sure, you choose to bow! Right! What a hypocrite!". I felt really discouraged and thought that I'm just too flawed to write such a song. But then the Lord reminded me of why He endured that suffering in the first place – to make wicked people like me righteous and that even in failure, I acknowledge Him as I once again choose to bow to Him in acknowledgement of my sin and in repentance. And so then I included these words in that 2nd verse, "Though we may stumble and we may falter. Though we have wandered and gone astray. Mercy is given to all who call You. Mercy is given to all who say... We choose to bow..."

As I went on to ponder the implications of making these declarations, I felt a bit of a shudder inside. I realized that though I'm free to say these things now in

America, many believers in other countries and at other times have had to pay a massive price for such declarations and I may have to some day soon. So I wrote the third verse about the cost of discipleship.

Since writing this song, it has now been published in a beautiful choral arrangement by Alegis Music and put in several songbooks. Another great blessing that has come from this song, is to hear that it's been translated into a couple of languages and sung in other countries. I was deeply touched a few years ago when, at one of our events, someone who'd gone on a mission trip to the Ukraine, gave me a DVD of this song being sung in a little Ukranian congregation. They told me that the message of the song was strongly embraced by the Ukranian people after years of having atheistic communism forced upon them and that the music sounded to them like their own style of music. Here's a clip of this song being sung by this Ukranian congregation.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gOtqKgEUn-Y>

To see a slide show with the lyrics featuring the Heart of the City recording of this song, click on this Youtube link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6SZthAB8n5o>
If you'd like to order this CD, find out more about Heart of the City or read other song stories, go to our website at www.heartofthecity.org.

We Choose to Bow

by Dan Adler

1. Though a million voices choose to deny You
We choose to bow!
Though a thousand thoughts seek to rise above You
We cast them down!
Though they deny that we all are sinful
Though they proclaim God is in us all
Though we are told we don't need a Savior
Humbly now, at Your feet we fall

Chorus: We choose to bow, we choose to sing
We choose to crown You the King of kings
We are not God, we say out loud
Only to You do we choose to bow
Do we choose to bow

2. Though the pow'rs of darkness rage all around us
We choose to bow!
Though trials come and temptations surround us
We choose to bow!

Though we may stumble or we may falter
Though we have wandered and gone astray
Mercy is given to all who call You
Mercy is given to all who say

3. Though the cost is great to the call set before us
We choose to bow!

Though the world may hate us, our God is for us!
We choose to bow!

Though we may struggle or we may prosper
Though we have little or many things
You are our God and there is no other
Worthy now of the song we sing

LAST CHORUS: We choose to bow, we choose to sing
We choose to crown You the King of kings
We are not God, we say out loud
Only to You do we choose to bow
No other god! No other king! Only to You do we choose to sing!
Oh Holy God, we praise You now! Only to You do we choose to bow!
Do we choose to bow! Do we choose to bow!

Copyright 1995, Centergetic Music