Hymns, Music and Spirituality Margaret Cording Petty

SUMMARY

Can hymns and music relate to true spirituality? Why does their use create such division? A look at an informal survey of 'the burning question' leads us to seek afresh the biblical mandate of the unique gift that God has given to his Church. Our differences can be used *constructively*,

as theologians, church leaders and musicians learn from one another through a spiritual exercise, in the spirit of Ephesians 5:21 (ESV) '...submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.' As his body, made whole through his victorious sacrifice, our true spiritual service and its ultimate goal remain God's glory, Soli Deo Gloria.

RÉSUMÉ

Quelle relation les hymnes et la musique entretiennentils avec une spiritualité vraie ? Pourquoi sont-ils l'objet de tant de divisions ? Un survol informel de cette « question brûlante » nous conduit à rechercher à nouveau quel est, selon la Bible, le mandat concernant ce don unique fait par Dieu à son Église. Nos différences peuvent être

utilisées de manières constructives : les théologiens, les responsables d'Église et les musiciens ont à apprendre les uns des autres en s'adonnant à un exercice spirituel dans l'esprit d'Éphésiens 5.21 : « en se soumettant les uns aux autres dans la crainte de Christ ». Puisque nous sommes son corps, purifié par son sacrifice victorieux, le but ultime de tout service spirituel véritable demeure la gloire divine. Soli Deo Gloria !

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Können Lieder und Musik in Beziehung zu wahrer Spiritualität stehen? Warum erzeugt ihr Gebrauch so starke Spaltungen? Ein Blick auf eine inoffizielle Erhebung zu dieser "brennenden Frage" führt uns dazu, das biblische Mandat der einzigartigen Gabe zu suchen, die Gott seiner Kirche geschenkt hat. Unsere Unterschiede

können konstruktiv gebraucht werden, wenn Theologen, Kirchenführer und Musiker durch eine spirituelle Übung voneinander lernen, im Geiste von Epheser 5:12, "indem ihr euch gegenseitig aus Ehrfurcht vor Christus unterordnet". Als sein Leib, der durch sein siegreiches Opfer vollständig ist, bleibt Gottes Ehre, das Soli Deo Gloria, unser wahrer spiritueller Dienst und dessen letztendliches Ziel.

Introduction

When God became man, the angels sang Gloria in excelsis Deo! Their breath-taking worship filled the sky in perfect accord. So why didn't God simply delegate the music to angels? Why, among men of good will, does the God-given gift of music-making become so divisive, far from peaceful in the life of the Church? From a scriptural perspective, what are we to do about it?

Is music an end in itself; is it a 'vehicle'? Or is there a deeper reason that God mandates our musical expression? Are we all 'musical'? Just what is a 'new song'? Can Christ-like spirituality be attained in our midst, when the music debates and battles continue to flare throughout his Church, just as they have for two millennia? If so, how?

God has given humankind the capacity to make music. The Bible is replete with examples; more than 575 references, from both Old and New Testaments, describe music from all instances of daily life, and especially, worship.

The description of the astonishing week before Christ's death on the cross in the gospel accounts does not offer linear theological formulas. Instead, it gives detailed descriptions of the sensory aspects of Jesus' life: smell, touch, taste, sight, and yes, sound. Mary pours a pint of perfume on Jesus' feet and wipes them with her hair. In his triumphal entry, Jesus, riding on a donkey, is loudly acclaimed by the crowd, with waving of palm branches. In the upper room, Jesus washes his disciples' feet and shares a last supper with them. The last thing Jesus does with his disciples before going to the Mount of Olives is to sing a hymn. Body, soul and spirit, Jesus is our model of spirituality.

1. Discord in the Church today

Recently a query was sent to a number of musicians and theologians across Europe, asking them, 'From your perspective, what is the "burning question" concerning hymns, music and spirituality?' Their answers demonstrate the diversity of cultural expressions – and resultant problems – in the 21st century. Here is a sample of their questions:

 Should hymnody be top down, dictating theology, or should it be bottom up and flow from the hearts of the people? Do we allow people from generations past to dictate our spirituality?

 How to keep the rich musical and theological wealth found in the old hymns and chorals alive in modern worship, at the hands of a

video projector and screen?

 How much do we translate from English, German or French and how do we encourage new hymns to be written in national lan-

guages?

 Do we change the words in old hymns to reflect contemporary theological understanding? Do we remove gender references and references to traditional families to sympathise with those who are not from traditional families or know no 'men or brothers' whom they respect?

• Where are the hymn writers in the 21st cen-

tury? There are very few good ones.

- Is music 'communication' or 'personal expression'? Should the musician express his innermost feelings, or what he thinks that others should hear, or want to hear? Should church music be directed to an audience, or to God, or...?
- Cultural perspectives: how much do we want to see a global village in hymnody and how much do we need to maintain cultural identity?
- · Has the search for musical relevancy become

a god? Or is it true, as Dean Inge wrote, 'He who marries the spirit of the age soon becomes a widower'.²

How does our music connect the natural and supernatural parts of the Kingdom of God
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 Is there a place for professional musicians in the church? Should the congregation be made to participate or to listen?

 Should music appeal to mass consumption, the lowest common denominator, or rather to 'honest' creations that are perhaps considered as strange and weird?

 Should church music be MacDonald's fast food, Maxim's haute cuisine or Mother's

home-made fare?

• What do we do about the gods of consumer worship which say, 'God you're great, you're wonderful, powerful, mighty. I fall down before you and worship you... now give me, give me!'... If God never did one more thing for me in my life, because of what Jesus completed on that cross, I owe and I want to give him glory and praise for the rest of my life. Worship is about giving back... not getting. But gracious God that he is, he still gives us and gives and gives us in our own worship.

We would all agree with the last person. Child educators tell us that from ages 2 to 3, the child enters the 'me' stage. Everything revolves around the 'me' and 'what I can get'. Currently the gods of consumerism control much of global thinking and acting – I, me, my. Hymns are no exception, as a disproportionate number of contemporary church songs centre on the self, on me and my relationship with God.

Everett Ferguson's description of four common misunderstandings of worship summarises these many questions.³ They apply to church music, as well:

- 1. an external or mechanical interpretation of worship
- 2. an individualistic interpretation
- 3. an emotional uplift interpretation4. a performance interpretation
- D. A. Carroon adds trye more 4
- D. A. Carson adds two more:4
 - 5. the restriction of worship to experiences of cultus
 - 6. a comprehensive [individual] worship that leaves no place for corporate worship

From observation, we could add a seventh:

7. a *laissez-faire* interpretation, 'any old thing, any old way', in abuse of God's patience and grace

Carson indicates that the basic problem is one of authenticity in relationship to the Word of God and to heart attitudes, on the part of both leaders and participants. Too often, the response to these problems has been a 'quick fix' based on one's experience, seeking to treat the symptoms.⁵ To arrive at the core of spiritual understanding, we need to seek biblical answers. From prison, Paul writes,

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. (Colossians 3:16)

The verse is surrounded with calls to unity, peace, love and thanksgiving. How do we get there?

2. Definitions and guiding principles

What is art? C.S. Lewis contends that art should not come from and glorify human subjectivity but should be inspired by, and point to God, as revealed in his Word. Our God-given imaginations must lead us beyond ourselves to the very Creator

of our beings.6

Leanne Payne defines the truly imaginative experience as an 'intuition of the real', an acknowledgement of objective realities in their unseen dimension, their essence. This takes it away from 'self-expression'. At the heart of Christian spirituality is 'incarnational intimacy'. 8 We have the joy of communion with the true and living God. As we practice his presence in our lives, our artistic perception will reflect him. So, we return to the question, 'How does our music connect the natural and supernatural aspects of the Kingdom of God and animate our living in it?' Because of the incarnation (John 1:14; 1 John 1:1), our artistic expression should begin with knowing God, depending on his forgiveness for our sins as we forgive others, abiding in him, listening to him, carrying his cross, serving him, living in the freedom of his love which casts out fear and stimulates our imaginations.

What is good art? While acknowledging the complexity of the aesthetic question, Frank Gaebelein identifies four marks of truth in art:9

 Durability: God's truth doesn't wear out. It keeps on being true. It is why the Psalms, Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott and Handel's Messiah are all sung today in many places and many languages throughout the world.

• Unity of form and structure; coherence: It holds together, even in complexity. There is order, an embodiment. The literary coherence of the Bible is the most striking example.

• Integrity or authenticity: A wholeness of intention, of the overall truthfulness. Integrity rules out that which is created for mere effect, for sentimentality, for manipulation or profit. Much of the lucrative contemporary Christian Music Industry lacks authenticity. Our music-making must neither be 'publicity' for the Gospel nor seeking to influence or manipulate. 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord Almighty' (Zechariah 4:6).

 Inevitability: The quality of utter rightness or finality of expression. 'This is the way it should be.' Don't change a word or a note! God's creation is the ultimate model; Genesis 1 tells us that, looking at his creation, 'God

saw that it was good'.

Good art, then, will reflect the character of God and of his creation. Among his attributes,

• God is Holy. 'Who may ascend the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart.' (Psalm 24:3-4). We must worship him in the beauty [splendour] of his holiness, Psalm 29:2.

• 'God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.' (1 John 1:5-7)

• God is not a God of disorder but of peace. Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way, 1 Corinthians 14:33, 40.

 God is faithful: 'Sing to him a new song; play skilfully, and shout for joy, for the word of the LORD is right and true; he is faithful in all he

does.' (Psalm 33:3-4)

• God is love: 'I will praise you, O Lord my God, with all my heart; I will glorify your name forever. For great is your love toward me; you have delivered me from the depths of the grave.' (Psalm 86:13) And like the minstrel song of the prophet Isaiah, 'Let me sing now for my well-beloved a song of my beloved concerning his vineyard...' (Isaiah 5:1)

Questions to ask are: Are our song texts faithful in reflecting the nature of our Triune God, in

accordance with Scripture? In a finite scope, do both music and poetry attain a degree of durability, unity, integrity and inevitability?

Why music? Why is it the privileged artistic expression? In a devotional entitled 'At the heart of

all work', Eugene Peterson writes:

David's first job as king was making music, attempting to re-establish the divine order in Saul's disordered mind and emotions. Establishing order in the midst of chaos is basic to kingwork. Music is probably our most elemental experience of this essential work. Music, bringing rhythm and harmony and tunefulness into being, is at the heart of all work. Kingworkers, whatever their jobs, whistle while they work.¹¹

Music is the chosen expression for at least two reasons. First, the outstanding characteristic of music, its 'strength', is that it involves our entire being, both the visible and invisible parts, body, soul and spirit – our ears, vocal chords, tongue, lungs, muscles – but also our will, intuition, emotions and intellect. 'Bless the LORD, O my soul, and *all* that is within me, bless his holy name'. (Psalm 103:1)

To be spiritual is to be totally real, totally complete, in both the natural and the supernatural realm. When God became flesh, he did not become

less spiritual. As Ellis Potter writes,

We are to become more and more like Jesus. We are to become more and more spiritual, which means rational, creative, moral, working, thinking... The resurrected Christ roasted a fish breakfast for hungry disciples on the shores of Galilee.¹²

Our musical expression must demonstrate the completeness mentioned by Paul: 'I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind, with

understanding.' (1 Corinthians 14:15)

Secondly, music in community is the one expression that allows all of us to join together with our entire beings – bodies, souls and spirits – to render service to God, to honour him, to sing his Word and to respond to it. When our longing for self-fulfilment and our Babels are put aside, when we come together with clean hands and a pure heart, in humility, giving grace to each other, united in one accord to sing God's truth, and led by his Spirit, *then* he will show us his glory.

2 Chronicles 5 describes one of the most amazing events in all of Scripture. At the dedication of the temple, when the Ark was brought to the Most Holy Place, all the priests, who were practiced and prepared, had first sanctified (cleansed,

consecrated) themselves; secondly, they were arranged regardless of their divisions; and finally, with brass and percussion and other instruments, with one accord they gave praise and thanks to the Lord. They raised their voices in praise to Him and sang:

He is good;

his love endures forever.

Then the temple of the LORD was filled with a cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the temple of God. (2 Chronicles 5:13-14)

If we follow his plan, singing in community to God is active, practical, uniting, spiritual, fruitful

and glorious. But it is his party.

We tend to talk about the methods and styles of church music. Yet much of the confusion about the use of music in the life of the Church probably comes, not from lack of good will, but from misunderstanding the *functions* of its communication. Of great help is the model that David Pass sets forth in his book *Music and the Church*. It begins with the following premise:

The nature of *church music* is determined by the nature of the *church*, and the nature of the church is determined by its *mission*. The basis of its mission is the Trinity. The object of the Church's mission is the world. The purpose of the Church's mission is forgiveness. ¹³

Basing his model on Acts 2:42, Pass enumerates three 'address situations' in the Church.¹⁴ The early church 'devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer'. From this Pass derives three interdependent modes or 'address situations' in the church's mission which represent the directions in which the communication flows:

Koinonia ⇔ = mutual edification, fellow ship, affirmation.

Leitourgia î = the 'service of worship' or prayer and praise to God.

As this is translated to music for the Church, our proclamation, our mutual 'koinonia' fellowship and our worship need to communicate as follows:

A SHAREST WAR TELE	What is to be communicated	Relationship between participants
Kerygmatic music ↓	Proclaim the Word and the forgiveness of God. Focus: on the message.	Formal. One person or specialized group, prepared in advance, confront with a message. Most tolerance for stylistic diversity and innovation. Disposition of the will: <i>Boldness</i> .
Koinoniac music ⇔	Affirm that it is good to belong to the fellowship of those forgiven. Focus: on the needs of community. Support, comfort, edification, consolation.	Informal. Semi-specialized group. Songs can be learned between the groups. Disposition of the will: <i>Unity, togetherness</i> .
Leitourgic music ரி	Express our need for God and his forgiveness. Praise God for his presence and his forgiveness. Focus: on dialogue with God.	Formal. The congregation sings to God, who listens. Accessible songs, often well known. The community is most vulnerable. Resistance to change. Disposition of the will: Desolation, jubilation.

Regarding our proclaiming of Christ through music, we need to ask: Is the message truthful, complete, clear and well-presented? Are we preaching Christ, and Christ crucified (1 Corinthians 1:23)? Is it Christ's love that is heard and seen, or are our performances simply like clanging cymbals (1 Corinthians 13)? Europe is an incredible continent with people groups of all age, race and class, and they *all* respond to music; are we faithful to God and to his Word in musical proclamation?

As we serve one another in koinonia, are we really listening to each other? Are we singing the song of the other person, and with him, to comfort, edify and support? Or are we only interested in our own music?

As we collectively worship Christ, are we seeking God's pardon for our sins, seeking each others' pardon, coming together with clean hands and a humble spirit, and then, as cleansed and forgiven children of God, and with one accord, addressing our love and adoration to him? The worship belongs to him and his Spirit is our worship leader.

3. The use of hymns

The vast heritage of church music that we have received is like stones of remembrance. It represents where we have been and what God has done; it teaches us to keep our eyes on God and his Word; it reminds us that a great cloud of witnesses surrounds us. In addition, the passage of time often works as a filter, to offer us the best, leaving aside the mediocre. To forget this heritage of hymnody

would both impoverish us and underline our lack of humility.

Throughout church history, especially at critical turning points, ¹⁵ theologians and spiritual leaders have written hymns in defence of the faith, for teaching and encouragement of believers in their Christian walk, and as testimony to God's faithfulness in their lives. The list of contributors to church music is long and comes from both oriental and occidental traditions, in languages such as Syriac, Greek, Latin and many European languages. To name but a few of the best-known: ¹⁶

- Clement of Alexandria (c. A.D.200) Shepherd of Tender Youth
- John Chrysostom (c. 347-407) who in 398 organised evening hymn singing so that the faithful would not be influenced by loud Arian hymn processions
- Ambrose of Milan (c. 338-397), father of Latin hymnody, who fought against Arianism and for Trinitarian belief, and mentored Augustine; Martin Luther translated his hymn Veni redemptor gentium for the German Church as Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland.
- Augustine (354-430)
- Ephrem Syrus (died 373)
- Gregory Nazianzen (325-390)
- Clemens (348-413)
- Gregory the Great (589-604)
- Hrabanus Maurus (780-856)
- Pierre Abelard (1079-1142)
- Bernard of Cluny (Morlaix, 12th Century)

- Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), Salve caput cruentatum, 1153 (O Sacred Head, Now Wounded)
- Francis of Assisi (c.1182-1226)
- Martin Luther (1483-1546)
- Jean Calvin (1509-1564), who sponsored the French psalms by Clément Marot (1496-1544) and Théodore de Bèze (1519-1605), and its English psalter versions by Sternhold and Hopkins (1549, 1562)
- Isaac Watts, the father of English hymnody (1674-1748)
- Three German Pietists: Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676), Gerhard Tersteegen (1697-1769) and Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760)
- The Methodist Charles Wesley (1707-1788)
- Calvinistic Methodists such as Toplady (1740-1778) and William Williams (1717-1791)
- Caesar Malan of Geneva (1787-1864)
- John Mason Neale (1818-1866), who translated early Latin, Greek, Russian and Syrian hymns.¹⁷

Did women create hymns? Certainly, yet many of them remain unnamed and unknown. Women hymn writers came into their own in the nineteenth century: Mrs. Alexander, Catherine Winkworth (who brought nearly 400 German hymns into English), Anna Laetitia Waring, Charlotte Elliott, Frances Ridley Havergal and Fanny Crosby (8,000 hymns).

At a time in history when the musical expression of the Church had reached a complexity which distanced it from the ordinary worshipper, Luther wrote chorals, strong German texts to simple melodies, maintaining that

preaching also occurs specifically through music, particularly when music is combined with a sacred text. A musical composition could thus become a 'sermon in sound'. Not only could music 'move the listener to a receptive state for the spoken word' but also it could 'engender a calm and willing heart, making it receptive for God's Word and Truth... music could lend the associated text a greater measure of emphasis and potency.

He believed that, given a proper musical setting, 'the music will bring the text to life.'18

4. In defence of music

Still, looking at the many heated discussions about

hymns and church music, would it not be easier to simply dismiss music? Let us re-read two parallel texts:

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. (Colossians 3.16)

Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. (Ephesians 5:19-21)

It becomes apparent that one of the chief purposes for music in the Church is pedagogical, an experience for learning. Music has heuristic value. Through the musical experience, we can discover not only more about ourselves, but also about God and each other. Thus, among other things, music may well be a testing ground for the Church. Just as an instrumentalist rehearses scales, so we may, in the safety of Christian community, practice Christ's love toward each other in the use of musical expression. It is a sort of laboratory experience for the Church, by mutual submission. As we love one another, so shall we be known as Christ's disciples (John 13:35).

A contrapuntal relationship exists: musicians and church communicators are in continual need of biblical knowledge and sound doctrinal teaching; theologians will profit from an understanding of poetic and musical expression and the body/soul/spirit-driven motivations of musicians and communicators. Today's theologians need to come forth and write good hymn texts; skilled composers need to put them to singable music.

Imagine that we are all brought together and told that the final concert is coming soon (cf. Revelation 22:7). We are instructed to start practicing and to 'work out our faith with fear and trembling' (cf. Philippians 2:12). Scripture gives us rehearsal material, practical spiritual exercises from Old and New Testaments, which offer us a reciprocal pedagogy, 'for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose'. By God's Spirit and through this joint struggle for harmony, we come to know him more deeply.

5. A practical spiritual exercise

This exercise entails that the Ten Commandments

and their corollaries are applied to church music in four steps. Its greatest value will be in group interaction, not in the specific outcome. The steps are:

• Consider each commandment (Exodus 20 /

Deuteronomy 5)

 Application: From your perspective, how might this commandment apply to church music?

- What is a 'new covenant' corollary to this commandment?
- Application: How might this corollary apply to church music?

As an example, we take the commandment 'You shall not murder (kill)'. Two of the many applications might be: 'Does my choice of songs for this service kill the believers' desire to participate?' And 'Is the sound volume so loud that it physically damages hearing or shatters nerves?' The New Testament corollary could be John 10:10, 'I am come that they may have life, and have it to the full.' The application of this corollary is: 'Which songs will encourage believers to an abundant life in Christ Jesus?' Another corollary is Matthew 25:22, '...anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment.' Here the application might be: 'Does our music-making create anger among "brothers»? How can we be reconciled?'

6. Conclusion

God teaches us that pedagogy is important. But as Oswald Chambers warns, ¹⁹

Beware of placing our Lord as a Teacher first. If Jesus Christ is a Teacher only, then all he can do is to tantalize us by erecting a standard we cannot attain. What is the use of presenting me with an ideal I cannot possibly come near? I am happier without knowing it.... But when I am born again of the Spirit of God, I know that Jesus Christ did not come to teach only: He came to make me what He teaches I should be.

We come to him as paupers and he tells us, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 5:3). This unique gift of music, his kingwork, he bestows upon us, as a means of corporate expression for proclamation, teaching, mutual encouragement and worship. As the Epistles exhort us, let us embrace it with a spirit of listening, humility and prayer, as we seek to communicate in our diversity and find balance in our expression. With thanksgiving to God in our hearts, may we submit to one another, in unity,

with one accord, remembering that his love covers a multitude of sins, and that his joy is ours as we abide in him.

He will give us a 'new song'. It is not about the date of copyright or about human cleverness. It is about God's faithfulness and love at work in us. In Christ, we are new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17). His compassions are new every morning (Lamentations 3:22-23). As we sing a freshly composed song, a Psalm of David or a sixteenth-century choral, it is by God's Spirit that we experience newness of life. We are cleansed, complete, truly spiritual, in Christ Jesus. As his body, our true spiritual service and its ultimate goal is God's glory, Soli Deo Gloria.

7. For further reading

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Notes

- 1 Jn 12:5, Jn 12:12-19, Jn 13, Mt 26:17-29, Mt 26:30.
- 2 William Ralph Inge (1860-1954), Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, London.
- Everett Ferguson, The Church of Christ, 227-229, cited by D. A. Carson, 'Worship by the Word', in Worship by the Book (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002) 58.

4 Carson, 'Worship by the Word', 58.

- 5 Personal observation, based on 35 years in professional music teaching, orchestral playing and Church music.
- 6 Hugo Foxwood, 'Print the Myth: the Imagination of C. S. Lewis, http://www.thirdwaymagazine. com/338.
- 7 Leanne Payne, *The Healing Presence* (Wheaton: Good News Publishing, 1989) 139.
- 8 "7 Insights from Leanne Payne», http://danbrennan.typepad.com/my_weblog /2006/03/seeven_ insights.html.
- 9 Frank Gaebelein, The Christian, the Arts, and Truth:

- Regaining the Vision of Greatness, ed. by D. Bruce Lockerbie (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1985).
- 10 See Steve Camp, 'A Call for Reformation in the Contemporary Christian Music Industry' and his '107 Theses', October 31, 1997.
- 11 Eugene Peterson, *Living the Message* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996) November 23.
- 12 Ellis Potter, Switzerland, 'Comprehensive Spirituality Transcript'.
- 13 David Pass, Music and the Church: A Theology of Church Music (Nashville: Broadman, 1989) 55. The table is a synthesis of Pass's model on pp. 95, 97
- 14 Pass, *Music and the Church*, 77 figure 8, arrives at this structure through a comparison of ecclesiological models.
- 15 Cf. Donald McKim, Major Issues in Christian Thought (Atlanta: John Knox, 1988) enumerates eight major controversies in the history of the Church: Who is God? Who is Jesus Christ? What is the Church? What is humanity? How are we saved? Where is the authority? What are the Sacraments? What is the Kingdom?
- 16 Cf. John Julian, *Dictionary of Hymnology* (New York: Dover, 1907, reprint 1957).
- 17 See 'Hymns', Classical Encyclopedia, based on the 11th edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, at http://www.1911encyclopedia.org/Hymns.
- 18 Quoted by Dietrich Bartel, Musica Poetica: Musical-Rhetorical Figures in German Baroque Music (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997) 7-8, citing Oskar Söhngen, Theologie der Musik (Kassel: Johannes Stauda, 1967) 95-97.
- 19 Oswald Chambers, My utmost for his highest (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1927) July 21.

Singing and the Imagination of Devotion Vocal Aesthetics in Early English Protestantism

Susan Tara Brown

Singing and the Imagination of Devotion examines a common activity – singing – which is often taken for granted. This study reveals a previously unexplored source of aesthetic theory for anyone interested in music, worship, and the interface of Christianity and the arts. Anglican and English Puritan divines who wrote prolifically on the subject of singing, and asked probing questions about its deeper significance upon the 'landscape of the soul' and Christian community.

A masterful exploration of the theology, psychology and spirituality of sacred song in the 17th Century.'

J.I. Packer

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