Searching for the "Good Song"

Determining the quality of Christian songs within the polarities of worship

by

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i

Summary

This thesis tries to answer the question what Christians should be singing in worship and why. The situation in many congregations is one of conflict around music and worship styles. The question is how these can be bridged and how worship leaders can be guided to make responsible choices about what is sung in Sunday worship. It is argued that what is sung, strongly influences the theology and faith of congregants.

The thesis locates the discipline of hymnology within a hermeneutical approach to practical theology and tries to develop a theory to answer the question how to determine quality in Christian songs. The current discussions in practical theology and hermeneutics are examined for their relevance to hymnology, particularly some of the insights of Habermas, Gadamer and Ricoeur. Here particularly the idea of "dialogue" and "fusion of horizons" becomes relevant for bridging the divides in the conflicts around worship music. The dissertation examines biblical and church historical answers to the question of whether and what Christians should be singing. It becomes clear that the answers have varied widely during the course of church history, sometimes swinging between extremes. The next chapter looks at songs in the context of the worship service, their function within various parts of the service, and particularly looks at the dialectical poles of worship which should be kept in balance. Musical perspectives are discussed looking at ways to help people not formally trained in music to evaluate tunes.

This theoretical section leads to a catalogue of criteria for "Good songs":
These are criteria for quality, for "Good Text", such as biblical and theological value, how easily it is understood, whether it takes human experience seriously and its poetic value. Criteria for "Good Tune" include its level of difficulty, how heavily it depends on accompaniment, and its balance between the familiar and the interesting and new. The third category of criteria evaluate the match between text and tune in mood, rhythm and climax. The last category looks at the balance in the song between different polarities, such as, amongst others, the balance of past and present, cognitive and emotive elements, between challenge and affirmation, and between universal and particular emphases.

This list of criteria is then tested on three songs each of four different songwriters: two traditional and two contemporary: Paul Gerhardt, Charles Wesley, Graham Kendrick and Noel Richards. In each case a background is given, an overview of their work as a whole and a detailed analysis of each song.

In the end the criteria themselves are evaluated as to their usefulness and user-friendliness. Suggestions are then made how these criteria can guide worship leaders in their choices of songs for the Sunday service.

Key Words

Christian songs, hymns, hymnology, Praise and Worship music, worship wars
Luther and Music, criteria, quality, balance, emotion in music.

Preface:

This thesis is the culmination of a lengthy process of research which involved the help and support of various people. I wish to acknowledge the support of my supervisors at the University of Pretoria, Prof Cas Vos, and Prof Hennie Pieterse, and after the retirement of the latter, Prof Cas Wepener. I also thank the secretaries and support staff at the University of Pretoria.

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I want to thank my family for the support, my father for the final proof-read and my husband Detlev for help with computer programmes, layout and printing. For technical reasons a blank page has been added at the end of most chapters.

The content of this thesis is, however, solely my responsibility: I herewith declare that this whole thesis, unless specifically indicated to the contrary, is my original work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

7

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS

1. 1. Actuality

The question of music in the Sunday service is a burning issue for many people and in many congregations. Few issues in congregations generate so much emotion as the service and its music; these touch the heart of people's faith life. Many people are attracted to services, or put off going, by the kind of music that is played and sung, and their walk of faith is interwoven with songs that have shaped and sustained their faith. Many people have had the experience that "we get our theology far more often from the hymns we sing than from the sermons we hear" (Long 2001: 54). Music and the choice of songs generate passion and conflict, because they are so essential to faith. Marva Dawn, an American Lutheran hymnologist even speaks about "Worship Wars" which centre on whether one should worship in "traditional" or "contemporary" ways and often hinge on the music (Dawn 1995:3, see also Byars 2002:20). People disagree on whether one can "blend" new and old styles and music (Hartjie 2009:365), or whether one needs to have two different services to cater for different tastes. Long describes the clash between the " Hippolytus force" which tried to rediscover the riches of the churches' combined liturgical heritage and the "seeker-oriented service" movement led by Willow Creek, which sought to make worship attractive and understandable to outsiders (Long 2001:2-9). Willow Creek was very successful in attracting outsiders, but questions were raised whether it was just refashioning Christ, to be accessible to the culture (Byars 2002: 18). Since then, it has been the "Praise and Worship" movement"[1] which has had the most dramatic impact on churches all over the world, also on my own denomination, the Lutheran Church. It has helped break open static forms and open up congregations to new musical impulses and the involvement of worship teams in services. The monopoly of the organ has been supplanted by more musical variety, by a greater richness of instrumental accompaniments, guitars, percussion, piano and keyboard, often also flutes and strings. This has been a positive development, but not all congregations have been open to it. Some parts of the Lutheran Church are very much on the "traditional" pole, with others having all but rejected the historic liturgy and hymn-book. The new developments have not all been positive. Not all the new songs have been songs of theological and

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[1]   The Praise and Worship movement will be repeatedly referred to in this dissertation but it is not easy to define. According to Robert Webber this movement is characterised by a "concern for the immediacy of the Spirit, a desire for intimacy, and a persuasion that music and informality must connect with people of a post-Christian culture"(Webber 1994:128).

musical quality.[2]   There has also been the tendency of introducing too many new songs too quickly, making worship into a concert, rather than a participatory event.   There has been very little critical conscious reflection about the issue of criteria for songs. The dialogue between congregational reality and academic Hymnology often happens only on hymnal commissions. Congregations generally accept the official hymnals but want to be given, or simply take, the freedom to move beyond these selections. When they do, they use their own discretion, often having as only criterion their subjective enjoyment of a song.

My own personal faith journey was shaped profoundly by songs, new and old, throughout my life. I have also been involved actively in shaping church music for many years, not only as a pastor leading services and choosing songs, but also as a member of the church choir, and in the last years leader of the worship team for the contemporary "family" services in our congregation in Pietermaritzburg. This has made it important for me to reflect on how I choose and teach songs.   I have written songs myself, so the question of what defines the quality of a song becomes even more existential for me. Songs shaped my faith and my theology, as they have done for many people, and many of them have been committed to memory. "People will remember what they sing. Hymns and worship songs have a way of sticking in the memory when far grander verses fade away" (Page quoted in Hartje 2009:368). Another issue which concerns me deeply, is that congregations should not lose their common treasury of songs. Young people should be introduced to those life and faith sustaining hymns of previous generations, and older people should be enriched by the beauty and vitality of newer songs. The generations should be able to sing together.[3]   Which songs can be a part of such a "generation spanning repertoire" of songs?   Which songs speak to people musically as well as enriching their faith?   This thesis aims at exploring some of these questions.

1.2. Research problem

The issue "What should we sing in a Sunday service?" is an extremely vast topic and difficult to narrow down, so in a way this thesis is an initial exploration of a vast area, rather than a detailed analysis of a very narrow and specific problem. The issue is what defines the quality of a Christian

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[2]   G. Hartje, while in general supportive of the aims of the Praise and Worship movement, quotes many critics of the musical quality of the songs (Hartje 2009:365).

[3]   This is not a concern shared by all worship theorists, many of whom advocate services geared at different groups, tastes and styles. However, others are starting to argue for " intergenerational worship", see the articles in Vanderwell,H (ed) 2008.

2

song. Here I use "song" in a generic sense to include church hymns, choruses, repetitive chants, gospel songs, contemporary worship songs and anything else that is sung in a worship setting or a gathering of Christians. I deliberately want to use the rather undefined term "Good": "What is a 'good song'?" and demonstrate that this is answered in very many different ways by pastors, worship leaders and congregants, and for this reason often leads to conflict. However, I wish to define "good" in a particular way, and narrow down the research problem to the following:

What are the characteristics of "good" Christian songs that outlast their generation and are sung for decades or even centuries? Is it possible to predict which songs are likely to be sung for a while, if one invests the effort to teach them to a congregation?

Some songs require little teaching and last a long time. Some are easily learnt and soon forgotten. Some require a little effort to teach, and do not "put down roots" in a congregation. The last category are those that require a little effort to teach, but then sustain a congregation for years. My question is how to identify songs belonging to this last category, and whether one can give worship leaders some guidance as to how to choose such songs: quality songs to nurture faith and sustain people through life. Songs need to be "owned" by a congregation. They become part of "their" songs, of their identity. They become part of daily life, sung not only on a Sunday morning. [4] Are there common features among the songs that a congregation is willing to "own"? Luther calls such songs "church hymns" which are used and accepted by people as if they had written them themselves.[5]

Very often worship leaders choose simply what they know and like, or what they happen to have learnt from a CD or a worship event they attended. Some of these songs may not be suitable for long-term congregational use. Others may work very well. Indeed, not everyone will agree with the importance of choosing songs which are long-lasting. Many Christian groupings will argue that one should have a repertoire that is always on the pulse of the latest developments in music. In their

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[4] In a book by Reinhard Deichgräber on the hymns of Jochen Klepper, he comments on the need for Christian songs to become part of daily life, to be sung anytime and anywhere during one's daily routine: *"auf Spaziergängen, beim Autofahren, beim Warten auf den Zug, bei mancher einfachen Hausarbeit, tun sich immer neue Gelegenheiten zum Singen auf. Dabei merkt man bald, was an oder in einem Lied ist "* (Deichgräber 2002:12).

[5] Luther comments that even hymns by Ambrose are only church hymns because they were accepted by the people as their own: " *Es liegt daran, dass der Haufe Gottes oder Gottes Volk ein Wort oder Lied annehme oder für unrecht erkenne. St. Ambrosius hat viel schöner Hymnen gemacht, heißen Kirchengesang darum, dass sie die Kirche angenommen hat und braucht, als hätten sie dieselben gemacht und wären ihre Lieder*" (Luther 1543:WA 54:34).

3

opinion a "good song" is one that is at the cutting edge of culture and draws the largest crowd. In a world that changes rapidly, our repertoire of songs should change just as rapidly. The measure of quality of an individual song would then be the song's popularity and ability to touch contemporary singers. Is it important that a song can become familiar and "owned"? Is it important that everyone can sing along at least some of the time in a service? This thesis will argue for a particular definition of "good", but will trace some of the debates around normativity and quality criteria in the later chapters. Are there criteria which are understandable to anyone which could guide choices of worship leaders?

1.3. Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this dissertation is that there are many different criteria which need to work together in a song of quality. This means that the value of a song lies in its ability to make connections. As this is such a complex and dynamic field it is beyond the scope of this thesis to isolate elements or individual criteria and to "prove" or "disprove" their relevance to overall quality. This working hypothesis is a guide to exploring an area of work, and the test of validity or usefulness of these criteria needs to be ongoing in the field. In this study, different criteria and aspects will be discussed in turn which need to be balanced when putting together a service of worship. But it will be argued that the best songs are those which are able to connect these aspects within one song, for example a singable tune and theologically sound text, proclamation and response, the cognitive and the emotional, diversity and familiarity.

1.4. Methodology

The methodology of this dissertation has been a combination of deductive and inductive research methods (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:77). The final study and write-up focusses exclusively on literature, while the preparation phase of the research included conversations and discussions. The focus of much of practical theological research has been on finding empirical criteria to develop theories for communicative action (see next chapter on the definition of practical theology). Such empirical research interacts with theories to revise and elaborate such theories (Osmer 2008:74). Such empirical research can be a study of content of such communicative actions or surveys of the people engaged in such communicative actions. Van der Ven argues that "Theology as

4

interpretation of experiences of people requires an empirical method" (Van der Ven 1993:18). Such a method needs to be a critical method, which means it is "analytical, self-critical, being aware of biases, assumptions and self-interest" (Poling 1985:62).

Songs can be seen as documents of religious experience of people and as such can be objects of empirical practical theological study. To find quality criteria for Christian songs, an extensive literature survey was done in order to deduct criteria for theological and musical quality. Literature on music in worship was studied, from a biblical, historical, theological and music theoretical background. Barnard in his discussion on methodology in liturgical research outlines as different approaches the anthropological, systematic, historical and biblical-theological (Barnard 1998: 95-97). All of these, but mainly the last two are used in the discussion on liturgy. The findings of the literature survey will be discussed in the initial chapters in terms of its implications for formulating quality criteria. The second step was an inductive process. By an extensive study of new and old hymn-books, song collections and CDs, some common factors in popular and surviving songs were looked for. The guiding question in the survey of hymn-books was: Which songs are often sung? or (in the case of old hymn and song-books), which are still sung? Why were they popular or why did they survive? Which ones used to be popular and are no longer sung? Why not?

Throughout my research I have also have had informal discussions in congregations, with pastors and music practitioners and normal congregants. The fact that I was doing my doctorate on Christian songs has generated interest in most congregations I have been to, and I travel extensively within our church as guest preacher and leader of lay training workshops. The interested questions and opinions I was offered, the strong views on contemporary or traditional music, the reactions to songs I introduced in various congregations, have all informed my research.[6] Initially I was planning to formalise this aspect through a survey or qualitative interviews.[7] I carried out a pilot survey in my own congregation in 2007. This survey raised many very interesting issues, but it was difficult to narrow it down to the central question that interested me: What makes a song "work"? Few people had thought about this question and the responses were mostly in the category: "The song has touched me", or "appealing tune", or "has been an inspiration or comfort in my life".

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[6]   Osmer in his description of the methods of qualitative research gives the options of structured or unstructured interviews (2008: 63). My initial discussions were all unstructured, too unstructured to analyse in this research. They have informed my line of questioning, rather than my results.

[7]   The debate between the merits of qualitative versus quantitative approaches (Osmer 2008:50) seems largely settled, in that it depends largely on the topic as to which of the above is more useful.

5

These responses helped me formulate the various approaches to the question, " What is a good song?", but I found no way forward how interviews and surveys would help me find criteria. The interview notes and survey will not be evaluated in this dissertation. The study of song-books and CDs was much more helpful here, so I decided to stay with the intensive study of the material. Some of this will be of a quantitative nature, comparing the frequency of the occurrence of particular stylistic element in songs, others will be of a qualitative nature, studying content and evaluating theological messages in songs. Quantitative methods are used mainly where the field is broad, particularly in comparisons of song-books, and qualitative methods where the field is narrow, particularly in evaluating individual songs (Osmer 2008:50).

The study of a vast cross-section of the material was very illuminating, but also difficult to categorise on paper. I needed to choose and study some hymn-books comparatively, and then focus on individual songs to be discussed in detail using the criteria developed during the initial exploration phase. I have concentrated on two song-book studies: A comparison of two successive official denominational hymnals (German Lutheran hymnals, that is the EKG and the EG – see Chapter 5.4.2) and four consecutive contemporary German song-books, which have been used in our Lutheran Church, particularly in the youth groups (see Chapter 5.4.3). Then four hymn writers were selected and three songs of each analysed in more detail using the criteria developed. This shows up the strengths and weaknesses of each song. A way forward will be sketched as to how to evaluate the usefulness of the criteria into the future.

It needs to be noted that in the discussion on liturgical traditions I focus on my own Lutheran tradition and hymnals as well as the Praise and Worship movement which is having a great impact on our congregations. While other traditions are touched on, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to comprehensively discuss liturgical approaches. In referencing songs from printed hymnals I am following the convention within Hymnology of referring to these works by an abbreviation rather than by editor or publisher. A list of these abbreviations is found in the bibliography.

This thesis is written by a woman, and inclusive language is important for me and will be used throughout to refer to human beings. However, for simplicity's sake, traditional male language has been retained in most places where referring to God. This is the same in most hymns. Some hymns

6

nowadays use more feminine language, but they are in general not yet well-known or loved in the congregations. This use is simply practical and does not imply God is exclusively male.

1. 5. Exposition of thesis

The dissertation begins with the theoretical background, placing this study in the context of practical theological research, particularly within the hermeneutical discussion. Then follows a section of literature review, exploring the question of music in the service from a biblical, a historical, a liturgical and a music theoretical perspective. The steps lead up to the formulation of my specific criteria for a "good song". These criteria, discussed in Chapter Six cannot necessarily predict the success of a song, but they can describe the strengths and the weaknesses of each song which may lead to its success or its inability to find a permanent place in the congregation's repertoire. A song may have many strengths, particularly in its text, but serious weaknesses in its tune which leads to its lack of success. Similarly it may have serious theological weaknesses but be a great success because of its tune. To evaluate a tune is much more difficult than to evaluate a text. It depends on taste and contemporary notions of style. However, as the tune is often the overriding factor in determining the lifespan of a song, this dissertation will try to find some pointers that even people who are not musically trained can use to evaluate the effectiveness of a tune. Other criteria are developed and discussed.

In the final phase of the research, these criteria were tested on twelve songs. Two traditional and two contemporary songwriters have been chosen, and three songs from each songwriter were analysed in detail. These findings will be discussed in a chapter each on the songwriters Paul Gerhardt, Charles Wesley, Graham Kendrick and Noel Richards. The strength and weaknesses of each song will be discussed. The songs from the traditional songwriters have obviously survived until now, so have shown their quality. But whether they continue to survive, depends on being able to speak to this present generation. With the hymns of the contemporary writers, time will tell whether their songs survive into another decade. Some pointers towards this possibility will be made by the discussion of their strengths and weaknesses. The dissertation ends with some conclusions and pointers for people who choose songs for Christian worship.

7

CHAPTER TWO :   THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2. 1. Study of communicative actions

This study is written within the discipline of practical theology within the area of hymnology, which is a subdiscipline of liturgical studies. How people teach and theorise about practical theology has changed a lot in the last decades. For much of church history, practical theology has been seen as "applied theology" (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:8), so people would develop their theological insights in the biblical, systematic and historical disciplines and then apply them in the different practical sub-disciplines - homiletics, christian education, counselling, liturgics and others. The different sub-disciplines developed their methodology almost independently of each other, using the skills from secular disciplines, particularly the social sciences. Counselling used methods from psychology, homiletics from rhetorical disciplines. In the words of Heitink: "the counsellor becomes the therapist, the catechist the specialist in didactics, the instructor of church development a social worker" (Heitink 1993:245). This meant that there was no longer a common language with which the practical theologians as a group could engage with each other. In this context, hymnology was studied historically, and with the tools of literature studies (analysis and interpretation of poetry) and of course music interpretation. This left little point of contact with the other disciplines, who were all using their own specialised theories.

Today, most practical theologians agree that all the sub-disciplines belong to one unified practical-theological discipline which needs its own theoretical base. Osmer argues that "the same basic structure of practical theological interpretation is common to *all* the specialized subdisciplines of practical theology" (Osmer 2008:12). The common basis was found to be communication (Heitink 1993:8). All sub-disciplines have something to do with communicating the gospel to others. Communication can be studied scientifically and thus a new scientific basis for the discipline was developed, a theory which encompasses all the specific sub-disciplines. These were also broadened to include not only the actions of the pastor in a traditional congregation, but the action of the Church as a whole, in the lives of individuals, congregations and society as a whole (Müller 1974:24-25). As a science which studies human actions, practical theology has much overlap with the social sciences, but also has its own theoretical base and theological rationale (Greinacher 1974: 111-112). Practical theology goes beyond the social sciences by developing " normative theological perspectives to interpret research" (Osmer 2008:11). Increasingly it was also seen, that

8

practical theology does not only apply insights from the theoretical theological disciplines, but feeds back, critiques and enriches these insights from practical theological experience. It is a theological discipline which can contribute to the overall theological endeavour, especially by its focus on empirical research (Van der Ven 1993:20). Heitink defines practical theology in the following way: "Practical theology as a theory of action is the empirically oriented theological theory of the mediation of the Christian faith in the praxis of modern society" (Heitink 1993:6). This means, practical theology is focussed on the mediation of the Christian faith. He writes:

> God's action mediated through human action is the theological center of gravity of practical theology.... continuity of the Christian faith in the lives of men and women and in the church depends on tradition, the mediation of the tradition through various channels. Such mediation takes place in an educational setting between pastors and church members in celebrations and various forms of church work....

He gives examples how this happens through radio, television, personal encounters, conversations, and continues:

> This mediation takes shape in forms of communicative action, that is, in communication processes that occur within specific structures. Practical theology studies how these processes take place, and how these structures can be so adapted that there can be a real transmission of the Christian tradition.
>
> (Heitink 1993:8)

I will also use the definition by Heyns and Pieterse which goes in a similar direction. They define practical theology as a "theological operational science" which studies "believers' communicative actions in service of the gospel" (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:11&45).

There is no doubt that Christian singing is such a communicative action falling within these definitions of practical theology. Besides the Bible itself, songs are one of the primary ways that Christian tradition has been codified to be mediated to the next generation, and a very important way in which each new generation mediates its own experience of faith. Singing is a communicative action in which every congregant is involved and which every congregant shapes by enthusiastic or less enthusiastic participation. Songs communicate something of the faith and culture of the writers and if accepted, pass into congregational tradition, into the set ways this community mediates its faith. While in many cases it is a pastor alone who will decide what is preached, deciding what is sung and why is a process shaped by the entire community. This happens within certain structures, for example the decisions around song-books and hymn-books,[8] around the establishment of worship teams or purchases of organs, the agreements as to who chooses the hymns for worship, and the participation or lack thereof, which shapes the leader's choices. And

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[8] See the discussion on the interplay of community and theology in the shaping of the hymnal in Westermeyer (2009:313-319).

9

these decisions are made within certain understandings of what the Sunday service is or should be and what the culture of the time needs so that it will understand the mediation of the Christian faith.

The practical theologian H.D. Bastian sees a threefold task for practical theology: "a critical task with regard to tradition, an empirical task with regard to the way the church acts in the present, and a prospective task with regard to planning for the future" (quoted in Heitink 1993:112-113). This would mean in the area of studying songs that what is needed is a critical look at what the church has sung in the past, a thorough study of the present musical tradition in the relevant communities, and indicators for the way ahead: how should the church structure its music ministry, and what songs should it be singing? This dissertation will touch on all three aspects, but focus on the last question.

2.2. The relationship between theory and praxis

Asking the question what a congregation "should sing" on Sunday morning, is a special case of a general controversial question within practical theology: the question of the relationship of theory and praxis. Does theory come before praxis, or do the demands of praxis shape the theory or what is the relationship between these? [9]

As has been stated above, in academic theology the question used to be settled in clear favour of theory determining praxis. This would mean, that the theologians and experts need to decide what the congregation sings, as they are able to critically evaluate hymns and songs as to their theological and artistic merits and recommend only the songs of high value. This is the general position of hymnal commissions and academic hymnologists, who are often critical of the popular culture within congregations (Ameln in Bunners 1984:246).

While the above position had been the theological and academic consensus, it has often been ignored on the ground, with practitioners in the parishes either paying lip service to, or ignoring the findings of theoretical theology and working in the way that the situation seemed to demand. While congregations usually have accepted the official hymnals they have often had their own selections over and above the theoretically sanctioned choices. Sometimes congregations have also

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[9]   See extensive discussion in Heyns & Pieterse 1990:23-32

10

completely ignored the official hymnals and have sung what they believed their situation demanded, that is, the more contemporary, popular songs. The theories of the hymnologists have not taken congregational reality into account sufficiently well (Westermeyer 2009:316).

The opposite extreme of theory determining praxis is the position that praxis must determine theory. What is needed, and "what works" in the congregation should shape what we do. This is a process which starts by trial and error and then builds a theory according to what seems to "work in practice". The change in praxis is often insufficiently reflected. There is little of what Poling calls the "Unity of purposeful activity and thoughful consideration of that activity" (Poling 1993:65). In the case of songs this approach would try out songs in the congregation and observe what the congregation likes and enjoys singing. This then leads to a body of more theoretical conclusions, for example: "new songs in the Praise and Worship style are bringing people into the pews, so this is therefore the approach to follow." This can lead to extensive theoretical reflection on the new style of worship,[10] but it is the practical experience which leads to the reflection, not the theoretical reflection which leads to the praxis. However, this approach is also directed by an underlying theoretical framework which is often unconscious. For example in this case, the assumption that quantitative church growth is more important than qualitative theological or artistic considerations.

The consensus in practical theological reflection is that theory and praxis are indissolubly linked, and that not one can take priority over the other. However, the precise nature of the link is still an issue of debate and will be answered differently by different practical theologians. The fact that traditionally theology has given theory the priority over praxis still to a large extent determines the sequence of theological study (critiqued by Zerfass 1974:170ff). It was acknowledged that praxis can "correct" the theory (Zerfass 1974:172). However, normally the process was still one-way. Now much greater cognisance is taken of the fact that all theories arise out of situations, and that all praxis has underlying (even if unconscious) theory (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:28). A growing consensus position is that the relationship between theory and praxis is that of "bipolar tension", neither totally separate, nor identical (Greinacher 1974:113) and can be illustrated by the ellipse (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:31).

In the way this dissertation is structured now, it will seem that theory determines praxis. However, this research is only one moment in an ongoing process. The questions for theoretical reflection

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[10] Morgenthaler (1995) and Redman (2002) have written literature positively and critically reflecting on the Praise and Worship movement which will probably influence and shape the praxis of this movement. This praxis was shaped initially by experience and the input of talented individuals rather than by theological reflection.

11

have arisen from many years of congregational praxis, and the results of this research will be tested in practice in an ongoing way into the future. One practical result of this research has been the compilation of a songbook, where each song was evaluated by the developed criteria. (*We sing of Your love*, draft self-published Tönsing 2011). This songbook is now being tested in our own family devotions, and in various congregations of our church. This process may become the subject of future academic study.

2.3. The concept of communication, dialogue and hermeneutic theory

The insight that practical theology as a whole is concerned with communication has led more and more practical theologians to reflect on hermeneutical questions. Osmer argues that the practical theological task is essentially one of interpretation (Osmer 2008:20). Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation. So practical theological reflection led naturally to hermeneutics. This science developed initially primarily when working with written texts from the past (Osmer 2008:20). How can a written document, where the author is no longer available and wrote from a different time, different culture and theological understanding, be understood by readers today? These reflections have given rise to many debates and theorising about hermeneutical processes, which were broadened increasingly to include "the interpretive activity of ordinary people in everyday life", and hermeneutics was increasingly recognised as "a dimension of all forms of scholarship" and human experience (Osmer 2008:21).

Communication can be one way – as it would be from the initial author of a biblical text to us today. Then there are three elements in the process: The sender, the message and the recipient. However, more and more scholars of hermeneutics are speaking of dialogue: even with ancient texts the process is more dynamic, with readers interacting with the text. Osmer calls it " dialogical interplay" which can happen with a text, person or object (Osmer 2008: 23). People "construct meaning" and do not only "receive a message" (West 1991:9-10). This is definitely true for the reception of songs, both old and new.

Gerald West in his *Biblical Hermeneutics* discusses three ways of placing the hermeneutic emphasis: "Behind text", "reading the text", "in front of text" (West 104ff). The first tries to find the meaning of the text by going *behind* it, to the author and his context. The assumption is that the "real meaning" of the text lies in its initial intention when it was written. Finding this "real

12

meaning" is the aim of much historical-critical exegetical work and is very valuable.[11] In hymnology this leads to much research on song writers, their life and situation and what experiences may have led to the writing of a particular hymn or song. Music appreciation is also enhanced by some knowledge of the time and the general style and feeling of the era the music was written in. In some cases the original intention and context of a song is known and can be precisely described and often these personal stories bring a hymn closer to a congregation. However, the original intention of the author is not always the same as the meaning of the song for a congregation.

The second approach is the "reading the text" (or "on the text") approach (West 117ff). This acknowledges, that the link with the original author and context has been broken, by the act of writing it down, and that we do not always have access to the original intention. It argues for dealing with the text as it stands, appreciating and interpreting it as literature, with the tools of literary and structural analysis. Both the tune and the lyrics of a song can be analysed as works of art without reference to their background. In most thorough hymnological studies, there will be both an "on the text" and a "behind the text" focus.[12]

The third approach, the "in front of the text" approach (West 1991:124), takes seriously the active role of the message recipient, the reader of the Bible or singer of the song. Most ordinary readers / singers, will come with their own questions and experiences to the text and find in its message words of comfort, challenge and hope. These are often not identical to the original intention of the author, but they are the meaning that the people find in that message. Because the text has been detached from its original writer and its original intention, it is free to be used, (or misused), in ever new situations.[13] This process has been reflected on most thoroughly by Paul Ricoeur.

It goes beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss thoroughly the theoretical debates in hermeneutical theory. However, as the concept of "dialogue" is central to this thesis and its

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[11] Schweickart reflects on hermeneutical processes from a feminist perspective and writes that the "dialectic of control gives way to a dialectic of communication". Quoting Rich she writes: "reading is a matter of trying to connect with the existence behind the text" (Schweickart 1986:543).

[12] In the discussion of Giles of the hymn *As with gladness men of old*, there is a "behind the text" focus in that some details of Dix' life are given and the fact that he wrote the hymn on his sick bed as he was reflecting on the gospel for Epiphany Sunday, Mth 2:1-12 (Giles 2007:42). This gives a biographical background and setting for the hymn. There are also some reflections on various proposed revisions of the text. The "on the text" study looks at the structure of the hymn and its similarity with the structure of the classical collect prayer: "As..... so" and then proceeding to devotion. It comments on the prayerful ending (42).

[13] Schweickart writes that the duality of communication is "threatened by the author's absence" as a result of which reading is necessarily subjective. While the reader tries to enter the mind of the writer it is a "projection of the subjectivity of the reader" (Schweickart 1986: 543).

13

approach, and there is a strong focus on the congregation as active participant in shaping choices around musical praxis, the contribution of three thinkers in the field of hermeneutics will be discussed briefly here: Jürgen Habermas, Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur.

2.4. The contributions of Habermas, Gadamer and Ricoeur and their relevance to this discipline

2.4.1. Jürgen Habermas

 The self-definition of practical theology as a "theological operational science" which studies "believers' communicative actions in service of the gospel" (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:11&45) was in no small way influenced by the publication of Habermas' great work *Theory of Communicative Action (*English translation published 1983).[14] Particularly, Habermas developed a theory of dialogue which stands at the centre of his social theory. Fundamental to societies which run without violent coercion but by mutual consent is the process of resolving conflict by reason and by dialogue (Habermas 1984: translator's intro pg x). Such dialogue needs to be on an equal footing, free, and honest. For communication to be effective there are three validity claims: "that the alleged facts are true, that the norms are correct and fair, that the feelings are genuine" (quoted in Heitink 1993: 135). Only after a consensus is reached on truth, fairness and genuineness, can a discourse take place in which validity claims are tested. This is the "ideal speech situation" (Duvenage 2010:349). For true dialogue to occur, the partners need to be on an equal level. Habermas reflects extensively on what this means for society (where partners are often not on an equal level), and for religion, where experiences of the sacred are translated into contestable truth claims (Habermas 1986:77,81). In an expanded view of dialogue, Habermas' notion of a free and equal dialogue is relevant to many areas of the hermeneutical problem. There can only be a genuine dialogue in a two-way atmosphere of honesty and sharing, that is in acknowledging that not one of the partners has all the answers.[15] For example in dialoguing with the biblical text, there is a readiness to learn from the biblical message, but also a realisation that insights from our present context and experience may lead us beyond what the text itself can give. This can lead to a new understanding.[16] This spirit of dialogue should also characterise the process of discussion as to

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[14]   The German original published in 1981 is called *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns.*
[15]   This should be true too of the dialogue between reason and religion. According to Duvenage's critique, in Habermas this is weighted in a one-sided way to the benefit of the Enlightenment concept of reason, and should be more reciprocal (Duvenage 2010: 355).
[16]   This is for example the insight of feminist biblical hermeneutics, when studying texts which are oppressive for

 14

what should be sung in church and in trying to understand and appropriate a song or hymn.

2.4.2. Hans-Georg Gadamer

Gadamer builds on what Habermas has written. In his book *Wahrheit und Methode (Truth and Method)* he reflects deeply on the question, "What is understanding and how does it occur?" (Gadamer 1975: xviii).   He was critical of the way science had tried to "elimininate the starting point of inquiry" , bracketing out all "prejudices", or preunderstandings, that would compromise a scientist's objectivity. In contrast, Gadamer argued that all interpretation begins with a preunderstanding that comes to us from the past" (Osmer 2008:22). These preunderstandings cannot be eliminated but they need to be acknowledged as the "horizon" of the interpreter (Osmer 2008: 23). From this point, the interpreter enters the dialogue.

Each participant in a dialogue has their own "horizon". A horizon is the circle of all that is in view from the position held by that participant in the dialogue. This may be a small or a wider circle, but it is a limited circle, and restricts what one can see (Gadamer 1975a: 286).[17] By stepping away from the present standpoint, the participant can shift or widen their horizon. This includes developing a "historical horizon" by increased awareness of historical developments (Gadamer 286).   In the process of genuine dialogue, one participant, or both participants shift their standpoint to come closer to the horizon of the other (Taylor 2002:290). There is a back-and-forth interplay between horizons (Osmer 2008:23). One learns to step into a "foreign horizon" (Gadamer 287)[18] and tries to come to a place where one can at least partially see the horizon that the other sees. This leads to a process of "fusion of horizons" (*Horizontverschmelzung)* which leads to the possibility of understanding (Gadamer 289).

This metaphor for dialogue is a dynamic and critical metaphor and a useful image not only for understanding texts but also for musical appreciation. Exposure to different styles and also information on the history of musical style shifts can "widen one's horizon", to appreciate the value in a style with which one has been unfamiliar. The exclusive positions, "hymns only" or

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[17] women. Experience and commitment leads beyond what the text itself says (Schweickart 1986:539-541).
*Ein Horizont ist ja keine starre Grenze, sondern etwas, das mitwandert und zum weiteren Vordringen einlädt. (*Gadamer 1975a:232) . *Horizont ist der Gesichtskreis, der all das umfaßt und umschließt, was von einem Punkte aus sichtbar ist* (286).

[18] *Im Prozess des Verstehens kann man versuchen selber in diesen Horizont hinein sich zu versetzen. Man verläßt den eigenen Standpunkt, und kommt zu dem anderen und versucht seinen Horizont zu verstehen* (Gadamer 1975a: 287).

15

"contemporary praise and worship songs only" are examples of dialogue participants who are unwilling to shift their positions and explore the richness of other horizons. To stay in the image – sometimes it is not even necessary to give up one's position, but simply move to a higher level, to gain a wider view and new perspectives.

This thesis will work repeatedly with the concept of fusion of horizons, particularly the necessity of keeping seemingly opposite approaches in balance, by a process of seeing them together, in this dynamic process of understanding.

2.4.3. Paul Ricoeur

The third thinker who is relevant to this study is Paul Ricoeur. He has reflected deeply on the meaning of communication and what happens in the process of communication when the message becomes detached from the messenger. In effect, dialogue is trying to bridge a huge divide that not only exists between ancient texts and present readers, but between any two people who try to communicate face to face.

> Being-together, as the existential condition for the possibility of any dialogical structure of discourse, appears as a way of trespassing or overcoming the fundamental solitude of each human being. By solitude I do not mean that fact that we often feel isolated as in a crowd, or that we live and die alone, but, in a more radical sense, that what is experienced by one person cannot be transferred whole as such and such experience to someone else....
>
> My experience cannot directly become your experience. An event belonging to one stream of consciousness cannot be transferred as such into another stream of consciousness. Yet, nevertheless, something passes from me to you. Something is transferred from one sphere of life to another. This something is not the experience as experienced, but its meaning. Here is the miracle. The experience as experienced, as lived, remains private, but its sense, its meaning becomes public. Communication in this way is the overcoming of the radical non-communicability of the lived experience as lived.
>
> (Ricoeur 1976: 15-16)

In song-writing, a writer and/or composer, often in solitude, codifies something of his or her religious experience and faith into text and notes. This song cannot transfer that precise religious experience, but many singers may recognise something and feel that it expresses the meaning of their religious experience, which may indeed be quite different from that of the writer. "Something is transferred" and if meaning is transmitted, the song is "owned" by the singer. A song may also be a vehicle of religious experience, conveying a sense of the presence of God, or an increased sense of hope, comfort or joy. In each of these cases, communication has occurred through this song. Poling's description of Ricoeur's distinction between hidden and apparent meaning and the use of symbol also applies to music: "Symbolic language is language that discloses the multiple and

16

hidden meanings in experience. Symbols lack precision and clarity, and have deep ambiguity. But they are often the most appropriate language to point to a depth in experience which scientific language cannot touch " (Poling 1985:88).

In other cases, there may be strong religious meaning transmitted, which becomes public, but is not understood or accepted by the listeners. It may be too distant, too dull or too emotional, too shallow or too complex, and simply not understood by the listeners. The song fails to communicate, and is not taken up and "owned" by the singers. In such cases, communication has failed to bridge the divide between solitudes.

While even face to face communication has its complexities and difficulties, a whole new situation arises in written communication. A letter is written to a specific addressee, but is open to be read by anyone, once it is down on paper. Literature and poetry is usually not addressed to a particular person, but addressed to the "unknown reader", and could be accessed by anyone who can read (Ricoeur 1976:31).

> This universalization of the audience is one of the more striking effects of writing..... because discourse is now linked to a material support, it becomes more spiritual in the sense that it is liberated from the narrowness of the face-to-face situation.
>
> (Ricoeur 1976: 31)

Ultimately it is the response of the audience which determines whether a text is significant or not (Ricoeur 31).   This is definitely true of songs. The connection between the intention of the author and the text is broken. "What the text means now matters more than what the author meant when he wrote it " (Ricoeur 29).

This does not mean (as is often critically claimed of the "in front of the text" approach) that any interpretation of the text by the reader is valid. The reader will have an intuitive grasp of the meaning, but this needs to be confirmed by a process of "validation" which is a scientific process of arbitrating between competing interpretations. An interpretation must not only be probable, but more probable than another interpretation. Lindseth and Norberg explain in a study on interviews in the caring profession how one moves in the interpretative process from a "naïve reading", through "structural analysis" to a "comprehensive understanding" of the text, using Ricoeur's insights (Lindseth & Norberg 2004 website). There are criteria of relative superiority for resolving conflicts of interpretation, which can easily be derived from the logic of subjective probability" (Ricoeur 1976:79).

17

> If it is true that there is always more than one way of construing a text, it is not true that all interpretations are equal. The text presents a limited field of possible constructions. The logic of validation allows us to move between the two limits of dogmatism and scepticism. It is always possible to argue for or against interpretation, to confront interpretations, to arbitrate between them and to seek agreement, even if this agreement remains beyond our immediate reach.
>
> (Ricoeur 1976:79)

Thus the meaning of a text lies not "behind" it but "in front of it"(Ricoeur 87). The meaning of a text or song opens up in confrontation with the reader and singer and his/her situation. Understanding the background of the writer or composer may guard against some wrong interpretations, but cannot in itself open up the meaning of a song for singers today.

> What has to be appropriated is the meaning of the text itself, conceived in a dynamic way as the direction of thought opened up by the text. In other words, what has to be appropriated is nothing other than the power of disclosing a world that constitues the reference of the text. In this sense, appropriation has nothing to do with any kind of person to person appeal. It is instead close to what Hans-Georg Gadamer calls a fusion of horizons *(Horizontverschmelzung)*: the world horizon of the reader is fused with the world horizon of the writer. And the ideality of the text is the mediating link in this process of horizon fusing.
>
> (Ricoeur 1976: 92-93)

To be understood a song must connect with its singer and convey meaning. This is of course a very subjective process and does not yet in itself say anything about the quality of the song. But it is clear that unless songs approved as "quality songs" in theory, can make this connection for people, they will not receive or "own" them.

2.5. The Zerfass Model – the movement between theory and praxis

How does one move from theory to praxis and back to theory, or from praxis to theory and back to praxis? The two have been determined to be equally important, but still the relationship needs to be more clearly defined. Contextual theology has long spoken of the hermeneutic circle or spiral which leads from action to reflection, back to a new action which again leads to reflection. Heyns and Pieterse describe the way that theological or hermeneutical models can "facilitate and promote the traffic between theory and praxis" *(*Heyns & Pieterse 1990:37*)*. In this context R. Zerfass has developed and described such a model which has become influential in practical theology. It is a model which shows up the task of practical theology as a "theoretical endeavour of rationally addressing crises and troubles in church praxis and inventing new steps to improve church activities" (Heimbrock 2007:57). The model is described as follows by Heitink:

18

He showed in this study how practical theology starts from the description of a concrete, and usually unsatisfactory, praxis. Something must be done! Reflecting on this situation solely on the basis of church tradition does not lead to any real improvement. Praxis must first be examined with the use of a series of instruments from the social sciences. As a result, tensions become visible, leading to the emergence of impulses to act, with a view to renewal and improvement of the existing praxis. Practical theology has the task to lead in this process of change in a way that is responsible from the perspective of both theology and the social sciences.

(Heitink 1993:113)

If one was to locate this dissertation in this diagram it would be situated in the middle left: centred on rectangle 4, arrow 7 and rectangle 9. It is an in-depth reflection on theological tradition and an attempt to develop a practical theological theory for singing in the service. Rectangle 6 and arrow 5 and 8 also come into the discussion through discussion of contemporary experience and songs. However, it does not have an individually weighted own empirical study. Part of the "situation analysis" in this case, is an awareness of the disagreements in the discussions around worship and that not all actors agree on what the problems are and what the desired situation could be. Part of the practical theological theory development would mean to come closer to an agreement as to what could be desirable as goal, for example a fully contemporary Praise and Worship service every Sunday, or "blended worship" with old and new elements. [19]

According to the Zerfass model, what practical theological theory building needs to do, is to show up the inadequacies of the present theory which leads to the unsatisfactory praxis and to show up in which direction a future praxis needs to lead.

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[19] The term "B*lended Worship*" is used by Robert Webber for a process that brings together the best of the Old and the new: in Webber, R 1998. *Planning Blended Worship - The Creative Mixture of Old and New* Nashville, Abingdon Press

19

Praxis 1
(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

Theological Tradition

(5)

Situation Analysis

(6)

(7)

(9)

(8)

Practical Theological Theory

(13)

(10)

(12)

(11)
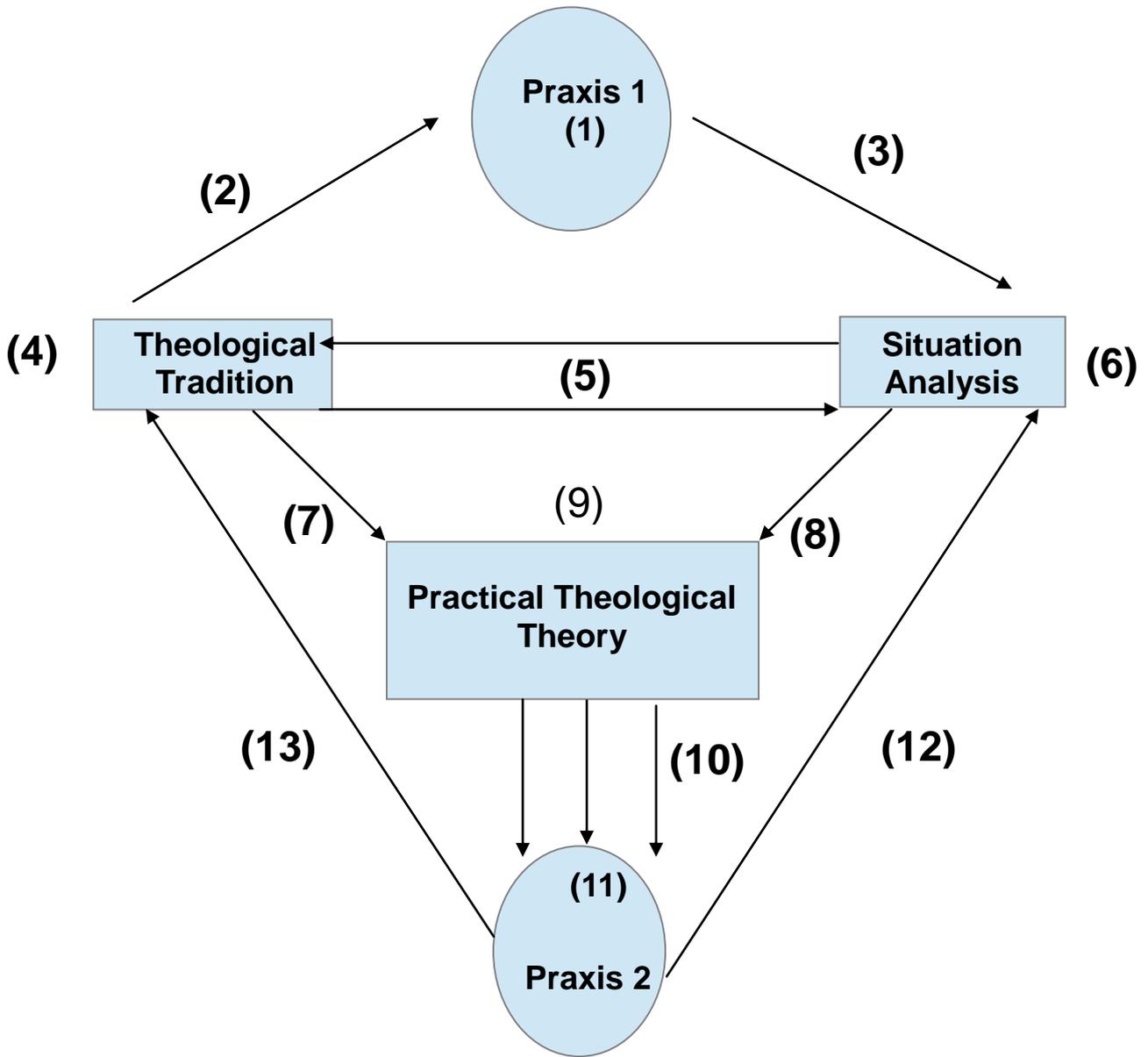
Praxis 2

Operational scientific model of the correction of Christian ecclesial praxis

Figure 1   **(Zerfass 1974:167)**

20

This leads to some of the following guiding questions:

What has so far been the guiding theory of hymnologists as to what congregations should be singing?

What is the theory guiding the new Praise and Worship movement and worship leaders in congregations?

What guidelines can one gain from biblical tradition, from church history and from denominational (in this case Lutheran) tradition?

What insights can one gain from studying the songs which are actually sung in the congregation, which ones are popular and which ones have lasted? (This is an element of situation analysis).

What criteria can be developed from these insights as to which songs should be sung and taught? (New practical theological theory).

2.6. A Theory to help guide choices and evaluate songs

The discipline of practical theology has developed an overall theory which guides reflection in all sub-disciplines. However, there is still a need for each sub-discipline to reflect and theorise on its own, using the tools from the social sciences that are relevant for that particular sub-discipline. This is the aim of this dissertation: to begin to develop a theory which will help to guide future praxis in the congregation, that is in terms of choices of songs for worship, and decisions of congregants as to the general musical style and theological content of their worship service. The basis of this theory needs to come from the theological disciplines, that is biblical, church historical and liturgical backgrounds, as well as from music theory and history. There will also be an empirical basis, which comes from intensive quantitative and qualitative studies of song-books and individual songs. The centre of this theory needs to be a set of clear criteria to evaluate songs. The biblical and historical perspective is the topic of the next chapter.

22

CHAPTER THREE – DEVELOPING A THEORY TO STUDY SONGS

BIBLICAL AND CHURCH HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

3.1. Introduction

In the previous section the discussion of the Zerfass model led to some guiding questions, which need to be answered when developing an adequate theory to study songs. This section aims at providing some insights and guidelines from biblical tradition, from church history and denominational tradition, which can then be used to help critique both the old traditional view of what should be sung in the services, as well as some of the contemporary answers.

This overview looks at a broad range of questions around Christian singing. It aims to explore biblical and historical answers to the questions Should we sing? Who should sing? What? How? Where? Why?

The most fundamental question is of course the first, which has not always been answered in the affirmative in church history. All the others also have had different answers during the course of biblical and church history:

Should Christians sing? Why, or why not?   If there is singing in the service, who should do the singing? Professional choirs or worship teams? The congregants? How should they sing? With instruments, organ, band or unaccompanied? Where should the singing take place? In the homes, in church, on the street? What should they be singing?   This last question is the central question of this thesis. The overview looks at different ways these questions have been answered and tries to find some guidelines for a theory to guide choices in Christian singing.

3.2. Biblical perspectives

3.2.1. Old Testament

The biblical texts answer the question, "Should we sing?" with an unequivocal "yes".   The concordance of the Luther Bible gives 98 references for the word "sing", at least a quarter of these in the imperative (Calwer 1979: 1279). The Hebrew concordance has 78 citations for the verb

23

sheer (sing- *sheeru* in the imperative) and 76 (including the titles of Psalms) for the noun "song" , *sheer* which are the same Hebrew letters*(Wigram* 1980:1255)[20]. The psalter with its 150 poems which were all probably chanted rather than recited has a central place in the Hebrew Scriptures. Scholars assume that some of the oldest material in the Bible are songs and poems which describe important events, for example the song of Miriam (Ex 15:21, Jeremias 2004:90) and the song of Deborah (Judg 5:2ff Eissfeldt 1974:106, Jeremias 2004:89). Some songs are probably based on other Ancient Near Eastern examples[21]. While most scholars are agreed that David did not write all the psalms attributed to him, it is fairly certain that David was a singer as tradition says (Zenger 1997:31), and that at least some of the psalms go back to him[22], or were sung by him, being even older (Dillard 1994:216), and the tradition that he established the guild of liturgical singers is probably historical (1 Chr 25, Dillard 216). So at least since the time of David, if not before, singing had a fixed place in the Israelite liturgical tradition. Music was acknowledged to have great power, to soothe the mind (1 Sam 10:5), to create an atmosphere favourable to ministry (2 Kings 3:14-16) and help people to sense the glory of God (Letsosa 2007: 67).

Who sang and where did they sing? Temple singers, made up largely of Levites would have sung (Vos 2004:273), but so would the pilgrims who went to Jerusalem and the worshippers, though as a rule they would have probably sung only chorus and antiphon (Vos 274). Many psalms are termed "Psalms of ascent" which probably means they were part of a pilgrimage singing tradition (Zenger 1997:350). Singing was a normal part of religious life. Even in exile, in spite of the question "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land" (Psalm 137v4) this lament comes in the form of a song, and many psalms were written in exile, the time when Israel passionately wrestled with the meaning of faith in its God and came up with deep and profoundly influential answers[23] (Zenger 1997:387). Increasingly after the exile and in the diaspora, worship was also located in the family and in personal prayer, (Sabbath and Passover celebrations) and the synagogue where psalms formed an important part of the regular liturgy (Coenen *et al* 1990: 908). Psalms included personal

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[20] Because of the technical difficulties of printing Hebrew right to left, the Hebrew letters have not been included.

[21] see Eissfeldt's discussion on cultic songs (1974:89-124) and Steymans' discussion on Mesopotamian songs of lament (Steymans 2004:168 – 234).

[22] It seems fairly likely that the last part of Psalm 24 was written for the occasion when David brought the ark of the covenant to the newly conquered Jebusite city Jerusalem (2 Sam 6). The highly poetic and rhythmical language speaks for such a triumphant procession, the fact that the God Yahweh is called the God of the victorious armies, (v 8 & 10) and the fact that God is seen as entering the city and not yet dwelling on Zion makes this setting the most likely (Kittel 1929:96-97). Anderson affirms the antiquity of some of the superscripts of the psalms and argues for the Davidic authorship of several psalms, including Psalm 99 (Anderson 1994: 226).

[23] *"Die in der Exilszeit und in der früh-nachexilischen Zeit so immens anwachsende literarische Tätigkeit zeugen von der Leidenschaft, in der Israel damals die Gottesfrage neu stellt – und zu Antworten durchstieß, deren Tiefe und Ernst auch uns Heutige still und demütig machen"* (Zenger 1997:387).

24

and communal prayers[24], and this reflects liturgical and musical praxis (Zenger 1997:70).

How did they sing? There are references to a great many instruments in the Bible, most notably the harp or lyre, the instrument in the David legends (1Sam16:23), but also in Psalm 150 alone the trumpet, the lute, tambourine, strings, pipes and cymbals. It is clear there was no sense that singing needed to be unaccompanied in the service. Instruments were used to accompany singing, or to make music for its own sake, as David did with the harp (1Sam16:23). Otherwise it is difficult to know anything about the musical details. From the titles of psalms it seems clear that sometimes well-known tunes were used for psalm singing, for example the title to Ps 57-59 "according to '*Do not destroy*' " which was probably a tune to which these texts were sung (Eissfeldt 1974: 453). Some psalms also give directions on musical accompaniment, for example "with stringed instruments" (Ps 4,Vos 2004: 274). However, much here remains conjecture. One can assume that singing was often accompanied by dancing (Letsosa 2007: 67).

Why did they sing? and What did they sing? Singing was a way to proclaim the great deeds of the Lord and tell what He had done for the people of Israel. Most songs have a strong praise and proclamation component (Ex 15:1-18, 1 Sam 2:1-10, Ps 66) and some tell the whole story of God with His people (Ps 106). However, psalms also are there to express trust (Pss 23, 121), ask God for help, (Ps 13), cry out to Him in times of suffering, (Ps 22) or asking for forgiveness (Ps 51). There are psalms celebrating victory (Ps 46), or extolling the power of the King (Ps 110). The longest psalm is a great play with words and letters expressing joy in the gift of God's law (Psalm 119). Singing was an important way to affirm one's identity as people of God and to build up the community of believers (Zenger 1997:22-26). While there does not seem to be any restriction on what and how one should sing, the prophets made a strong point that pious language in ritual and worship should be matched with ethical living, otherwise it is not pleasing to God. The strong words of Amos against the festivals and the "noise of your songs" (Amos 5:23) or the "idle songs" of the exploiting rich classes (6:5) are words aimed at a change of behaviour towards social justice, but not a critique of music as such.   This means that singing should come from the heart and not be a pious mask for exploitation.

Israelite religion had a prohibition on visual images. It makes up for this in the strong visual images in its poetry. There are descriptions of creation (Ps 8, 104), of the majesty and grandeur of God (Ps

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[24]   C. Vos points out that the distinction between the individual and the collective, that is the "I" as individual, or as Israel, is a modern distinction. The individual is conscious of being part of a people, and the community is conscious of being made up of individual and vulnerable people (Vos 2004: 252).

25

19, 29), of the desolation of suffering and pain (Ps 22). The words in combination with the music were what brought the reality of God, who could not be depicted visually into the experienced reality of people (Zenger 1997:10-12).

The element of pure adoration so prominent in present day contemporary songs is present but less typical. Few psalms focus primarily on the response of the believer, but many have strong elements of this, for example Psalm 42 and 62. The breadth of topics in the Psalter and its inclusion of all human emotions and aspects of life is a great example to Christian singing.

3.2.2. Biblical perspectives - New Testament

There are fewer references in the New Testament than in the Old (13 references in the Luther Bible concordance, Calwer 1979: 1279). However, we know that early Christians sang. Extra biblical evidence from the letter of procurator Pliny to the Emperor Trajan said about the Christians that they "sing hymns to Christ as to a God (*Carmen Christo quasi deo dicere)"* (Albrecht 1995:13). Singing seems to have been a natural way to express themselves and their newfound faith in Christ. This was firstly a continuation of Jewish tradition. Jesus and the disciples would have sung the psalms like His Jewish contemporaries. In the gospels' account of the last supper singing is mentioned: "And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the mount of Olives" (Mt 26:30 / Mk 14:26). This probably refers to one of the Hallel psalms which are part of the Passover liturgy.

It is clear that while early Christians in Jewish-Christian communities would have continued to sing psalms, they also began to compose their own songs to Christ, as Pliny wrote, and scholars believe that some of these early Christian hymns may have been included in the gospels and letters, for example the four songs in the infancy narratives of Luke: (*Magnificat* Lk 1:46-55, *Benedictus* Lk 1:68-79, the *Gloria in Excelsis* Lk 2:14 and the *Nunc Dimittis* Lk 2:29-32) and also the Pauline Christ hymn (Phlp 2:6-11).[25] Although Luke wrote to a Gentile audience, the songs in the infancy narratives have strong Old Testament parallels and seem to come from Jewish Christian communities (Wittenberg 1991:5). One can assume that his congregations would have sung them either before or after Luke included them in his work.[26] Whether Greek communities sang the Old Testament psalms is not clear, but the Septuagint translation of the psalms must have been known

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[25] Paul seems to quote and refer to hymnic tradition regularly, and according to Jeremias, saw this as foundational for his theology (Jeremias 2004:89).

[26] Bovon agrees that the songs were taken up by Luke from a pre-existent source, which he sees in the Pharisaic movement, rather than the Jewish Christian movement as was argued by Brown and others (Bovon 1989:82-83).

26

and the Greek work "ψαλλετω" (*psalleto / or psalo*) which gave the Psalter its Greek name is commonly used in the New Testament to denote "sing praises" (Rom 15:9, 1 Cor 14:15, Ja 5:13). The word comes from the musical instrument the psalter and has the connotation of singing to musical accompaniment, leading Luther to translate the phrase αδοντες και ψαλλοντες as "sing and play" (Eph 5:19). The references are too few to deduce much about the use of instruments in the early church. However, in Revelations the saints before the throne of the lamb are singing a new song and they are holding harps (Rv 5:8-9). So there seems to be no problem with accompanied singing at this stage in the early church, though it is possible that the early church, persecuted and still quite poor, probably could not afford many musical instruments (Letsosa 2007:67).

The content of these early hymns are mostly praise for Christ's salvation and proclamation of Christ as Lord, King and sacrificial lamb. Singing is an expression of joy (Ja 5:13) but also has a teaching purpose (Phlp 2:5-11). In 1 Cor. 14:15-39 Paul emphasizes that what we sing in public worship should be understandable to the congregation and to the outsider. It should not simply edify the individual or even praise God, but build up the congregation and draw it together.

The two passages that have generated the most discussion about the question of singing in the service are Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to do a thorough analysis of the passages. This discussion will just highlight the main issues briefly.

The Pauline authorship of these two letters has been disputed[27]. However, whether or not one accepts them as Pauline does not really affect the issues of the debate. They were accepted as authoritative canonical documents by the early church. Most of the debate centres on the admonition in both letters to sing "psalms, hymns and spiritual songs". What did the writer mean by these categories? Were they distinct types of songs? And how do these relate to the admonition to "teach and admonish one another" (Col 3:16) and to "singing in your hearts" ?

While it is tempting to interpret these categories immediately as Old Testament psalms, newer hymns in Greek poetic forms and spontaneous songs under the influence of the Holy Spirit, most scholars are clear that they cannot be so simplistically defined (Söhngen 1967:18). As indicated above, Ψαλμοισ (*Psalmois)* may simply be "songs of praise", just as υμνοισ(*hymnois)* could also be. The "hymn" sung in Mt 26:30 was obviously a psalm, and the admonition ψαλλετω (*psalleto)*

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[27] The argument in the *Eerdman's Commentary on the Bible* outlines some of the arguments, and argues as most likely scenario that Colossians is Pauline and Ephesians is modelled on Colossians by another author. (Hooker 2003:1404 and Marshall 2003:1386)

27

did not necessarily mean to sing Jewish psalms.   Similarly ωδαις πνευματικαις (*odais pneumatikais)* cannot be too narrowly defined (Detwiler 2001:19). Nevertheless these three words, repeated in identical fashion in two letters, do seem to be a plea for openness and diversity in worship, asking people to open up space for the various musical gifts. Detwiler argues that it is unlikely that the writer would have used three different words if they had not been meant to indicate diversity (Detwiler 2001:20). The purpose of such singing is to praise and thank God, but also for the upbuilding of the community (address one another Eph 5:19), and for proclamation and teaching (Col 3).   The Greek grammar leaves it open whether the singing is a response to the teaching or whether the teaching happens in the singing. Here different translations come to different conclusions[28]. This ambiguity may be deliberate so that the singing becomes both proclamation and response (Albrecht 1995:13).   However, it seems clear that the singing is not addressed exclusively at God, but at fellow believers and at those outside who still need to hear the proclamation. This is also clear by the content of the early Christian hymns themselves which are very often proclamations in the third and not the second person.[29] The controversial interpretation by Ulrich Zwingli that "singing in your hearts" meant not singing with the mouth (see next section) is not supported by the exegetical evidence and not seriously supported by any theorist today.

3.2.3. Conclusion:

It is clear from the above that the biblical evidence points to the fact that believers sang songs and should sing to proclaim their faith and build their relationship to God and to one another. There does not seem to be any restriction on what and how one should sing, as long as the singing is genuine and comes from the heart. However, one should be aware that what is sung builds up the body of Christ rather than simply edifying individuals. The content covers the full range of human experience, in proclamation, teaching and adoration. It seems that the ministry of singing was open to everyone and was a way in which people participated in worship. Instruments could be used in many ways to glorify God.

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[28]   Translation variations: Interlinear *"...in all wisdom teaching and exhorting yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs"* (Green 1985: 915). Here the teaching happens in the songs. English Standard Version: " …..teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God." . Here the singing is a separate action from the teaching, linked with thankfulness.

[29]   The distinction between praise and worship as made by contemporary music is foreign to biblical songs. Today "worship" is often seen as exclusively adoration in the second person. See Pass "leitourgic music" (Pass 1985: 1963) .

3.3. Church historical perspectives

3.3.1. The Early Church

It is clear that in spite of the openness to diversity in the passages in Colossians and Ephesians, the church throughout the ages has had problems with spontaneous songs of the Spirit, as these were a powerful and dangerous vehicle for false doctrine, outside the control of the authorities. Probably fairly early the church began to exercise control over what people sang, just as it began to define orthodox faith. Throughout history this control broke down again and again and was re-established.

Very little has been preserved from the first Christian centuries after the completion of the canon. The first completely preserved hymn is a lamplighting song, sung at evening services in the catacombs, which probably dates to around 200 AD (CHSC 219). It is mentioned by St. Basil in 370 AD as well known (Routley 1983:8). The first great hymn-writer was Ambrose, Bishop of Milan 340 – 397. He wrote in the context of the Arian controversy. The Arians composed songs which spread their teachings. Ambrose wrote Latin songs for the orthodox Christians always ending with a doxology, a praise to the Trinity (Routley 1983:9)[30]. Ambrose's Latin hymnody was a high point in Church hymnody not reached again until the Reformation as more and more tight control was exercised by the church as to what could be sung and in the end even who could sing (Kloppenburg 1998:267). Heresy could most effectively be controlled by limiting the freedom to preach freely and write one's own songs. So worship became restricted to a fixed liturgy with prescribed words and actions (Routley 1983:10).

A change in music was brought about by a change in acoustic space when the church moved from the catacombs to the basilicas. This brought about a greater professionalism, an increase in processions and choirs. The congregations became more passive (Letsosa 2007:69).

In the Eastern Church the liturgy has been fixed since the 5th century, (Liturgy of John Chrysostom). This liturgy has little of what in Western tradition is described as hymnody, but it has a very rich musical liturgical tradition and many prose chants have been described as hymns, especially if they are not directly based on psalms or other biblical texts, such as hymns to the virgin Mother of God (Rentel in Wainwright 2006:281-288). However, this part of Christian

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[30] Some of the Ambrosian hymns in translations are still in contemporary hymnals, for example the Luther translation of his hymn *Veni Redemptor Gentium (Saviour of the Nations, come* ELW 263 / EG 4).

29

tradition will not be discussed in this dissertation as it is so different in character and style from Western liturgical tradition and has had very little influence on my own Lutheran tradition.

3.3.2. Medieval hymnody

During the middle ages, very little congregational singing happened in public worship. Singing had been increasingly restricted to the priests and to members of the orders who sang liturgical plainsong and psalms, occasionally metrical Latin doxologies or hymns for special occasions. Some of the most well known of medieval hymns are *Lauda Sion Salvatore* by St. Thomas Aquinas (1227-74) (Routley 1983: 13), and the *Salve* Passion Cycle by Arnulf of Leuven (1200-1250). This cycle, later ascribed to Bernard of Clairvaux, is the basis of the later discussed hymn, *O Sacred Head* (see later chapter on Paul Gerhard).[31]

While the words that could be sung were increasingly restricted there was more flexibility in the musical expression and while early Gregorian chant was very simple, in later medieval masses the choir singing attracted more and more elaborate settings, often polyphonic which made the words increasingly difficult to understand. Most congregants were not able to understand the Latin text anymore, so the Mass became a musically elaborate performance, largely unintelligible to the congregants who were spectators viewing a drama centred on the elevation of the sacred host (Driscoll in Wainwright 2006:2008). While the musical settings did not help the congregants participate or understand, they did produce some musical masterpieces[32] which, however, today are more appropriately performed in concert halls.

However, outside public worship the authorities could not restrict what believers sang, and a rich medieval tradition of carols and religious ballads and dances developed outside formal public worship. Many of these were based on legend, focussed on the nativity or figures of the saints. They were often in the vernacular, or a mixture of Latin and the vernacular, for example *In Dulci Jubilo* (Routley 1983:12). This tradition became the focus for protest singing prior to the Reformation (Mitchell in Wainwright 2006:314).

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[31] See Kloppenburgs list of some medieval hymns and the brief indication what they show of the theology of that period (Kloppenburg 1998:267).

[32] See Ulrich's Chapter on the Vocal music of Catholic Composers (Ulrich 1963:133-156).

30

3.3.3. The Reformation

The reformers uniformly critiqued the musical praxis of the medieval church, which excluded congregants and obscured the words of proclamation. But they differed sharply as to what they proposed as its alternative. Their teaching affected the music and singing in those churches for generations. The following discussion centres on three reformers: Luther, Calvin (influenced by Martin Bucer) and Zwingli. Luther gave the most space and importance to music and Zwingli completely restricted it.

3.3.3.1. Zwingli (Zürich, Switzerland)

Huldrych Zwingli is said to have been the most musically gifted of the three reformers. Perhaps because of this he understood the power of music and its ability to influence emotions and faith. He felt and argued increasingly strongly that music is a worldly thing, which is good for relaxation and entertainment, but is dangerous because it manipulated feeling and distracts from spiritual endeavours. He argued for music and singing to be completely excluded from the service (Thompson 1961:142) so that people may give their ear to the word of God alone. He removed the organ from the churches in Zürich, and placed a high value on silence as a way to God. *Es is wider aller menschen vernunft, daß man in großem getös und getön andächtig sye* (– "It is against any common sense that one can be reverent surrounded by great sound and noise" – my translation) (quoted in Söhngen 1967:34). While he stated that he did not condemn singing and other ceremonies in other denominations (Zwingli 1525 in Thompson 149), he clearly felt that his was the best way, and attempted to find biblical arguments, mainly from Amos' rejection of the "noisy songs" (Amos 5:23) and the admonition in Colossians and Ephesians to sing to God "in your hearts" which Zwingli interpreted as a rejection of external singing (Leith 1981:211).

He encouraged the use of music in the home and in the school, even religious psalm singing was given a place here, and Zwingli composed religious songs, one of which is included in the German Lutheran Hymnal: *Herr, nun selbst den Wagen halt!* (EG 242), but in public worship prayer, silence and listening to the Word were to be supreme. From 1524 until 1598 there was no singing in the churches in Zürich and other Zwingli influenced areas. But then they began to allow unaccompanied psalm singing as promoted by Calvin (Söhngen 1967:44).

31

3.3.3.2. Calvin (Geneva, Switzerland):

John Calvin was not a musician and what he said about music was based on his theological reflections. Relatively early the Reformers in Geneva allowed vernacular psalm singing. But it was the stay at Strassburg and the influence of Martin Bucer which convinced Calvin of the power and usefulness of singing psalms in the vernacular, and motivated him to promote the production of the Genevan psalter (Wendel 1963:60).

For Calvin the Word was supreme. Music to him was a useful carrier of the word, but no more than that. It has no spiritual value in its own right. Like Zwingli, he thought that music was a human invention, easily misused to distract and manipulate (Calvin *Institutes* 3 XX:32). He was wary of the ability of music to influence emotions and transport words deep into the hearts of people. "When melody goes with it, every bad word penetrates much more deeply into the heart" (Preface to the Psalter in *Opera selecta* 2:17 in Leith 1981:211*)*. For this reason only biblical words should be set to music, so as not to open the door to heresy. There should be a clear distinction between secular and sacred music, with sacred music being dignified and suitable for cultivating a reverent attitude, they should have *poids et majesté* ("gravity and majesty"), a clearly "sacred" style which is neither a dance or a march (Albrecht 1995:143 and Söhngen 1967:63).

The words should always be clearly understood. For this reason, all polyphonic singing was outlawed, but even harmonisations and musical accompaniment was discouraged. Singing should be in unison and unaccompanied, so nothing would stand in the way to a clear understanding of the words to be proclaimed. Intelligibility was paramount:

> Spiritual songs can only be sung from the heart. Now the heart seeks after understanding, and in that, according to Saint Augustine, lies the difference between the songs of men and that of birds. For a finch, a nightingale, a parrot may sing well, but they do so without understanding. Now the proper gift of man is to sing, knowing what he says, since the intelligence must follow the heart and the emotions, which can only be when we have the song impressed in our minds in order to never cease singing.

> (*Opera selecta* 2:15 in Leith 1981:177)

It was metrical psalm singing, and the monumental work of the Genevan psalter which became characteristic of Calvinist worship and his most enduring legacy in worship reform. The first psalter was produced in 1539 which included some of Calvin's own metrical versifications, but he then drew in other poetic and musical talents. The poetical talents of Clement Marot and Theodore Beza and the musical talents of Guillaume Franc, Louis Bourgeois, Claude Goudimel and Pierre Davantés ensured the enduring popularity of the psalter which sustained Calvinists for generations

32

(Leith 1981:185). These psalms were prayers, sung proclamation, sustained their faith and trust and helped them to endure in times of persecution. Psalm 68 has been called the "Huguenot Marseillaise" (Leith 185-186).

The tunes of the Genevan psalter travelled throughout the Protestant world, and helped spread the Calvinist faith.   They were mainly tunes without a fixed constant rhythm, changing from duple to triple rhythms freely. This was in line with Calvin's position that a sacred tune should be neither a march nor a dance (Albrecht 1995:143). The Genevan Psalter entered Germany in the translation of Ambrosius Lobwasser and was enthusiastically received. So much so, that the Lutherans felt compelled to produce their own psalter, a collaboration between the poet Cornelius Becker and the well-known church musician Heinrich Schütz (see later discussion). Today the tunes of the Genevan psalter are found in most denominational hymnals, the most well-known being the "Old Hundredth" (*All people that on earth do dwell* ELW 883*)*   and the tune to Psalm 42/3 (*Comfort, comfort ye my people* ELW 256*).*

3.3.3.3. Luther (Wittenberg, Germany):

In this section the convention will be followed to cite references as found in the comprehensive editions of Luther's writings: *Luther's Works* (LW), and the two German editions, *Erlanger Ausgabe* (EA) and *Weimarer Ausgabe* (WA). They can be found in the Bibliography under "Luther".

Martin Luther was a great lover of music and had a markedly different approach to music in worship than the other two reformers. He too was critical of misuses in the medieval musical praxis, but maintained that music is in its essence good, even if people misuse it (LW 53: 316*).* He defended the use of music and the arts against fairly vociferous opposition (EA 62:297). He saw music as a gift of God, not as something man-made, but as a creation of God. This created being he personified as "Frau Musica" to whom he wrote a poetic tribute in his preface to the hymnal (EA 62: 295), a poem that has been set to music and included in the German Lutheran Hymnal (EG 319).

Luther saw music as very close to theology in its essence (EA 62:309). He opened the gates wide for all kinds of ways to use music in the service. Music can praise God on its own terms. It is not simply a carrier of the word. Simple instrumental interludes have their space in the service. Choirs can be used, even if the rich harmonies sometimes obscure the proclamation; the harmonies

33

themselves can praise the creator (Söhngen 1967:89). Luther encouraged people to write songs – words and tunes, and did not prescribe any style. People should praise God and proclaim his wonders with music. He wrote:

> Nor am I of the opinion that the gospel should destroy and blight all the arts, as some of the pseudo-religious claim. But I would like to see all the arts, especially music, used in the service of Him who gave and made them.
>
> (LW 53: 316)

Luther's worship reform had as important component the full participation of the congregation, and congregational singing was the major vehicle for this. In music, the congregation participated in proclamation, in confessing their faith and in "teaching and admonishing one another" (Col 3:16). He saw a three-fold role for music, as a way to praise God, as offering of the congregation and as a way to build Christian character (Blume 1965:10). Initially Luther encouraged others to write hymns, and some people did, but when not enough material was forthcoming for the needs of the fledgling congregations, he began to write himself (Friedenthal 1982:568).[33] His hymns cover a vast range of themes and musical styles, from reworked ancient and medieval hymns[34] and Gregorian chants to metrically rhymed psalms[35], to new hymns in a popular style with freely composed words.[36] Luther demonstrated his basic philosophy of taking the best of previous tradition and combining it with impulses from his new theological insights. Luther showed great talent as a poet and composer. His songs reached even a wider audience than his theological writings, leading his opponents to remark that Luther's songs "destroyed more souls than his speeches and writings" (Blume 1965:27). His most famous songs are: *A mighty fortress* , *Dear Christians one and all rejoice* and his Christmas song for children *From heaven above to earth I come.*[37] He quickly discovered the didactic power of songs and used them deliberately to spread his teachings. For example he produced metrical and musical versions of all five of the sections of his small catechism.[38] Some of these are too dry for use today, but at least his version of the Lord's

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[33] Friedenthal notes how Luther became a poet and musician out of didactic considerations, and necessity, and yet he had a greater influence on the people than any of those much greater musicians and poets that came after him.

[34] Luther translated Ambrose's *Veni Redemptor Gentium* (EG 4) and the Hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* by Hrabanus Maurus (EG 126), a Prayer for the Holy Spirit from the 13th century (EG 124), and *Media Vita in Morte sumus* from the 11th century, (EG 518) amongst others.

[35] The following psalms in paraphrases by Luther are still in the EG: Ps 12 (EG 273), Ps 67 (EG 280), Ps 124 (EG 297), Ps 130 (EG 299). His *A mighty fortress* is a very free paraphrase of Psalm 46.

[36] Luther created the tunes to *Dear Christians one and all rejoice* (ELW 594) and *From heaven above* (ELW 268). For the latter he first used a popular tune, then later made his own, perhaps because people objected to the associations (Blume 1965:19).

[37] *Ein feste Burg* (EG 362, LH 195), *Nun freut euch lieben Christen g'mein* (EG 341, LH 322), *Vom Himmel hoch* (EG 24, LH 23).

[38] Luther made metrical paraphrases of the 10 commandments (EG 231), the creed (EG 183), The Lord's prayer (EG 344) and wrote teaching songs about Baptism (EG 202) and Holy Communion (EG 214).

prayer is still regularly sung today (EG 344). The fact that he wrote in the vernacular made his songs accessible. He also deliberately sought to keep the language understandable to the public. In his letter to Georg Spalatin 1523 he pleaded for psalm paraphrases in contemporary language:

> Our plan is to follow the example of the prophets and the ancient fathers of the church, and to compose psalms for the people [in the] vernacular, that is, spiritual songs, so that the Word of God may be among the people also in the form of music. …. But I would like you to avoid any new words or the language used at court. In order to be understood by the people, only the simplest and the most common words should be used for singing; at the same time, however, they should be pure and apt; and further, the sense should be clear and as close as possible to the psalm. You need a free hand here: maintain the sense, but don't cling to the words; [rather] translate them with other appropriate words. I myself do not have so great a gift that I can do what I would like to see done here.
>
> (LW 49, 68-9)

So Luther had very open answers to the questions Who, Where and How? Anyone could and should sing, choirs and non-professionals, in the worship service, in the homes, anywhere where Christians come together, with or without instruments, unison or polyphonic. Tradition can be taken up where it does not compromise theological truth. To the question, Why should we sing? Luther gave an eloquent answer in his "Preface to the Babst Hymnal" of 1545:

> For God has cheered our hearts and minds through his dear Son, whom he gave for us to redeem us from sin, death, and the devil. He who believes this earnestly cannot be quiet about it. But he must gladly and willingly sing and speak about it so that others also may come and hear it.
>
> (LW 53:333)

Above all, for Luther, Christians sing to proclaim and share their faith. They also sing to praise God, express their trust, to find comfort, to worship and adore, and to build up the congregation. Luther's songs also contained an element of lament (for example his paraphrase of Psalm 130, *Out of the depths* EG 600). He saw his songs as expressing the whole of Christian experience. Through his emphasis on congregational singing he placed the service firmly back in the hands of the congregation.

The fact that Luther lifted restrictions on what and how to sing in services unleashed amazing creativity and made Lutheran areas leaders in church music for generations.

35

3. 3.4 History of hymnology after Luther

This can be only a very brief overview on how the answer to the above questions varied in the different periods after the Reformation (focussed here mainly on Lutheran and Reformed Germany and England). It also indicated how sometimes developments became extremely one-sided, after which the pendulum would swing to the opposite extreme. This goes against the concept of balance in singing which will be argued for in the next chapter.

Some answers to the questions above remained unchanged through the centuries. Congregational singing remained a fixture in Lutheran services, usually accompanied by the organ from at least the baroque era (EG *Liedkunde* 956.3). While initially most congregants sang from memory, there were always authorized collections which fixed what could and could not be sung in a Sunday worship service. The denominational conflicts and concern about heresy again restricted what could be sung in a Sunday service (Albrecht 1995:107).[39] Outside, in the homes and Christian fellowships, youth groups and revival meetings, newer songs had their place. A small percentage of these then found its way into the authorized hymnals, normally after some decades.[40]

What changed profoundly throughout the generations was obviously what was sung and why people were singing – what motivated people to write new songs. In the following very brief overview I follow the history of Hymnology given at the back of the German Lutheran Hymnal, the *Evangelisches Gesangbuch.* (EG 956.2-956.6). The references will come mainly from those contemporary hymnals that have author indexes.

3.3.4.1. Late Reformation and early Orthodox era (late 16th Century)

This period was dominated by the denominational conflicts and the concern for pure teaching. Hymns of proclamation were prominent. Hymns primarily taught the pure doctrine, sometimes with almost no response of the believer. Restrictive authorized hymnals were used by the leaders. Congregants were expected to learn the hymns off by heart (Albrecht 1995:107). With the

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[39]   Albrecht writes how hymns were restricted to about 30 or 40 in the rural areas where most people were illiterate. People were expected to learn these by heart.

[40]   The song collections of Johann Crüger, which will be discussed in the chapter on Paul Gerhardt, were not authorised hymnals for the church service, and mainly used for groups and home devotions (Albrecht 1995:109). It took 50 years for the songs of Paul Gerhardt to be included in the authorised hymnals.

36

translation of the Genevan Psalter by Ambrosius Lobwasser,[41] metrical psalms became more popular, so much so, that the Lutherans feared it would spread Calvinism in Lutheran areas, and commissioned their own "Lutheran psalter" produced by Becker and Heinrich Schütz.[42] Experience of persecution, war, the plague and hunger gave rise to hymns of hope for the second coming and eternal life (EG 956.2(2)). The hymns of Philipp Nicolai written during the bubonic plague in Unna became the most well-known.[43] In England metrical psalmody accompanied the advancement of the Protestant faith. However, many psalms were restricted into English common metre, leading to a lack of diversity in tunes (Routley 1983:25).

3.3.4.2. Confessionalism and baroque culture (early 17th Century)

This era was dominated by the experience of the Thirty Years' War which devastated Germany. Hymns focussed more on the individual and themes varied from a desire to escape this earth to an intense thankfulness for this earth and life. Hymns for all times of the church year and for seasons and times of day became popular and were intended for home devotions, not for the Sunday service (Albrecht 1995:40). Johann Heermann,[44] Paul Gerhardt and others had a strong emphasis on the cross and comfort for people in pain. There was more emotive content in the words and the tune and a growing emphasis on the individual faith response. Some baroque texts started to have the tendency to sentimentality[45] (EG 956.3(1)).

3.3.4.3. Reform Orthodoxy and early Pietism (late 17th Century)

This was a time of post-war reconstruction and of re-evaluating the meaning of faith and confession. Dogmatic controversies became less important than personal faith and conversion. People wrote not so much to teach theology but to express personal faith experiences, or to call

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[41] The Lobwasser Psalter (1573) remained the hymnal for the German reformed congregations for 200 years until it was largely supplanted by a new translation by Matthias Jorissen(1798). Two texts of Lobwasser are still in the EG (294 and 459).

[42] The psalter by Cornelius Becker was produced in 1602. Five of his texts are still in the EG, of which the most well known are probably are Psalm 100 (EG 288) and the version of Psalm 119 (four verses only still sung EG 295). The prominent Church musician Heinrich Schütz provided many of the tunes of which six are still in the EG, some of them with newer texts, for example one by Tersteegen (EG 393).

[43] The two hymns *Wake, awake* (ELW 436) and *O Morning Star, how fair and bright* (ELW 308) have been called the King and Queen of Lutheran Chorales (Rössler 1990:117). The tunes have been set to countless other texts. While the EG has tried to cut down on overuse of tunes (see later discussion), there are still six texts for the former and two for the latter tune included.

[44] Johann Heermann (1585-1647) not only suffered through the Thirty Years' War and deprivation but also severe personal illness and bereavement. His hymns are songs of comfort in the midst of pain. The most well-known of these is the passion hymn: *Ah, Holy Jesus* (ELW 349).

[45] An example of this is *Ermuntre dich, mein schwacher Geist*, a hymn for Christmas by Johann Rist. In EKG 24 this hymn has 6 verses. Some of those with more emotive language have been cut in the next edition, EG 33, which now has three verses. It might have been cut completely but for verse 4 which has been popularised in the Bach Christmas Oratorio. Verse 4 has now become verse 1 in the EG.

37

others to conversion. Songs focussed on the individual believer and the relationship to Jesus and song collections on individual piety (Albrecht 1995:111). The tunes were emotive, sometimes almost Aria-like, and expressed spiritual fervour, though not easy to sing. Only simpler tunes have survived from this era. The most famous hymnwriter of this era was Joachim Neander, from the reformed tradition, whose hymn *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty* is one of the most well-known from German Protestantism (ELW 858) (EG 956.3(2)). In England the long monopoly of Calvinist psalmody began to give way to freely composed hymns. Isaac Watts questioned why Christians should not sing about Christ. His collection of hymns, many still sung today,[46] opened space for a new age in English hymnody (Routley 1983: 31).

3.3.4.4.Pietism and Orthodoxy (early 18th Century)

The early 18th century was a time of revival and various spiritual movements grew rapidly, concentrated in various centres around the country. These movements had different spiritual and theological direction, with some being biblicist and otherworldly, and others (for example the Moravian settlement at Herrnhut) diaconical and missionary.   It was a musically rich time which produced the famous composers Telemann, Bach and Handel and the hymnwriters Tersteegen[47] and Zinzendorf[48] (EG 956.4 (1)). Music was a great motivator in the Moravian movement (Routley 1983:36).   Here again songs were emotive and expressed personal piety and discipleship. In England too the Methodist revival and the hymns of Charles and John Wesley[49] brought hymnody to a new height. Charles Wesley's hymns brought together biblical teaching, proclamation, and faith response. The resistance to " freely composed" hymns continued in the institutional church, and the new hymns were largely sung outside public worship (Routley 1983:39-41).

3.3.4.5. Enlightenment and biblical faith (later 18th Century)

The roots of the Enlightenment lie in the Renaissance and Reformation. But in the later 18th century scientific discovery and philosophy elevated reason to the highest place and began to question biblical revelation. Everything was subjected to reason, also theology and the hymns.

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[46] There are still 10 hymns by Watts in the ELW and 15 in the UMH. The most well-known are *When I survey the wondrous cross* (ELW 803) and *Joy to the world* (ELW 267).

[47] Gerhard Tersteegen was a lay theologian and mystic whose hymns became very popular amongst the pietists. Eight texts are still found in the EG. Several texts were translated, amongst others *God himself is present* (LH 501) and *Thou hidden love of God* translated by John Wesley (UMH 414).

[48] Nikolaus Graf von Zinzendorf was the founder of the Moravian community at Herrnhut. He understood singing to be an important faith and community building activity and wrote about 2000 hymns. Five of these are found in the EG. *Jesus, still lead on* is the most well-known in English congregations (ELW 624).

[49] Charles Wesley's hymns will be discussed in a separate chapter. John also contributed many texts, mainly new translations or paraphrases of older hymns (4 texts in the UMH) for example a free translation of Gerhardt *Give to the Winds thy fears* (UMH 129).

38

While this led to great advances in biblical scholarship it was to the great disadvantage of hymnody. Many hymnologists call it the time of "decay" (Blume 1965:217). Besides the praise of the creation and the creator, and an appeal to a moral life and love for neighbour there were few themes that inspired hymnwriting.[50] Many old hymns were ridiculed, or completely rewritten.[51] Other groups countered the rationalism around them with a simple biblical faith, or with biblicism. Few hymns have survived from this era, most notably those of Matthias Claudius, most well known for the song *We plough the fields and scatter* (ELW 680). He was very critical of the tendency to see the rational mind as absolute standard, and made this a theme in an evening song[52] (EG 956.4(2)). In England the high point was the production of the *Olney hymns* by John Newton and William Cowper[53] (Routley 1983:46-47). The controversy about freely composed hymns came to a head in a legal challenge in 1819 after which the Archbishop of York revoked the law against "songs of human composure" and officially allowed hymns to be sung in worship[54] (Routley 1983: 50). The fact that hymn singing was no longer associated with Dissenters led to a growing popularity of hymns and to the publication of hymnals (Spinks in Wainwright 2006:523).

3.3.4.6. 19th Century (Romantic era)

The excessive focus on dry rationalism gave way to a renewed focus on emotion on faith and on tradition. There was a rediscovery of the hymns of the reformation and also those of the pietistic era. Hymnody experienced a revival as the missionary movement gained momentum (EG 956.5). These were fervent songs of faith and calls to witness the gospel to the ends of the earth, sometimes mixed with militant nationalism. Many of these were collected in the song-book of the missionary movement, the *Missionsharfe* (see later discussion), some have survived to be included in the EG, most notably the hymns of Philipp Spitta.[55] A notable name in England was James Montgomery.[56]

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[50] Christian Fürchtegott Gellert had a broader range of themes than was normal for that era, but also wrote about human morality and neighbourly love (EG 412), an admittedly sadly neglected theme in other times, and praise for the creator (EG 506). Beyond this he wrote hymns for different seasons and times.

[51] Hymns were expected to conform to the rationalistic world view and scientific discovery. A story tells how Paul Gerhardt's evening hymn *Now rest beneath nights shadow* was criticised for the line "*the world in slumber lies"* as scientific insight had proved that only half the earth was sleeping at any one time. It was suggested to rewrite it, to "*es schläft die halbe Welt"* (half the world in slumber lies). His song of faith *Ist Gott für mich* was rewritten to become a song stressing good moral intentions (Albrecht 1995:119).

[52] The song *Der Mond ist aufgegangen.* In the translation of David Schubert:
Conceited, boasting loudly / of all we do so proudly, / we blindly seek our way.
We poor frail mortals, sinning, / mere webs of air are spinning, / and further from the goal we stray (LH 891 v 4).

[53] This partnership produced many enduring favourites, for example John Newton's *Amazing Grace* (LH 851) and *Glorious things of thee are spoken* (LH 187).

[54] Before the case was heard in court, Archbishop Vernon Harcourt officially sanctioned a revised edition of Cotterill's *Selection of Psalms and Hymns* (1967:150).

[55] Philipp Spitta (1801-1859) wrote and collected hymns for the Lutheran revival movement. His songs are fervent songs of faith and trust, but the tunes are simpler than many from that era and there is more in depth theological content, which is probably why more of his songs survived. Six of his texts are in the EG, some have survived in

39

In England the Oxford movement revived liturgy and hymnody and produced some English translations of much older Latin Hymns, especially by John Mason Neale, such as the hymn *O come, O come, Immanuel* (LH 2).[57]   Collections were made of traditional hymns and folk songs, and many songs were written in this style. The groundbreaking song-book *Hymns ancient and modern* emphasized the idea of diversity of tunes, and that each hymn should have its own (Routley 1983:57).[58]   Many hymns were taken over from Germany, mainly in the translations of Catherine Winkworth[59] (Routley 1983:58).

3.3.4.7. 20th Century first half - The singing movement and hymnody during National Socialism

At the turn of the century the liturgical and "Lutheran Renaissance" movements gained momentum which gave rise to a movement reviving singing and resulting in many song and choir collections. There was an emphasis on good taste and high standards in texts and music. This movement resulted in the first hymn-books uniting the regional churches: before the First World War (1915), the *Deutsches Evangelisches Gesangbuch DEG* and after the Second World War (1950) the *Evangelisches Kirchengesangbuch* EKG which brought together the Eastern and Western churches.

The rise of Hitler divided the singing in the church. Many hymns with nationalistic and militant content arose, and hymns were purged of Jewish content.[60] However, in the confessing church movement, new hymns which encouraged steadfastness and hope in times of affliction were born, which became accepted after the war[61] (EG 956.6(1)).

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translation, for example *Saviour, I shall be for ever* (LH 172).

[56]   Well-known hymns of James Montgomery are *Angels from the realms of glory* (ELW 275) and *Hail to the Lord's anointed* (ELW 311).

[57]   The ELW contains 14 Texts by J.M. Neale and the UMH has 10. Other well known texts are the translation of *In Dulci Jubilo*: *Good Christian friends rejoice* (ELW 288), *All glory, laud and honour* (ELW 344) a translation of a text by Theodulph of Orleans (760-821), and *Christ is made the sure foundation* from a 7th century hymn (ELW 645).

[58]   Many firm associations of tunes and texts come from the first edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, for example the match of *Hark the Herald Angels' sing* to MENDELSSOHN or *O God our help in ages past* to ST. ANNE. It also gave the text of Henry Lyte *Abide with me* a tune and popularised it (Routley 1983: 57).

[59]   Catherine Winkworth was the most successful translator of hymns from German. She wrote none of her own. ELW has 19 of her texts, and UMH 14 though many have been revised and modernised. Well-known texts: *Comfort, comfort now my people* (ELW 256), *Now thank we all our God* (ELW 840) *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty* (ELW 858).

[60]   The German Christians produced a song-book *Gesangbuch der kommenden Kirche*. They tried to remove all "Judaisms" from the hymn texts, for example words like Jehova, Zion, Halleluja, Hosianna and names like Abraham and David, even Jerusalem were purged. They wanted a more "heroic" Christian faith (Albrecht 1995: 127).

[61]   Notable names here are Jochen Klepper, Otto Riethmüller, Rudolf Alexander Schroeder and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Some of these hymns have been translated in recent years for example Bonhoeffer's *By gracious powers* (ELW 626) and Klepper's *The night is marching onwards* (LH 738).

40

In England too at the turn of the century there was an emphasis on "good hymnody" and good taste in church music. This was amongst others promoted by Robert Bridges[62] and the composer Ralph Vaughn Williams[63] who became the musical editor of the *English Hymnal* of 1906 (Routley 1983: 72). However, after this high point, hymn-writing went into decline, with questions being raised whether Bridges had raised the standards too high (Routley 75).

3.3.4.8. The new and ecumenical song movement

After the war, the young generation, disillusioned with German nationalism turned towards America for its musical inspiration. Jazz, spirituals and biblical chansons became popular. A new openness to the world gave momentum to the ecumenical movement. On Church festivals and at competitions song-writers were encouraged to experiment with new styles. Prominent themes were social justice and neighbourly love, and an awareness of the need for Christian unity across boundaries.[64] Shorter choruses which enabled people to sing together easily gained popularity, particularly also the chants of the Taizé community[65] (EG 956.6 (2)).

There was less emphasis on high quality, and the guitar became a popular instrument to accompany religious singing. This was the case in England too, where, more so than in Germany, the ascendant pop culture had a strong effect on hymnody. People experimented with service styles to make worship attractive to those not coming to church. Music was seen to be the key to effective evangelism.

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to thoroughly discuss the very complex musical landscape of the second half of the 20th century. Most of the styles did not affect our church directly. Influences included the Jesus Movement and other movements to incorporate contemporary gospel pop and rock music into Christian culture (Bozeman in Browne 2001:438). This was the beginning of the contemporary Christian music industry which is now a multi-million dollar business (Scheer 2006:213). Routley comments that after 1955 developments in music were in "such a state of flux, that people were reluctant to produce new hymnals" (Routley 1983:93) and only supplements were

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[62]   Robert Bridges wrote translations and paraphrases of older hymns, amongst others *When morning gilds the skies* (ELW 853) based on a 19th century German hymn.

[63]   Ralph Vaughn Williams wrote many new tunes for *The English Hymnal*. Some of these were new arrangements of folk tunes: Examples: FOREST GREEN, matched in British tradition to *O Little town of Bethlehem* (LH 633), and SINE NOMINE matched to *For all the saints* ELW 422.

[64]   Examples are *Hilf Herr, meines Lebens (*SR 40, EG 419), *Zwischen Jericho und Jerusalem* (SR 42), *Brich mit den Hungrigen dein Brot* (EG 420), *Komm in unsre stolze Welt* (EG 428).

[65]   Some of these have gained entrance into denominational hymnals: EG 789.1- 789.7, 553, 579, 587, 648, 649, 656-8, 660.

41

produced. Since then, however, many new denominational hymnals have come out, but they only cautiously accept products from these contemporary movements.

3.3.4.9. The Praise and Worship movement

Of all these different streams, only the Praise and Worship movement had a deep and lasting impact on our church. It will therefore be discussed a bit more thoroughly here.   Also the two song-writers who will be discussed in later chapters are generally seen as part of this movement.

The Praise and Worship movement arose out of the charismatic movement in the later 70's and early 80's, and spread around the world. This movement has its roots in 18th century camp meetings, and worship festivals as well as in the Jesus Movement of the 60s and black gospel music (Scheer 2006:13).   One can also see influences of the Methodist Holiness movement, African American Churches and Methodist revivalism (Barnard 2006:51-52). The movement was also a reaction to the "Seeker Service" movement of Willow Creek (Barnard 2006:51). The "Seeker services" were not "services" in strict sense of word but evangelistic events. One talked about God, but not to God. The movement began when Christians rediscovered the centrality of worship to Christian life.

According to Robert Webber this movement is characterised by a "concern for the immediacy of the Spirit, a desire for intimacy, and a persuasion that music and informality must connect with people of a post-Christian culture" (Webber 1994:128). A distinguishing feature of the movement is its tendency to distinguish praise from worship and to see worship as a process which moves people into an ever more intimate experience of God. Praise is offered first. It extols God for what He does and is offered to God in the "forecourt of the temple" (Webber 129-130). Praise leads into more intimate "worship", which focusses on the relationship with God and on who He is. This experience is likened to being in the Holy of Holies, and is often accompanied by intense emotional experiences of God's presence and blessing (Webber 130-131). Barnard describes it as "free-flowing praise" following a particular sequence: 1) Invitation, 2) Engagement 3) Exaltation 4)Worship 5) Intimacy (Barnard 2006: 53). Worship leaders rose to prominence in this emotionally engaging service, often shaping all except the sermon (Scheer 2006:15).

Musically, it was a reaction to upbeat Jazz styles and entertainment; it wanted to focus on God and draw people into an experience of His presence. The musical style became much slower and instead of short choruses focussing on single Bible verses, most songs were written as a direct address to God. The songs of Graham Kendrick and the "March for Jesus" movement he founded

42

was a transition between the public, socially conscious and the much more inward, feeling focussed music of the worship movement (see later chapter). With some exceptions, there was less focus on community (Spinks 2010:93) or proclamation or the consequences of Christian faith, all focus was on God, and on the experience of being in His presence (Tönsing 2008,99-100). Still, very much, music was the key to drawing people in to services. The music is marketed very effectively throughout the world. This has also had the unfortunate consequence that there is a "use and discard" effect and an increasingly high turnover of music (Barnard 2006:55).

Scheer writes perceptively:

> Though the Praise and Worship genre dominates the charts and churches today, some question how long this can last. Like any popular music, it will gain momentum, become overplayed, then be replaced by a new fad ... Any trend that so permeates the market will eventually become a caricature of itself rather than the refreshing expression it once was. My hope is that when the Praise and Worship style recedes, it will leave room for exciting and authentic local expressions of worship.
>
> (Scheer 2006:213)

Now that we are well into the second decade of the century, one can begin to see such a shift towards songs with more content, more proclamation and a renewed focus on context. Notable here are especially the songs of Stuart Townend, but also Keith and Kristyn Getty and others. *Songs of Fellowship IV* was published in 2007 and 73% of its songs have more than one verse, over against 42% in *Songs of Fellowship I.* Also the verses tend to be longer. Many of those in *Songs of Fellowship I* were a mere one or two lines.[66] It is fairly clear, also from the popularity of Stuart Townend's songs, that the worshipping congregations have started to look for more content and theology in the songs they sing which can only be welcomed.

It is too early to say where it will lead, but looking back one can be fairly certain that the songs of the next generation will be different from today's, but will probably bring their own theological and musical excesses.

3.4. Conclusion from historical overview:

The debate about whether or not Christians should sing in public worship and whether one is allowed to sing with musical accompaniment or in parts seems largely settled in most Christian churches. Most churches would agree that the congregation should be singing, though this

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[66] The count in both books included only the songs of the last 30 years before publication, and excluded those songs where only a word or phrase changed in each verse. A high percentage of the songs with more content in SF I are songs by Graham Kendrick. In the other two books, counted by the same system, the percentage is as follows: in SF II: 52% with more than one verse and in SF III: 59%.

43

participation may be compromised by a too rapid turnover of new songs. Debates abound about the question "what" congregations should be singing, and what the relative importance is of "old" that is long familiar music versus new and "contemporary". The historical overview has shown that every generation had its own favourite themes and its own theologically one-sided excesses. To find a balance in themes and theological insights a good balance of songs from all different generations is probably the easiest way to go.

The next chapter will look at songs from a liturgical perspective, from their place in the Sunday worship service. While the liturgy has also seen historical development, there will be less focus on the history than on the structure of the service itself.

CHAPTER FOUR – DEVELOPING A THEORY TO STUDY SONGS

LITURGICAL AND SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES

4.1. Introduction

Christian songs are sung in many settings, but their primary setting is the Christian worship service usually on a Sunday morning, when Christians of a particular denomination gather together to sing, pray, praise and adore, listen to the word of God and, more or less often, celebrate holy communion together. It is this congregational setting primarily that determines what can or should be sung, and what songs will survive.

However, there are as many differences of opinion about what the Sunday morning service is and should do, as there are different theological approaches among Christians. There is also not universal agreement about the use of the term "worship". From Orthodox Christians who enact the great mystery in the same way it has been done for centuries to contemporary charismatic churches who see worship as a way of evangelising people today, the understanding of the essence of worship varies widely. It goes without saying that the opinions about the role of music, songs and hymns within this worship also differs widely. But probably all Christians would agree that the public worship service lies at the heart of any church's self-understanding and Christian practice.

It goes beyond the scope of this thesis to do a thorough comparative study of liturgical approaches. This chapter will generally confine itself to a Lutheran approach while looking at other approaches and definitions where they appear enriching and relevant. Much work has also been done in practical theology in the realm of studying liturgy as cultural ritual from a cultural-anthropological approach. While this work will be referred to, this chapter will largely concentrate on examining the self-understanding and practices of worshipping Christian congregations.

The Lutheran World Federation's 1996: *Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture* defines worship in the following way:

> Worship is the heart and pulse of the Christian Church. In worship we celebrate together God's gracious gifts of creation and salvation, and are strengthened to live in response to God's grace. Worship always involves actions, not merely words. To consider worship is to consider music, art, and architecture, as well as liturgy and preaching.
>
> (LWF 1996 Online)

45

In this definition is already a recognition of both the vertical and the horizontal aspects of worship (that is praising and adoring God and building up the fellowship of believers). There is also the realisation that worship is not only that which "comes before the sermon", something Carson criticises as a "reductionist" approach to worship (Carson 1993:14). Carson argues that worship is a lot more than what happens on a Sunday morning, a point also made by many other liturgists.[67] However, most studies of worship do confine themselves, for practical reasons, to the corporate activities of Christians gathered, usually on a Sunday morning.

Christian worship shapes Christian theology and practice and probably shaped the development of the Christian Scriptures: "Worship is not something tangential to the Christian story but a matter that lies at the very heart of the Christian Scriptures from the beginning to the end" (Webber 1994:19). And singing in some form has for most of this time been an essential part of worship. This goes from liturgical chant to contemporary choruses. The Catholic scholar Lysik writes: "A liturgical service takes on a nobler aspect when the rites are celebrated with singing" (Lysik 2004:25). It is often commented on that music helps people enter into an encounter with God and helps them express their praise and adoration. Klomp comments on the way the "sound of worship" creates a "sacramental" space for the encounter with the living Christ (Klomp 2011: 223). But at different times and places in the service, music and hymns have very different functions.

4.2. Terms for the worship service and definitions of worship

Some of the differences in understanding are expressed in the different words that different traditions use for what happens on a Sunday morning. Several of these will be used interchangeably in this thesis to signify everything that happens on the Sunday morning:

The word "liturgy" comes from the Greek word *leitourgia,* derived from "work" *ergon* and "people", *laos.* This word referred to a public work, performed for the benefit of the city or state. This could have involved donated services or taxes. This word emphasizes the participation of the people as a whole for the benefit of others (White 2000:23). The word acquired a broader meaning

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[67] Oskamp quotes a pastor in a reformed congregation in the Netherlands, who argues that a sober liturgy ("sobere liturgie") is the most appropriate because the real liturgy and service to God takes place in the world. "*Onze diens van God verrichten wij bovenal in de wereld.*" (Oskamp 1998:14).

46

to include the work done by slaves for their masters and the acts of service one did for one's friends (Chupungco 1997:3). In the Septuagint it is normally used for the levitical cult, in the New Testament for priestly or magisterial functions, the spiritual sacrifice and the cultic celebration of Christians (Chupungco 1997:3). Today it is widely used by the historical churches to signify the historical form of the divine service with its repetitive parts. Although all forms of worship have their repetitive patterns, normally today when people speak about "liturgy" they are referring to the traditional, historical service. Important in the word liturgy is the indication that this is something the congregation is involved in and actively engaging in and not merely a spectator in.

The English word "Worship" which has now come to be the dominant word in use comes from the Old English word *weorthscipe* - "attributing value or respect to someone" (White 2000:25). It is still used to address a mayor or a magistrate. The Oxford concise Dictionary defines "worship" as: "adore as divine, pay religious homage to, idolize, regard with adoration" (Sykes 1984: 1243). This word, like "liturgy", emphasizes the human response to God that is an important part of a worship service: that is giving praise and adoration to God, thereby acknowledging his worth in our lives. Although it is the word now which is most widely used and understood, therefore also the word which I am using most, it is problematic in that it emphasizes almost exclusively the human response and can be seen as changing God into a "spectator" in the service (Morgenthaler 1995:42). The word is used generally for Christian religious activity on a Sunday morning, but also more specifically to denote the more contemporary kind of service with "worship" music, that is slower, reverent songs generally in the second person, addressing God directly and expressing love and promising allegiance.[68]

Cult / Culto: This word has its origin in the Latin *colere,* "to cultivate". It emphasizes the relationship of mutual responsibility, as between farmer, land and animals, a relationship of giving and receiving, of nurturing faith. Unfortunately the English word has become associated with bizarre and closed forms of faith and so is not really useable for the Sunday Service (White 2000:24).

Other words have come to be associated with the Sunday Service without being the primary association: *Celebration* (White 28) is frequently used also in secular context, so does not have a

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[68] In SF I of the songs listed under " Worship and Adoration" in the index 59 out of 75 are in the second person. This proportion is even higher if one only looks at songs from the last 20 years.

47

specific meaning, but it emphasizes the communal and the joyful aspect of worship. *Ritual* refers to the repetitive nature of the act, which may also be of secular nature. *Ordo/ Order* refers to the ordered structure of a traditional liturgical service (White 2000:28).

The word preferred in the Lutheran context is the word "Divine Service" (German *Gottesdienst)* which carries the sense of mutual service – God serving us and we serving God in return. Luther insists that God serving us is primary, and our serving God is a secondary response to the saving act of God.[69] That "liturgy" or "worship" starts with the action of God and not with our action is the foundation of the Lutheran understanding of liturgy (Lengeling 1981:18). This understanding is also present in many other denominations and within liturgical studies. Immink speaks of the "two-fold movement" (*dubbele beweging)* from God to congregation and from the congregation or individual to God (Immink 1998:67). This leads to an understanding of liturgy as a "dialogue".

4.3. Liturgy as dialogue

There are really two ways of understanding worship: A transactional way which starts with our act of worship, supplication and praise, which results in God's response of blessing, forgiveness and guidance. This is the understanding of all sacrificial cults[70] and the natural way that people tend to think about religion. It seems to be an underlying theology of some of the contemporary Praise and Worship movement, which sees God as the "audience" of worship. Morgenthaler writes that worship services should be "joyful, wholehearted ministering to the heart of God" and not performances for the sake of a human audience (Morgenthaler 1995, 42). However, she shifts the role of spectator from the public to God. God responds to our act of worship. This is echoed in the words of the Hillsong musician Darlene Zschech when she writes:

> Throughout the stories in the Bible, whenever someone demonstrated exravagant worship, God reacted with extravagant blessing. It's cause and effect. Extravagant worship brings extravagant results.
>
> (Zschech 2002:35)

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[69] Luther writes "This is the only service in the New Testament (*Hic est unicus cultus Novi Testamenti)* which we have to render to God, that we preach the benefits which God showed to us sinners in Christ." (Luther 1527-29 WA 25:156) In an Advent sermon he writes: "The only good we can do for God is Praise and Thanksgiving. This is the only true *Gottesdienst*. All other goods we receive from him, so that we can give such offerings of praise." Luther 1525 WA 10 I 2:80)

[70] The Oxford Concise Dictionary defines sacrifice as " *the slaughter of animal or person, surrender of a possession, as offering to a deity, act of prayer or thanksgiving or penitence as propitiation"* and defines "propitiation" as "*appeasement",* that is, something one does to change the mind of the deity and its action towards the individual (Sykes 1984, 919 & 826).

48

In this understanding we are the ones initiating the action, and God responds with more or less blessing, depending on how well we have worshipped. However, in the case of Zschech the impression that all hinges on our worship is mitigated by some of her later words, where she speaks about the "silent years", when we do not have much to give, but may find that this time deepens our relationship to God more than our active worship (Zschech 2002: 206).

The second way to understand worship is to realise that the movement starts with God's acceptance, promise and forgiveness, to which our worship, praise and confession is the response. "This story of God initiating a relationship and of the people responding in faith is not only the story of salvation and redemption, but it comprises the very essence of worship" (Webber 1994:19). If it is accepted that the movement starts with God, God is never a spectator but always " both director and principal actor" (Tönsing 2008:101).

Immink's "two-fold movement" is taken up by the Catholic scholar A Ruff, who stresses that the initiative for salvation is on God's part, and that the Christian liturgy is a response to God's initiative. He characterises the two-fold movement as follows: " Movement of God towards humanity with gift of himself, movement of humans towards God in the act of faith" (Ruff 2007:2). This double movement is present within the liturgy itself, and part of the attitude of the worshipper, the "*homo liturgicus*" is receptivity, being ready to receive what God gives (Daneels in Pecklers 2003:10).

Pecklers writes:

> But Christian worship is fundamentally God's work in or on us as God's salvific purpose is worked out and accomplished. It is a divine activity – an event of tremendous grace – at which the community encounters God in holy mystery, not as passive spectators but rather as active participants. It is God who invites them into that holy presence and their liturgical participation is a response to that invitation...
> ....We approach God's presence with open hands and hearts because we are simply too weak and poor to offer God *anything*. God doesn't need worship; we do. We gather to acknowledge our very fragile essence as creatures and our utter dependence on God who alone can save us.
> God's initiative and our response forms the dialogical nature of all Christian worship. This dialogue does not remain within the confines of the assembly, but extends beyond the Church to embrace the whole human family – believers and non-believers alike. As such, Christian worship imitates the pattern of our salvation which began with God's initiative and followed with our response – both individually and in common.
>
> (Pecklers K., 2003, 23)

4.4. The aim of worship

The Catholic formulation of the aim of the liturgy is " the perfect glorification of God and the

49

sanctification of those who celebrate it" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium SC7* quoted in Chupungco 1997:5). This again is a two-fold definition which takes into consideration a horizontal and a vertical dimension to worship. But there is a difference in emphasis as to whether the "sanctification" or the "strengthening" is in order to better express our thanks and adoration to God, or whether worship prepares us for service in the world. Many definitions of worship do not consider this additional meaning to the word service, but think only of people serving God in a religious sense. Clowney in his article on Presbyterian worship shows how Presbyterian liturgy became "focussed on the glory of God" (Clowney in Carson 1993:117) and was guided by the Westminster Catechism's phrase on the goal of human life: " Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever" (Clowney in Carson 1993:111).

The Methodist *Africana Worship Book* presents the following definition of worship:

> Worship is response. Worship recognizes that God is present, or at least recognizes that God might, in the vernacular of some African-American church people "show up and show out" .
> Worship is a human response to the mystery of all worlds.
>
> (Bridgeman Davis 2006:17)

The expectation is that the experience of the presence of God will be transformative in one's daily life. Another formulation in this series it that "we make a larger space for God than is normal in our day to day grind" which helps us to "experience spiritual reformation" (Bridgeman Davis 2007:17). The expectation is that worship itself and not only the sermon, has an effect on the worshipping believer, in strengthening faith and building character (Dawn 1995:106). The LWF phrase, we are "strengthened to live in response to God's grace" (LWF 1996) does have a dimension of awareness of the service to God within life and the world, but the reality on the ground does not always take cognisance of this dimension of worship.

4. 5. Social and cultural aspects of worship

Worship has always shaped and been shaped by culture. It has been a preserver of culture,(conserving), but also a vanguard of culture, enabling a culture to change and develop, for example in music, architecture and other art forms. This it shares with rituals in general which are both a means to codify a culture's practices, and a means to develop and change them. Bell writes that rituals are not a matter of unchanging tradition, but "on the contrary, some analysts now see ritual as a particularly effective means of mediating tradition and change, that is, as a medium for appropriating some changes while maintaining a sense of cultural continuity" (Bell 1997:251). This change and continuity can be seen very clearly in a community's singing culture.

50

It goes far beyond the scope of this study to discuss these questions in detail, but as it relates to music there are several aspects to consider:

1) Songs preserve what is best of the past culture, give a sense of history to the present.

2) Songs define cultural and social identity

3) Songs are a vehicle for translating faith truths into contemporary culture

4) Elements of culture need to be evaluated and taken up critically.

4.5.1. Songs preserve what is best of the past culture, give a sense of history to the present

Rituals in general, and liturgy in particular are a means to preserve cultural learnings of the past. This does not mean that they are static, but that they help to order how a group sees and deals with its past, helping to give it identity. Wepener writes that life is not possible if one has to continually invent new ways of interacting and engaging with one another in a group (Wepener 2008:314) and tradition streamlines this interaction and gives a group definition. Music and especially songs is one of the many ways cultures codify their traditions and identity. How it does this is a fairly complex interplay between the individual creative artist, or those who try to introduce a new tradition and the group that receives this. The word " inculturation" very broadly has been used for the process where one tradition is transmitted to another group. Within this process, some aspects of the tradition are accepted and preserved and others not (Wepener 2008:316). Something similarly complex happens when innovative or creative people try to introduce a completely new tradition, for example elements of liturgy, music or songs. On what grounds are traditions accepted to become an integral part of the culture, or rejected?

Every culture and age produces its own music and visual or dramatic art. Of this relatively little survives into the next generation, but what does, is often the best of its age. Some of it survives because it expresses so precisely the spirit of an age, and can help future generations understand an age and what the people must have experienced and thought. Sometimes, however, the true greatness of a work of art is only appreciated later.[71] These are often those works which become trendsetters, triggering a shift in culture or style. These are generally masterpieces that later define

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[71] In the first category in the case of visual arts are often those pieces commissioned by powerful rulers to glorify their reign or the nation, and as they are made with valuable materials and placed in prominent places they have a good chance of survival (for example Greek and Roman statues) (Munro 1979: 37- 62). They represent the spirit of an age. The artworks of Vincent van Gogh are prominent examples of the latter (Munro 1979: 240-241). During his life his greatness was not recognised by many.

developments or epochs. This is true also of songs. In Hymnology particular song-writers can be seen as having defined and shaped the shift of an epoch.[72]

There are also examples in history where masterpieces have been forgotten or even destroyed by later generations who did not understand them. Sometimes, though, valuable forgotten treasures have been rediscovered (see section on music). Sometimes in such cases, new generations discover in these historical documents sources of hope and inspiration for the present. This was evident in the increased popularity of the Reformation hymns in the confessing church in Germany, during the Nazi era (EG 956.6 (1)).

Christian songs preserve what is best of the faith experiences of previous generations of Christians. And when they are studied, they deepen the sense of history of those Christians today who sing and appreciate them. It becomes clear that we are not the first generation that had experiences with faith.

4.5.2. Songs define cultural and social identity

Bell describes one of the functions of ritual, particularly of community feasts and festivals as identity formation. Festivals are "social dramas, by which the group enters into a dialogue with itself about itself" (Bell 1997:120). Participation in a feast is a means for "defining and reaffirming the full extent of the human and cosmic community" (Bell 1997:123).

Music has long been part of the human rituals around festivals and getting together. In general singing together and the type of songs sung, help define one's group and one's role in it. This is still clear today in national anthems or other patriotic songs, and in religious music which helps define denominational identity.[73]

A change of group or world view is often accompanied by a change in traditions. This is true of all ritual, not only of music. A change of identity is marked by changed rituals. This happens for example when young people assert themselves over against their parents, rejecting their culture

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[72] This would be true of Paul Gerhardt's songs who within an age of Orthodoxy opened the way to more emotive expressiveness, or of Zinzendorf's hymns. He defined Moravian music for generations (EG 956.3 and 956.4).

[73] Most denominations will have certain hymns which are part of their identity in whatever language they may worship. This will be certain Wesley hymns for the Methodists, "A mighty fortress" for the Lutherans. Singing songs only of the last 20 years usually defines youth culture.

52

and music and adopting a different one.[74] This also happened in missionary outreach. In Western mission to Africa, converting to Christianity also meant a different way of dressing and different music. Adopting Christianity was accompanied by a rejection of African music, sounds and instruments (Steinert 2003:110). While some Christian missionaries insisted on this, others would have liked to introduce percussion and African sounds, but this was often rejected by the African converts themselves, for whom the African sounds had strong associations.[75] Rosenkranz documents this phenomenon in missions around the world. In many places new converts resisted singing with a "truly local sound" as this music to them had a too strong association with their old faith. In most places, mission in new places began musically with European songs translated into the local language (Rosenkranz 1951, Knight 2010). Of course, there is no denying that many missionaries actively encouraged or even forced this change of culture (Egbulem in Wainwright 2006:678). The Christian identity was a semi-European identity.[76] It is unclear how much of this was rejection of the old faith and how much was the overpowering dominance of the colonial culture. However, the second shift was inevitable, where a true local identity is sought and indigenous sounds are welcomed back into the new faith. This second shift is important if the new faith is to have a lasting home in the new culture. This second shift is where the inculturation debate begins.

Many evangelistic movements have used the fact that music builds group identity with great effect. Of course this may reinforce divisions within the church and community, and this needs to be kept in mind.

4.5.3. Songs are a vehicle for translating faith truths into contemporary culture

The discussion in the church around inculturation has been going on for many decades. In the Catholic church it has been acute at least since Vatican II. Chupungco, one of the most prominent writers on this topic distinguishes various different words in the debate, many of which are

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[74] The website Ypulse traces how the "Millennial" generation enjoys music and argues that it is less the particular style of music which is important to them, than the fact that it is enjoyed and shared via social media and is in some way participatory. But music has to be sufficiently recent to be accessible technologically and live. (Ypulse 2013)

[75] Compare the argument in Fiedler that African converts tended to want to adopt cultural elements of Western Christianity which they saw as personally beneficial (Fiedler 1996:11).

[76] There seems to be only one exception to the general rule that converts accepted European culture also in its music: Xhosa Christian hymns composed by an early Xhosa convert, Ntsikana who came to faith in 1814. This music, however, lay dormant for a long time, until it was rediscovered and embraced by Xhosa ministers and music scholars at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century (Knight 2010).

53

relevant to the question of music in worship. " Indigenization" means conferring on the liturgy a cultural form native to the local community (Chupungco 1992: 14). More often than not this is achieved by using indigenous music, sometimes as settings to traditional liturgical pieces. The motivation for inculturation is Christ's incarnation, his identification with the human beings He came to live with and preach to (Chupungco 1992:17). " Contextualization" (1992:19) is a more general word, used less in the musical than in the theological debates, but it nevertheless is clear that music and songs also arise from particular contexts, and should take their context seriously. There needs to be awareness around this. "Acculturation" is described as an "encounter between two cultures" where there is " juxtaposition, not interpenetration" (1992:27). This happens often in the case of music where different styles simply exist side by side, without influencing each other. This is an important precondition for "inculturation", where there is a "creative dynamic relationship" and a mutual influence between the Christian message and the cultures it has touched (1992:28). In music this dynamic relationship happens all the time, with musical styles influencing one another and spreading to other cultures and worship styles. This should, however, not become a one-way process, but a critical process of " interaction and reciprocal assimilation" (1992:29).

Songs are one of the best ways to translate faith truths into contemporary culture and every generation needs to do this for themselves. Not every translation will prove to have lasting value, but it still needs to be done if the church is to retain its relevance and connection to people living in this contemporary culture. Music is an effective way to reach people where they are. But it should not be the music styles of the contemporary culture that simply determine the liturgy, but a critical process of taking up the styles that will serve the purpose of transmitting the Christian message. Chupungco's categories of "dynamic equivalence", " creative assimilation" and "organic progression" are descriptions of methods by which the Roman Mass can be inculturated (Chupungco 1992:37). But they are relevant to the music debate in showing the care and the critical awareness needed in adapting Christian liturgy and worship styles to contemporary culture. One needs to look in contemporary culture for valuable elements that can be incorporated into worship and into one's tradition for elements that can be translated into an understandable medium for contemporary culture.

While worship needs to be rooted in culture it should never lead to a comfortable ethnic ghetto existence, but always preserve the identity of church as " sacramental presence of Christ's body in a fragile and broken world" (Klomp 2011:231).

54

4.5.4. Elements of culture need to be evaluated and taken up critically

As has been stated above, any inculturation needs to be done critically and planning worship so as to touch people within a given culture is a constant challenge. All cultures contain elements to be affirmed and others to be rejected by Christians (Wainwright & Tucker 2006:27). Worship needs to remember its mandate to draw together the body of Christ, and while no service can effectively reach all ages and cultures, there should be the element of openness to all ages and cultures. Redman quotes William Temple, "He who marries the spirit of the age will find himself a widower in the next" (Redman 2002: 129). It is important for the church to remain distinguishable from the surrounding culture, otherwise it loses its relevance.

> It is my claim that we ought not to, and do not need to, conform to our culture's patterns, but that the Christian community must intentionally sustain its unique character and just as intentionally care about the culture around it in order to be able to introduce people genuinely to Christ and to nurture individuals to live faithfully.

(Dawn 1995:11)

However, it is also no longer relevant if it has no meaningful points of contact with cultural rituals (Pass 1985:91). Farhadian points out that Christian unity will always lie in common worship rather than in ideologies or ethnic similarities, and that this common worship should be enabled even within the process of inculturation (Farhadian 2007:1). Worship critiques culture and culture shapes worship (Farhadian 2007:10). Quoting John Witvliet he gives some markers of vital worship. One of these is "Vital worship happens best in healthy communities which are marked by honesty, integrity, unity and pastoral concern for each worshiper" (Farhadian 2007:197). This means taking their contexts seriously, but also what unites them.

> What we need, then, in thinking about worship, is to sharpen our theological ears so that we can both listen *to* the culture with respect and to listen *through* the culture with insight and deeper understanding. When we listen to the culture, we will hear a yearning for God and a yearning for human community, albeit expressed in language far too small and individualistic and full of contradictions. When we listen through the culture, we can hear people hungering for more than they know how to say, for true community and for the living God.

(Long 2001: 32)

4.6. Elements of worship

55

It is far beyond the scope of this dissertation to do a comprehensive comparative analysis of liturgical elements in the different traditions. This overview again carries a Lutheran emphasis, but in dialogue with other traditions and considers how these are relevant to congregational song.

4.6.1. Praise and Thanksgiving

Praise in some form is an element of practically all worship traditions. Praise can be spoken or sung. To praise God is to proclaim what God has done, and glorify Him for it. The Oxford Concise Dictionary definition of praise is "express warm approbation of, commend the merits of (person, thing); glorify, extol the attributes of (God etc)" (Sykes 1984: 806). Praise is a large part of the content of the Psalter and biblical poetry and also became a central part of early Christian worship both in the Eastern and the Western tradition. In the historical liturgy, praise is part of the service in the Gloria in excelsis and various sung responses (EG 179, 180, 181, ELW pp 99, 121, 131, 160). Since the Reformation, praise has been a large part of the content of congregational participation in the sung psalms (for example the paraphrase of Psalm 100 EG 293 or Ps 103 EG 289) or hymns of praise (EG 316 to 340). This is the case in most Lutheran services. Other traditions have featured exuberant praise songs and congregational participation including raising of the hands. Songs of praise can be directed at God directly, in the second person, or speak of God in the third person, addressed to one another. They can be general, proclaiming the greatness of God, or theological statements, proclaiming the central content of faith. In the Willow Creek "seekers' services" praise to God directly gave way to proclamation about him, as it was expected that seekers could not join in direct praise to God (Morgenthaler 1995:44). The Praise and Worship movement made praise again a central part of the Sunday service, preferably directly to God in the second person (Morgenthaler 1995:190). Most of this was in the form of song. Thanksgiving is often directly linked with praise, as God is praised and thanked for what He did for his people (this is often done in the psalms, for example Ps 118, EG 294), or it can be a more specific part in the service, where thanks is given for particular mercies or gifts, for example during the collection.

4.6.2. Adoration

Adoration has always been part of Christian worship. It is expression of respect and love for God,

usually in the second person, and often used more emotive words or music. It is present in the Old Testament psalms, though it is hard to find a psalm that would be pure adoration.[77] In early Christian ritual there was also adoration. The Great Doxology in the traditional liturgy is to a large extent pure adoration (EG 180.1). Throughout history there have been examples of emotive adoration in hymns and responses.[78] Such songs often draw on the bridal language of the Song of Songs, the poems being interpreted as parables of the love relationship between God / Christ and the individual soul. This tradition flowered in the time of the pietist revival and now again, in the worship movement. Direct adoration to God is often emotive and has been described as "lovemaking to God " (John Wimber, quoted in Webber 1994: 131), or as "entering the Holy of Holies" - into the presence of God.[79]

The historical liturgy has given adoration a clearly circumscribed place in the service and has steered clear of allowing too much emotion in the service (see later discussion on this). This has been true of Lutheran traditional worship. However, in Pentecostal and charismatic services, and also in the Praise and Worship movement, Adoration is the central point and highlight of the first part of the service and the place where God's presence is most clearly felt. This emotional moment of connecting with God and feeling God's presence is what attracts many people to these contemporary services.

4.6.3. Confession of sin

This has always been a central part of historical worship, but has been de-emphasized in the various contemporary worship forms. It generally has a place in the early "gathering" phase of the

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[77] The closest example would probably be Psalm 63, with the exception of verses 9 to 11.   Most Old Testament psalms change from second person adoration into third person proclamation as if addressing God in such an intimate fashion is something that cannot be upheld for a long time (for example Psalm 42 and 43 which switch several times) . Awareness of the holiness of God, requires some distance, which the third person address provides.

[78]   For example: "*Adoro o devote*" -*Thee We Adore, O Saviour*- by Thomas Aquinas / Gerald Manley Hopkins ELW 476 or Philip Nicolai's "*Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*" – *O Morning star, how fair and bright* EG 70 / ELW 308.

[79] Webber discusses the "Temple sequence" popular in Praise and Worship services modelled on the progression of the service in the Jewish temple where there is a progression from the outer courts to the inner court and into the Holy of Holies. All of the steps are accomplished through song (Webber 1994:130).

57

service.[80]

Dealing with sin, brokenness or affliction is a central role of liturgy, and even human ritual as a whole. In Bell's categorisation of human ritual, one of the categories is "rituals of affliction" (Bell 1997:115) and asking the deity for forgiveness is a crucial element in this. Songs can play an important part in creating awareness of brokenness, and opening the ways to healing. Orthodox and Catholic and also Lutheran services have a penitential basis. The question is when this is too much and undermines the joy in faith people should be finding too. The "Kyrie eleison" of the traditional liturgy is a small element of confession and lament left in our historical tradition (EG 178.1 – 178.14). It may stand on its own at the beginning, or become a response to a confessional litany or prayers of intercession (ELW pp 98, 120, 138).

Confession creates the space for people to deal with brokenness in their lives through worship. Contemporary services avoid ritualised confession and absolution, but sometimes have public testimonies which contain confessions. While most contemporary songs do not contain the element of confession of sin, some contemporary writers are starting to take the importance of this element seriously again.[81]

4.6.4. Call to faith

In the evangelical tradition, the altar call is the centre of worship. Seeker services as held by Willow creek (Kotze 2008:2) also have this as their focus. An important aim of such services is to call people to faith. Worship services are thus evangelistic events. There are differences of opinion whether this should be so.[82] Lutheran services have traditionally focussed on believers, building character and praising God (Dawn 1995:8). Those non-believers who come are taken into a communal process. While the sermon will often have evangelistic focus, usually the liturgy itself

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[80] Webber in his book *Blended* worship sees confession as being an integral part of the first part of the service, the "gathering" in traditional, contemporary and blended services. Here the transcendent "otherness" of God is acknowledged, and in this presence the worshipper recognises him or herself as a broken and sinful human being (Webber 1998: 50). Klaas Runia also sees a " confessional motif" as important for a truly Reformed worship service (Runia in Carson 1993:108).

[81] Two examples of contemporary confession songs: " *Father, we have sinned"* by Townend & Getty SF 4, 1762 or *"Lord, have mercy on us"* by Kendrick, MP 430.

[82] The Willow Creek community Church under Bill Hybels argued that one needs to aim services at seekers specifically, and have separate services for believers. The seekers' services aimed to " attract, entertain and eventually change" the unbelievers (Kotze 2008:3). Critics argued that these evangelistic events should not be called services at all because they are not aimed at worshipping God and argue that true worship has more evangelistic power than entertaining programmes for seekers (Kotze 2008:36).

58

does not. Lutherans have sometimes incorporated a call to or reaffirmation of faith, but normally the service is seen as the gathering of the believers and not primarily as evangelistic opportunity. Evangelism should happen primarily in other events. Nevertheless, every Sunday service does have the element of calling people to faith in Christ, even if it is not seen as primarily evangelism. Songs also have this element and many songs have a strong proclamatory or even evangelistic message.   This is a strong element in reformation hymns, (for example in the hymn *Such, wer da will* EG 346 which is a statement of faith and call to others to seek Christ) and in hymns of the pietist and missionary movements (for example *Just as I am* MP 396 as statement of faith and challenge to others also to come to the Lamb of God). Sometimes singing a confession is also a challenge to faith for those, not yet sharing that confession. In contemporary worship music there is a focus on the response of the believer, less a focus on calling people to faith, but the proponents argue that experience has been that outsiders who join in the worship experience a powerful call to faith (Morgenthaler 1995:46).

59

4.6.5. Faith response

This is a component of worship services in most traditions. There are various ways of doing this. Historical worship forms use the traditional Creeds, or creeds in song form (EG 183, 184), other worship forms more strongly use personal testimonies of faith. The faith response of the individual or the congregation is a strong element in many songs, expressed in "we" or "I" forms.[83]

4.6.6. Proclamation / Scripture reading and teaching

Most Christian traditions have a strong element of proclamation in their services, whether this be through readings or through a sermon or homily. In most Protestant traditions this is a central focus of the service, in the Catholic or Eastern Orthodox traditions the sermon is less central, but readings teach throughout the liturgy. Some traditions have no readings which stand on their own, but only the message, which often is based on many different texts.

From a Lutheran point of view it is important that the word of God is proclaimed in a Sunday service, and importantly, not only mediated by the interpretation of the preacher, but also simply by the biblical text as it stands. Teaching is the place we are served by God and where our character is formed to enable us to be servants during the week (Dawn 1995:4). Not all traditions see songs as having a role in proclamation of the word, but there is a long tradition of simply setting biblical texts to music [84], and a hymnic tradition of scriptural paraphrases and biblical teaching. Songs can preach as can sermons.   In the Lutheran tradition there is the practise of reinforcing the readings and/or sermon with strong proclamatory songs to the theme.

4.6.7. Sacraments

The relative importance of the sacraments differs between traditions.   In many traditions, holy communion is becoming more important again, with people wanting to celebrate more often (Webber 1994:19). Songs enhance the sacramental experience. Songs sung before and after

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[83]   Examples would be: *I believe in Jesus* by Marc Nelson, MP 264, *All I once held dear* by Graham Kendrick SF 2, 646, and *You laid aside Your majesty* by Noel Richards MP 795.

[84]   Singing the Genevan Psalter was a form of Bible teaching in Calvinist congregations. Other examples of "Bible songs" include *God our help (Ps 90)* by Isaac Watts, MP 498, *A new commandment* by Roy Crabtree MP 1, *Seek ye first the kingdom of God* by Karen Lafferty, MP 590.

60

baptism often emphasize the call of God and the experience of grace, and those sung during the distribution of communion celebrate the sacrifice of Christ for us. Sometimes these songs try to teach the meaning of the sacraments according to that denominational tradition.[85] The fellowship experience is enhanced by singing together during the celebration of holy communion. Repetitive choruses which can be sung off by heart are useful here.[86] In the Lutheran tradition there has been a slight shift in the tone of the songs during communion from a more personal penitential rite focussed on receiving forgiveness, to a more celebratory act of fellowship with Christ and one another.[87] In general there are few contemporary songs focussing on the sacraments but there are notable exceptions.[88]

4.6.8. Prayer

Prayer is a feature of most worship services in the Christian community. This direct address to God may happen throughout the service, in formal prayers during the historical liturgy, or more spontaneously, in groups or by a leader. The former is more common in Lutheran services. There are many songs that are in themselves prayers, but songs are used in a variety of ways also to enhance the prayer experience for example through responsive chants, or quiet humming during a leaders' prayer.

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[85] This is clear in the Lutheran tradition where there are many sacramental teaching songs in the sections Baptism EG 200 – 212, and Holy Communion EG 213 – 229. The Baptist congregation in Pietermaritzburg has as its hymnal a general evangelical hymn-book, *Hymns of Faith*, which has no section for specifically baptism songs, but which has many songs with teaching content on holy communion: HF 523-540. For baptismal services they often use Easter hymns.

[86] Example: *Let us break bread together on our knees* (ELW 471) or chants of Taizé such as *Laudate omnes Gentes* EG 181.6.

[87] In the old German Lutheran hymnal, the EKG, there were 11 Communion songs, none of them joyful and celebratory, all in more serious, penitential mood. (EKG 154-165). In the EG there are 16, with a great overlap, but of these two are joyous celebratory songs which are often used during communion now (EG 225, 229).

[88] Examples: The baptism hymn *Father welcomes all his children* by Robin Mann LH 826 and the song for communion: *The trumpets sound* by Kendrick MP 667

61

4.6.9. Meditation

This is a regular feature of relatively few traditions of worship services today, most notably the Taizé services[89] and that of the Quakers (Spinks in Wainwright 2006:512), but many traditions use silent prayer on occasion. Music, quiet chants or recorded music may lead into such times of silence and out of it again.

4.6.10. Affirmation of community

Worship is the place where the body of Christ grows together and is affirmed. The worship service leads to an individual faith experience, but also the consciousness of being a unified body of Christ.

Liturgical traditions can enhance or undermine the feeling of community. Community is built by participation and by actions performed together, such as communal responses or prayer or rituals such as greeting one another or celebrating communion together. The singing tradition can help or undermine this.   In general, simply singing together builds community, but too many songs focussing on the individual can undermine the importance of the body of Christ (see later discussion on "I" songs vs "We" songs). The worship experience should enhance the consciousness that we "are" church, and not worshipping "at " a church.   There are traditional and new songs which focus on a call to community.[90]

4.6.11. Call to service and Christian life

Not all traditions see the call to service in the world as an integral part of worship. Consequently there are also not so many songs that have this as theme. Of these, some have the tendency to become dry or moralistic.[91] Most often this element is centred in the sermon and in the prayers but sometimes also in the songs more towards the end of the service, often after the sermon or right at the end. Christian responsibility is not a theme that comes much into the lyrics of contemporary songs, again with some exceptions.[92] A call to service as part of the worship service has the

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[89] See article on *The value of silence,* Taizé 2001.

[90]   The Church's one foundation by Stone LH 191, *Blest be the tie that binds* by John Fawcett MP 60, *Bind us together, Lord* by Bob Gillman MP 54.

[91] See discussion on period of Enlightenment and note on Gellert in previous chapter 3.3.4.5.

[92]   Examples: *Brother, Sister let me serve you* by Richard Gillard LH 855 and Graham Kendrick: *Beauty for brokenness* SF II, 664.

potential of being greatly motivating and of understanding everyday life as the primary place to serve and worship God.

4.6.12. Blessing and Sending

This is an essential element in the historical liturgy, also in the traditional Lutheran service, often not emphasized in contemporary settings, where sometimes the service simply ends after the main message. Some traditions have a highly ritualised blessing and sending sections, others a simple form. Some songs have "blessing and sending themes" (EG 170,171), in some traditions the service ends with a final hymn or chorus, sometimes with a procession. These rituals do not always make clear that the "real service" begins after leaving the church.

4.7. Defining the polarities of worship

There are many things which need to happen in worship and sometimes these aims are in tension. David Bosch speaks of " creative tension" (Bosch 1991:381)**.** There is a need for speaking to the contemporary culture, but also a need of preserving the best of past insights, there is a need to attract people without losing depth, a need to minister to people in their situation and a need to challenge them to change it. Marva Dawn argues for the need to keep dialectical poles in balance, and lists the following: "Tradition and Reformation" (Dawn 1995: 58ff), "Truth and Love" (60), "Thought and Feeling" (69). In an Afrikaans dissertation on music in ministry (*Musiekbediening)* Semmelink gives other polarities which should be held in tension, neither pole being neglected: The Word and Experience (*Woord versus Ervaring),* Fixed liturgy and Free liturgy (*Vaste Liturgie verses vry-liturgiese Erediens),* Spontaneity and Responsibility (*Spontaneiteit en Verantwoordelikheid,* God -directed aims and person-directed or inward-directed aims (*Godgerigte doel, mensgerigte doel, inwaardsgerigte doel),* Individual and Congregation (*individu en gemeente)*, formalism and fanaticism (*formalisme en fanatisme)* (Semmelink 1993:75-103).

Luther wrote regularly on the tension between "Freedom" and "Love" which should inform any worship reform[93] and which informed his decision to reverse some of the changes that his

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[93] In his introduction to Vol 53 of *Luther's Works* Leupold writes: …."In this spirit of liberty and with this concern for the man in the pew, Luther planned the reformation of the cultus" (Leupold 1965: :xvi) and "he shrank from

63

colleagues had made to worship forms while he was at the Wartburg (Friedenthal 1979:395-396).

In the textbook *Music: A Living Language (*Manoff 1982) in a foreword by Prof Trotter, the issue of making connections between different concepts is also raised, in this case referring purely to music and not to worship, but some of the issues raised are similar:

> Finding the pattern that connects one thing to another might indeed become a motto for teaching today. Pairs of urgently needed connections tumble out: between feeling and thought; between playfulness and seriousness - or as Auden put it, between "carnival and prayer", between instruction and behaviour; between behaviour and attitudes; between heritage and change..... All the information in this text aims at such connections.
>
> <div align="right">(in Manoff 1982 xix)</div>

Making connections between polarities is one way of promoting the kind of dialogue Habermas and Gadamer speak about and to foster a process of "shifting and fusing horizons". As most people tend to focus naturally on one more than one the other, consciously trying to maintain a balance keeps horizons from becoming rigid and unmoving and promotes an openness for dialogue and interaction.

The following list of 10 polarities arose in the reflection on the different polarities mentioned above, and from interactions with traditional and contemporary liturgies and songs. These were the polarities which seemed most relevant to ensure a broadness of themes and a balance in worship and singing. Some others mentioned above are also relevant but will not be discussed in detail here.

1. Past vs Present

2. Objectivity vs Subjectivity

3. Cognitive vs Emotive

4. Community vs Individual

5.Familiarity vs Diversity

6. Affirmation vs Challenge

7. Cross vs Glory

8. Transcendence vs Immanence

9 Vertical vs Horizontal

10 Universal vs Particular

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innovations and avoided liturgical sensationalism because he had a pastor's concern for the faith and piety of the common people.... Neither Old nor New were ultimate values to him. He approached the tangled problem of tradition vs innovation with the freedom of the Christian man" (xiv-xv).

64

4.7.1. Past vs Present

Worship has always been remembrance of God's actions in the past, and food for the road today. *Anamnesis*, or remembrance of God's saving act in Christ, is an important part of the traditional liturgy (Johnson in Wainwright 2006:52), but not always recognised as important by proponents of contemporary worship. Conflicts over worship are often fought out in these two camps. But both are important. Preserving and remembering the past can help us deal with the present. We do not preserve the past for the sake of tradition, but so as better to face the present and the issues we are confronted with. We can take what is best from the experiences of those who have gone before us, to help us in our present struggles. The old forms and traditions did not emerge by accident. They lasted because they worked (Craig-Wild, Peter. 2002:59). This does not guarantee that they are right for today, but the wisdom in them should not just be lost.

Liturgy is dependent on tradition, just as tradition is a product of liturgy (Wepener 2008: 313). Wepener gives the example of a boat moving forward, while the rowers are facing backwards (Wepener 2008: 317). There is a critical and reciprocal interaction between the backward look (receiving tradition) and the forward looking, steering motion which takes the life reality of the participants in the ritual seriously. These two are named " Designation" (receiving what is given by the past) and " Appropriation" (taking serious contemporary reality). Without a balance between these two dynamics one can end up with the extremes of constant mechanical reproduction of tradition, or the pressure of continual revision (Wepener 2008:319), or what Horton calls " dull routine" versus "perpetual innovation" (Horton 2002: 10). He argues " Even if the practice of the past is correct, each successive generation needs to rediscover that for itself" (Horton 2002:13).

Marva Dawn speaks of the tension between "Tradition and Reformation": We continually need to revitalize our tradition while not losing its anchoring roots. Through education we can teach people to discover the beauty of their heritage, while discovering new ways to present it to others (Dawn 1995:59). Very often in history, true innovation has come from returning to the sources. Van de Laar writes:

> Alongside this, [necessary contemporary forms] though, the value of tradition for contributing depth and continuity to the faith must also be recognised and accepted. In every significant spiritual revival, there has been, not just an introduction of new music, but a rediscovery of the riches of music from times past. The psalms for example have always been the basis and measure of worship music.

65

In our culture today there is a tendency to reject that which tradition and history can give and to value only new developments in technology, art or music. Marva Dawn quotes Lasch: Society trivializes the past "by equating it with outmoded styles of consumption, discarded fashions and attitudes, " and as a consequence "people today resent anyone who draws on the past in serious discussions of contemporary conditions or attempts to use the past as a standard by which to judge the present" (Lasch quoted, *The Culture of Narcissism* in Dawn 1995:132).

Our culture needs to ask itself seriously what we lose if we throw away all tradition for the sake of success and novelty (Dawn 1995:144). Our innovation needs to be rooted in the truths that our history has passed on to us. Hymns and liturgical pieces that have survived can usually be counted on to have value. People have preserved them and passed them on because they have recognised their deep truth. The songs that have survived will be the best of those produced in their era. Singing songs only from the last few years deprives people of this truth and beauty.

It is a pity that tradition and innovation have come to be seen as mutually exclusive. No tradition is ever static, and every contemporary practice has its roots in the past. Redman argues that contemporary means "with the times" and should refer to "when something is used, not when something is created" (Redman 2002:175). All contemporary services develop a tradition over time, and take their present praxis from older traditions.

Luther was very conscious of this and preserved as much of the old tradition as he was able to do without compromising his convictions. "Luther is a strange combination of both faithful continuity and radical discontinuity with the past, a tension that has characterized much of Protestant worship ever since" (White 2000:37). He was respectful of popular piety and careful about reforms that would destroy it. By only rejecting what he found to be patently false, he enabled much ceremonial and liturgical art to survive (White 43). Similar tendencies can be seen in the trendsetting work of Isaac Watts who continued to draw on the psalms and the Wesleys who also drew heavily on tradition and heritage in their musical ministry (Van de Laar 2000:156).

Equally problematic as rejecting all of tradition as such is the tendency not to allow innovation and new impulses out of a fear that it may lead to shallowness and heresy. It is equally important to

66

take the present culture seriously and try to speak to the people in it, so as not to lose relevance. Orr encourages church musicians not to run from new styles but to "thoughtfully incorporate them" (Orr 1991:35).

In the best practices of worship, past and present are held in a dialectical balance.

4.7.2. Objectivity vs Subjectivity

In the history of worship there have been many times when the one pole has been emphasized almost to the exclusion of the other. In Lutheran Orthodoxy there was an emphasis on "objective faith truths" and "the true doctrine", and little subjective faith response was allowed. This era was followed by the pietist revival, where the subjective experience of faith almost drowned out proclamation, at least in hymnody. A similar motion of the pendulum happened when rationalism (emphasis on fact and reason) gave way to romanticism (see previous church historical discussion).

Objective elements in a worship service are fixed liturgical pieces, the observance of the liturgical year and lectionaries, the church creeds, the sermon in so far as it proclaims the truths agreed on by the faith community. There are also hymns which proclaim the truths of faith. Subjective elements are personal testimonies, freely chosen texts for messages, songs with emotive content, focussing on the individual's feelings, needs and experiences (Dawn 1995:50). In general, worship services with little room for subjectivity do not attract the young generations. However, pure subjectivity has the tendency to severely narrow down the range of theological and biblical themes, in general in the direction of the individual's self-interest.

Vietzen writes in a dissertation about the language of worship, arguing that objective language is necessary to help express a diversity of subjective experiences:

> Faith remains objective, the experience of it is always a subjective matter for the individual. As Austin Lovelace expresses it: " Unless the hymns we sing become our personal expressions, and the thoughts expressed become our own thoughts, our worship will be vain before God."
>
> (Vietzen 1968:46)

Worship which can truly build up believers needs the objective proclamation and truth of faith and give space to subjective experience and expression. The psalms are a good guideline here, with a

67

large part of the psalms devoted to proclamation, and another significant part devoted to the faith response of the believer.

4.7.3. Cognitive vs Emotive

This polarity is similar to the one dealt with above. It deals with the issue of the "head" and the "heart" in worship. Traditional services have been accused of being too "head" centred, just as many contemporary services have been critiqued for being too emotional. For many people, "successful worship" means having "felt" the presence of God, and they criticise the fact that they do not have these experiences in mainline services.[94] These are realities that need to be taken seriously as experiences and feelings are for most people entry points to be able to hear the message. However, in some contemporary services there seems to be pressure to produce feelings. Marva Dawn writes: " Lacking sincere intimacy in congregational fellowship, we often put false pressure on worship to produce feelings of intimacy" (Dawn 1995:28).

Redman writes on Praise and Worship services:

> A weakness among Pentecostals and charismatics is the frequently blurred line between experiencing God in worship and emotional release in worship..... emotionally expressive worship has a strangely addictive quality for many. This may lead some to worship their worship experience, rather than worship God.... The emphasis on the emotions in postmodern popular psychology may attract many postmoderns to charismatic worship who seek a new kind of emotional release. But the attraction quickly fades without a deep foundation in classic Christian theology and a rich worship experience that embraces the whole person and lifts the worshiper out of a solitary experience into a truly corporate setting.
>
> (Redman 2002: 150)

Scheer makes a similar point when he warns of placing too much emphasis on the emotional effect of music in worship:

> It can also become an emotional experience that has an almost addictive quality – one in which the worshiper returns again and again for a new " high" but never receives any spiritual sustenance.
>
> (Scheer 2006: 213)

While one may be critical of too much emotionalism in contemporary services, and the shallow theology this sometimes produces, Redman's critique of mainline services also needs to be heard:

> Unleashing human emotion in worship can be healthy or destructive. It is true that many Pentecostals and charismatics try to manipulate the emotional state of the congregation by suggesting what worshipers should feel or how they should respond. In fairness it should be pointed out that charismatics are not alone in this, many Protestant churches also attempt to control expression by suggesting the kind of emotional state that is appropriate (it is acceptable to feel reverent and thankful, but not joyful and celebrative; fine to be humble

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[94] Michael Nüchtern describes the situation in Germany where many people at the fringes of the church associate religion with the feelings that come from emotionally laden music at special times of life. There are often conflicts around this with theologians and classically trained musicians who see these musical elements or songs as "kitsch" : too sentimental and theologically unacceptable (Nüchtern 2008:16-22).

68

and contrite, but inappropriate to reveal brokenness and pain).

<div align="right">(Redman 2002:40)</div>

The suppression of emotion in worship can damage people's openness to the Word of God.[95] However, ultimately it is not musical or emotional manipulation that will arouse genuine feelings, but the proclamation of faith content. Dawn writes that we should take feelings seriously, but let them be aroused by proclamation:

> Telling you about my feelings will not bring about the same feelings in you. Only if I tell you what aroused my feelings can you respond to that same stimulus with subjective reactions of your own.

<div align="right">(Dawn 1995:175)</div>

This shows that the cognitive and the emotive element, though sometimes in tension, are not opposites. The best worship songs appeal to the whole person: the will, the emotions and the intellect. Music has a powerful role in stirring human emotion. This is precisely the reason it was viewed suspiciously by some reformers and has been carefully controlled by institutional churches (Van de Laar 2000: 259). Yet as such it is a powerful vehicle to convey cognitive content if these two poles are kept in balance. Hotz writes that well structured worship can give well-ordered expression to emotion and "religious affections: "We gather in reverence and awe, are moved by that awe to humility and contrition; we abide together in mutuality and delight, we go forth in gratitude and with renewed sense of obligation, direction and hope" (Hotz 2006: 81).

4.7.4. Community vs Individual

An important function of corporate worship is to weld people together into a community, the body of Christ.   Faith is something intensely personal, people respond as individuals, but worship always also has a communal element.   Singing together is one powerful way of building a community, but this cannot happen if the congregation cannot sing along.

This very often happens with new and untested songs. They cannot be sung easily by congregants, and they divide the community into the performers and the listeners. Many people who are not used to a singing culture have no problem with being a spectator, but in the understanding of worship for which I have argued, singing should be something that is done by the whole community.

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[95] This is explicitly acknowledged in the journal *Arbeitsstelle Gottesdienst* which dedicates a whole volume to the theme "Kitsch and Emotion – The potential of the Popular". Several articles by M. Nüchtern, S. Reinke, B. Wittke and others warn against closing all doors against emotionalism and popular taste as this closes the doors against whole social groups of people who have this avenue of access to religion (EKD 2008).

Community building songs are on the one hand songs which are easy to sing, where everyone can participate and where outsiders quickly can feel at home.   They are also songs which have the pronoun " We " rather than " I", and perhaps have community as a theme in the words. Love, service and Christian unity are themes of songs that build community.

Many contemporary worship songs have the self at the centre, and much of Christian witness in our culture has also become a "self-improvement, self-actualisation gospel", rather than the gospel of serving one another. Masango and Pieterse point out that in many cases the church and faith have become part of the private life of individuals rather than leading people into becoming part of the *Missio Dei* in the world (Masango & Pieterse 2008:128-130).   It is indeed important that songs express a personal faith and become owned by the individuals who are singing them. Our worship needs to build up the character of the individual believer (Dawn 1995:105ff). It is important that songs express a personal faith response. But this needs to be balanced by the recognition that faith only grows in community and that worship needs to happen in the context of the Christian community, which needs to be built up into a caring community to serve the world.

Pass calls the kind of music that draws people together "Koinoniac music" (Pass 1985:120). It can only be that if it is generally understood and accessible. Quoting Routley, he comments that for this reason it is normally pastors or cantors of ordinary congregations who write the best hymns and congregational songs because they are part of this singing community and know their abilities and needs:

> It is not only a question of writing less music than one would otherwise write, nor is it a matter of rebelliously accepting the limitations of the unmusical community. It is a matter of liking the people who are going to sing the hymns, and that means "welcoming the duty" in a truly Gospel sense.
>
> (Routley quoted in Pass 1985:155)

Much of the music produced today is "performance music" rather than "koinoniac" music, and depends heavily on good lead singers and a strong band. This ultimately does not draw the community together but makes the worshipers into spectators of talented individuals. This is part of the question of this thesis: Which songs are able to become genuinely congregational songs?

4.7.5. Familiarity vs Diversity

Our faith community and worship should make us feel at home, and give us a sense of belonging

and identity (Long 2001:25). It should, however, also remind us that we are part of a global Christian community and a long line of witnesses. We should also have a sense of worship connecting us with our present cultural and social reality.   Musical diversity can express this, but should not completely sacrifice the feeling of belonging.

Familiarity is an important element of worship. Even contemporary, creative services generally have stable recognisable elements, which help people to participate. Stable components of worship are something that can carry people through life. Marva Dawn writes about the importance of memorized tradition in nurturing character. Memorized tradition allows even children or old and frail people to participate in worship:

> Research studies show that the earliest memories are retained longest in people's minds. How important it is, then, to fill children's memories with hymns, songs, prayers, Scripture verses and creeds! ….   Memorized pieces connect us to rootedness of faith and to the knowledge of God that has endured throughout time and space.
>
> (Dawn 1995: 120-121)

Long also has this as an important element of "vital worship": "Vital and faithful congregations have a relatively stable order of service and a significant repertoire of worship elements and responses that the congregation knows by heart" (Long 2001:86).

However, if a worship tradition begins to consist of only the familiar, it can become stale, loses its vitality and its connection to our present reality. This is why diversity and creativity in worship are also important. These, however, should be controlled sufficiently to keep a sense of belonging. People should be able to participate and not become spectators in a "show".

Crouch stresses this in an article for worship leaders giving guidelines for teaching songs:
It is important not to introduce too many new songs at once. New songs should be repeated often to familiarise oneself with them. And familiar songs should be regularly sung in worship:

> Make full use of the songs your congregation already knows, carefully adding songs that will serve well over time. There is new meaning to be found in even the most familiar songs - and you don't have to teach them!
>
> (Crouch in Siewert 1998: 99)

Within a song there needs to be a balance of familiar elements, of repetition and stability in the rhythm which makes the song easier to learn. But there needs to be enough variation to sustain

71

interest and keep the melody flowing.

Diversity is important in that different groups and generations should be able to recognise something of themselves in the songs they sing. Many churches have had success because they have reached specific groups with music that connects with their culture. This communicates an open door and the message that it is not difficult to become part of the church's "in group". This has led to some liturgists arguing that one needs to target one's worship music quite specifically at one's market and tailor it to their taste in music.[96] This no doubt is a challenge to churches. But there is also a danger of simply asking what the "target market wants". This may mean catering to the superficial lowest common denominator, and of making worship into a consumer item or entertainment. Marva Dawn has a strong critique:

> Christian worship at the turn of the century is being affected adversely by aspects of our culture that "dumb down" everything. Consequently, we must be careful lest our character as individual Christians and the character of our communities lack sufficient substance to reach out to the world around us and to influence the culture.
>
> (Marva Dawn 1995:4)

Fully inculturating worship carries the danger that worship and theology no longer critique and transform a culture, be it an indigenous culture, or post-modern consumerist culture. Siewert writes on worship and culture:

> From a biblical perspective cultures are relative. That is, no one culture possesses all knowledge of God, and no one culture reflects God perfectly. Every culture contains partial understanding of God, and every culture contains sin. Some cultures have obviously been influenced by the gospel, and we can celebrate this. But since cultures are human and express human rebellion against our Creator, we must count every culture as fundamentally fallen. No one culture, then, adequately celebrates God's glory. Our worship awaits the perfecting force of Jesus' kingdom coming in fullness.
>
> (Siewert 1998:18)

God is committed to send people out across cultural barriers. We may bring what is of value in our own, while we learn and adapt to other cultures in order to connect with people from other backgrounds. We expand our worship by appreciating other cultures (Siewert 1998:18).

4.7.6. Affirmation vs Challenge

Faith needs to tell people that God loves them the way they are, but also challenge them to make changes in their life where they are needed. This is a difficult balance to maintain, but necessary.

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[96] Morgenthaler argues in detail how to assess the different generational groups in American society and aim worship services particularly at their needs. She speaks of "boomers" and "busters" and what shape worship should take and what kind of music could be sung (Morgenthaler 1995: 162, 187).

72

This balance needs to be kept particularly in the proclamation, but also in the worship structure and the content of songs. There are different kinds of challenges: the challenge to conversion, challenge to have faith and trust, challenge to love and ethical action. This polarity is similar to what Lutheran scholars call the polarity between "Indicative and Imperative" or also "Law and Gospel" (Ebeling 1972, 110).

This is a polarity that plays itself out mostly in the texts of songs. Vietzen writes in a critique of song texts that it is important that God is not only portrayed as a refuge from problems, but as a source of strength to face problems. We are carried and sheltered by God, but also challenged: "The Christian is not called upon to retreat from the tempest, but to face it in the strength of God..." (Vietzen 1968:39).

4.7.7. Cross vs Glory

Cross and Resurrection are the centre of the Christian faith. We proclaim that Jesus dying for us brought us forgiveness of sins and also new hope in suffering and new life. Both emphases are important. We cannot have Christ's glory without the cross. The cross has always had its place in traditional worship and needs to regain it in contemporary worship, where there is often a greater emphasis on glory. The cross should also be brought into our present reality, not only be kept in the past as an instrument of reconciliation. The passion story takes up much space in the biblical witness, clearly to encourage Christians in their suffering. Denying the reality of suffering in believers' lives can do great damage to faith.

Marva Dawn warns against worship that is only upbeat, focussing exclusively on the positive:

> " Praise" that uses only "upbeat" songs can be extremely destructive to worshipers because it denies the reality of doubts concerning God, the hiddenness of God, and the feelings of abandonment by God that cloud believers going through difficult times. I have counselled numerous people whose experience of worship that focused only on happy praise left them with huge feelings of inadequacy. "Why do I feel so discouraged? I know I should praise God, but I just can't" they say. That is because the worship has not dealt with their feelings of guilt, their doubts and fears, their sense of hypocrisy and sinfulness. Many question their faith because they are not able to be as happy as their fellow believers. They can't enter into upbeat worship if their life is in shambles. Instead of recognizing the inadequacy of worship that teaches only one aspect of our relationship to God, they blame themselves for inadequate faith.
>
> (Dawn 1995:88)

Lament and Protest have to be an integral part of corporate worship, as demonstrated in the psalms. It is unbiblical to ignore the immense suffering in the world. Our worship should interpret this suffering in the context of Christ's saving death on the cross. Dawn argues that Christians should not attempt to "reach out" with worship services so shallow that they are fatal to faith:

> If people are introduced to a Christianity composed only of happiness and good feelings, where will the staying power be when chronic illness, family instability or long-term unemployment threaten? If worship is only fun, how will those attracted to such worship have enough commitment to work on the conflicts that inevitably develop because all of us in the Church are sinful human beings?
>
> (Dawn 1995: 280)

Hofmann argues that only such songs as still can be sung in difficult times are worthwhile including in the core repertoire of the church: "What I cannot sing from the hymn treasury of my church when I am facing death is not worth incorporating into this treasury in good days " (Hofmann 1967: 31).

74

Of course, the church has often erred on the other side too. A focus on the cross almost to the exclusion of Easter turns into a Christian faith with little joy and confidence. It comes across as unconvincing and unattractive. As Christians we participate in Christ's resurrection and have a part in His glory. Our worship may joyfully reflect this, while not neglecting the reality of difficulty.

4.7.8. Transcendence vs Immanence

Another polarity which is not always easy to keep in balance is the awareness of the greatness and otherness of God, over against the awareness of his closeness, love and friendship. Within the theory of ritual, Durkheim distinguishes "negative rituals" which try to stress a separation from the sacred and "positive" rituals, which emphasize communication with the sacred (quoted in Bell 1997:93). While the word "negative ritual" may be problematic, within liturgy and songs too this distinction can be noted, with elements emphasizing the otherness of God and distinction from humanity, and those emphasizing closeness and community. Siewert points out the importance of the liturgical year and the doctrine of the trinity as "aids to balance our awareness of transcendence and immanence" (Siewert 1998:12). Dawn speaks of the importance of balance:

> Holiness without love incites terror; love without holiness invites libertinism. Worship that focusses on God's transcendence without God's immanence becomes austere and inaccessible; worship that stresses God's immanence without God's transcendence leads to irreverent coziness.
>
> (Dawn 1995:96)

Our culture needs to recover a sense of "awe of the sacred" without this leading to an otherworldly faith that no longer connects with our reality. Long comments that one characteristic which "vital congregations" have in common is that they "make room, somewhere in worship, for the experience of mystery" (Long 2001:20). He quotes Lathrop when he speaks of the dialectic between "strangeness and welcome" as being "key to the experience of the holy in worship" (Long 2001:23). We need a sense of Christ's presence in our life and daily struggles, without losing the underlying sense that we are undeserving of the grace and mercy of being regarded by the Lord of heaven and earth. Martin Luther has tried to bring this into his explanation of the 10 Commandments in the Small Catechism: "We should fear and love God, that we...." (Small Catechism in Pöhlmann 1991:538-541).

75

Music can bring this sense of awe into a worship service, it can also distance people from the worship experience if it is music too far removed from their experience. Music simply taken from the surrounding culture may give this sense of connection or it may trivialise the worship experience. This is not easy to balance.

4.7.9. Vertical vs Horizontal

All faith has vertical and horizontal dimensions which should also become apparent in worship. God meets us directly through word or proclamation. We worship Him in prayer and song. However, we also meet God in fellow human beings and encounter Him in the community. Long names as second reason for people to come to worship the "Sense of Belonging" (Long 2001:25). We also serve Him by serving one another, and serving His world. So-called "spiritual" actions and social and ethical actions belong together.   In a worship service most parts, including songs focus on the vertical dimension, the horizontal having its place in the sermon and prayers.   But the horizontal dimension should become part of our worship experience, also in its music. " Praying and singing together creates an awareness of the other, and awareness of the other discloses social and ethical expectations and demands" (Long 2001:28-29). Often this dimension is not that conscious, but one can make it more conscious.

Graham Kendrick points this out in his book *Worship:* Worship is always in danger of becoming an "end in itself". It is possible "to become so caught up in the pursuit of better, freer, richer and more creative worship that we have no time or energy left for the world outside" (Kendrick 1995:173). In the end there is a tendency to "worship worship" rather than serving God . He argues for worship that has social, economic and political implications (174). Worship that is blended with compassion for the world develops immense power.

> Tremendous results have been seen in movements that have combined righteousness and praise. This could explain why our arch enemy Satan, seems to work very hard to separate the two. My own personal observation is that movements tend to swing one way or the other. Those who gravitate towards Christian activism in the pursuit of political and social change sometimes neglect worship and prayer. At the other extreme there are many who prefer to pursue purely spiritual activities. They consume all their time and energy in hymn singing and prayer meetings and don't seem to notice the suffering around them. Spiritual activities can become an escape from the costly demands of the real world of need around us. The story is told of some parishioners who arrived at their local church for worship one morning to discover the doors locked and bolted. The vicar had posted a notice at the entrance': "You have been coming here long enough. Now go and do it!"
>
> (Kendrick 1995:213)

76

There are not many songs that are able to bring these two dimensions together, but they should become part of our worship practice.

4.7.10. Universal vs Particular

God's word is the same for all people at all time. It is a word of love and of grace. However, this word also meets people differently in different places and times. Both in the proclamation and our response, an awareness of the particular context is important so that the message may become incarnate in our time and space.

The post-modern era has recognised the particular in a way that previous generations did not. This has given space to particular expressions of theology, for example from the perspective of marginalised and poor communities, or from the perspective of women, or those suffering from stigmatisation and rejection. These are important expressions, but if absolutized, may result in the fragmentation of faith expression, causing people to forget that we are still all part of the same faith (Dawn 1995:38). While allowing for the particular expression of faith of particular communities, care should be taken to balance this with an underlying universal message of the love of God for rich and poor, oppressor and oppressed. Of course, challenge forms part of this universal message.

In ecumenical and international encounters it has proved valuable to have the "universal" songs (often of European origin translated into many languages) which form a bond, and for the discovery of the particular of each denomination and culture. Steinert writes about the way the European hymns have been accepted as part of Lutheran identity in the mission churches in South Africa, but the growing recognition of the need for the local flavour given by African choruses:

> Both types of church music ought to be given a place in future. It is not a question of *either - or* but the answer has to be an inclusive *and!*
>
> (Steinert 2003: 126)

It is also important for the self-understanding of the "centre" culture, that Western Europeans and Americans begin to realise that their culture is not "universal" but also particular, even though it is still normative in many parts of the world. Liturgical plurality, listening to voices from the

77

margins also in worship is an important part of discovering what is truly universal.

Hawn argues for liturgical plurality, which does not deny one's own heritage in song, prayer and ritual (Hawn 2003:14) but acknowledges and participates in a diversity of voices.[97] This counters the "idolatry of a single cultural perspective" (Hawn 15), and the tendency to see one's own perspective as the "universal" perspective.   Liturgical plurality celebrates the incarnation as a "cross-cultural manifestation of God's presence among us - all of us" (15). This experience shows, that "paradoxically, the awareness of the universal may be deepened by experiences of the particular" (16).

4.8. Conclusion

In most traditions songs play a part in many different parts of the service and serve many different functions. Almost every liturgical element can be enhanced and enriched by musical expression. The richer the use of songs is, and the more diverse their message and their function the more they are able to fulfil their purpose of expressing the believer's response to God's loving acts and to build up the community through proclamation, praise and adoration. The more connections songs can make within the polarities of worship the more they will deepen the faith experience and worship experience of the believer. This they can do through their lyrics, but also through the tunes themselves. This will be the focus of the next chapter.

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[97]   Hawn points out that singing old, historical hymns is already a "cross-cultural" experience and that inherent in our present practice is already a liturgical plurality. Claiming to be, or trying to be " monocultural", does not take this into consideration and "distorts the heart of the gospel" (Hawn 2003:13).

78

CHAPTER FIVE – DEVELOPING A THEORY TO STUDY SONGS

MUSICAL PERSPECTIVES

5. 1. Perspectives on music for untrained readers

This dissertation is in the discipline of practical theology, not music. It is not a study that can go deeply into the theory of music and melody. Nevertheless no study of songs can leave out a study of melody, as it is usually the melody more than anything else that determines the success and popularity of a song. This study aims to look at melody in such a way that it can be understood by people not trained in music. I myself am a lay person, trained through choirs and instrument tuition, but not professionally trained in music theory.

When reading hymnological studies I have found two main approaches when they discuss the tunes of the hymns. The first, mainly in English publications, for example the *Church Music Quarterly* discusses the lyrics at length, then only mentions and describes the tune briefly, with a history on origin and authorship. There is fairly little discussion on the musical aspects of the tune, and what makes it work.[98]

The other approach found generally in the German publication *Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie* discusses the tune in great detail, but in ways that are difficult to understand to readers untrained in musical theory.[99] It does evaluate the tunes on aesthetic and musical criteria, but often does not take into consideration its accessibility to the average congregant. Hymnologist Andreas Marti comments on the fact that there is no agreed or codified method to analyse tunes agreed to by hymnologists. So many different criteria are used depending on the preference of the hymnologist[100] (Marti 2001:149). Tunes which hymnologists have rejected as too emotional or

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[98]   In a hymn discussion by Giles, different tunes are mentioned, with the comment "Owen's tune is fine enough but it is dwarfed by St. Helen, a rousing and spacious unison setting which G Martin specified should be sung 'majestically'". However, the reasons for preferring one tune over the other are not spelled out (Giles 2007a:25). Similarly in another article he mentions that Dix disliked the tune named after him, where "every line ends with a tonic chord" but little more is said about the tune (Giles 2007b: 41).

[99]   See for example Marti's discussion of a song of Manfred Siebald, which analyses the tune in terms of structure and harmony and then declares it to be "light pop", because of certain features. This classification in Marti's view disqualifies the song from Sunday worship (Marti 1982:176). In another article he makes a detailed rhythmic and harmonic analysis of the tunes of Johann Crüger, but while he makes a description of the style, there is no clear conclusion as to what it is that made these tunes so successful and long-lasting (Marti 2012: 30-39).

[100]   Marti discusses several methods, some using a statistical analysis of certain style elements, others using the

79

shallow for use in a sacred setting have had enduring popularity amongst congregants, and have in some cases been rehabilitated by hymnal commissions.[101] The song *Take now my hand and lead me* (EG 376) was specifically rejected as not suitable for congregational use in a hymnological article in 1984[102] (Sauer-Geppert & Marti 1984), but included in the German hymnal *Evangelisches Gesangbuch* of 1994. The question on what styles are suitable for public worship also keeps shifting.[103] According to Luther, any style can be used as long as it fits with the words (Steinert 2007: 50). How does one judge such suitability?

While most hymnologists agree that songs for worship need to be singable by the average congregant, there is little indication as to what that actually means. Hymnologist Eric Routley defines hymns as "Christian folk songs" (Routley 1983:3) which are by definition songs that everyone can sing together. Albrecht sees the problem of contemporary music in that there is no real secular "folk song" anymore, but that music is performed by some, and listened to, or "consumed" by others (Albrecht 1985:64). This is also happening to worship music. There are at present fewer secular models for genuine singable songs. But Hartje sees a similarity between traditional hymns and the more successful Praise and Worship songs in that they are both "meant to be mastered by the laity, not the trained musician", and are not aimed at people who read music (Hartje 2009:366).

Siewert in his handbook for worship leaders gives the following guidelines for evaluating tunes:

> Music - is it singable? Range - not too great. Is it easy to remember? Can you remember the tune an hour later? The next day? This is a good sign that it will be easy to catch on to.
> Simplicity - does the tune move easily so that people will feel confident hitting the notes? Is the rhythm clear enough for people to get without feeling frustrated?
> It's okay to do music that challenges people as long as it's attainable with reasonable practice. Make sure it's of good enough quality to be worth the effort.
>
> (Siewert 1998: 88-89)

It is not easy to determine what is too difficult for a congregation, and this obviously also depends on the congregation and how musically gifted it is. However, there are some elements suggested

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harmonic and rhythmic features. None of these are very understandable to people not trained in music (Marti 2001).

[101] The previous German Lutheran hymnal, the EKG excluded several popular songs which are now back in the main section of the new edition, the EG: amongst others *Stille Nacht (Silent night)* EG 46, *O du fröhliche* (*O thou holiest)* EG 44 and *Großer Gott, wir loben dich (Mighty God we praise Your name)* EG 331.

[102] They mainly criticised the "infantile theology", but also the very emotive "sweet" tune (Sauer-Geppert & Marti 1984: 216), which they do admit, is of a higher quality than most tunes from the 19th century (222). It is too "comfortable" (*bequem*) and discourages people from grappling with more challenging texts and tunes (224).

[103] See the discussion on the "rehabilitation of kitsch" ("*ein bisschen Kitsch darf sein")* in the journal *Arbeitsstelle Gottesdienst*, Reinke 2008, Nüchtern 2008 and other articles.

80

above which are factors: range, rhythm and progression.

5.2. Musical styles and their suitability for worship

Styles and tastes in music shift and differ widely over the ages and between ages and generations. Similarly opinions about what is suitable for a Sunday worship service have differed widely. It took centuries before the organ was accepted as a sacred instrument[104] and it was rejected by many traditions. Calvinists rejected instrumental accompaniment altogether. Guitars and drums have only reluctantly been admitted into many mainline services, although they have been part of the evangelical scene for a long time.

Popular, romantic styles which were excluded by the former German hymnal (the EKG) have now been rehabilitated and are found in the new hymnal, the EG.[105] However, the militant styles of high religious and evangelistic fervour have not been rehabilitated, and are suspected of "triumphalism".[106] Jazz styles have found their place and contemporary styles and instruments are becoming more accepted. However, it is important to use styles critically and see what they communicate and what level of emotion they bring into the service. If they are unable to convey a certain amount of content, they should be used more sparingly than other styles.

There are differences of opinion amongst scholars as to how much meaning music itself communicates and what this means for its usability in worship. According to Warren, Stravinsky was of the opinion that "Music cannot in essence make connections to anything outside itself" and Kant argued that it is precisely music's lack of cognitive meaning that gives it its universal stature (Warren 2006: 83).[107] Terence McLaughlin, a musicologist, explains that musical systems involve the generation and release of tension, and that stress patterns in music correspond closely to the patterns in time of the flow of emotion and of our brain activity in the physical and mental state.

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[104] The organ, initially the water organ, was used in Roman gladiator games and thus initially had pagan connotations. (Tripod 1999). It was used occasionally in services from the 6th century and then increasingly during and after the era of Charlemagne (Bowles 1962:13).

[105] As mentioned above, the EKG excluded many popular songs and tunes, this included popular melodies to older hymns, for example the popular tune for *Beautiful Saviour* from 1842. The EG has included both tunes, the original more difficult tune from 1677 (EKG 437) and the 19th century one (EG 403). The popular 19th century tune to the Paul Gerhardt hymn: *Go out my heart* has been included as only tune in EG (503), instead of the 16th century tune in the EKG (371) which even then was very seldom sung.

[106] There were relatively few hymns of this style in the EKG, and most of these have been retained, with some exceptions for example *Siegesfürste, Ehrenkönig* EKG 95. This has been excluded from the EG.

[107] Schilling writes: "Music without words unquestionably has power to move, disturb, or bring emotional assurance, but its explicit theological significance depends on the beliefs of those who compose, hear or perform it. Believers in God will relate their experience to the divine presence. Others will ascribe it to some impersonal reality or simply enjoy it or be disturbed by it without referring it to anything beyond themselves" (Schilling 1983:31).

81

"Studies have shown that music can - reduce blood pressure, decrease pain perception, increase feelings of self-worth, reduce depression, occupy neuro-transmitters, block some pain receptors, reduce feelings of helplessness (Van de Laar 2000:166). The power of music is not only its ability to arouse emotion, but to arouse it simultaneously in a group of people:

> Music structures time. By imposing order, music ensures that the emotions aroused by a particular event peak at the same moment. It does not matter that the kind of emotions excited in different individuals may vary. What matters is the general state of arousal and its simultaneity. Because of its capacity to intensify crowd feeling, music has a power akin to that of the orator.
>
> (Storr quoted in Van de Laar 2000:170)

It is clear that people do "find meaning in music's non-cognitive communication" (Warren 2006: 83-84) and that music has been linked with emotion and also with worship since its beginning. Religions have valued and feared music's seductive power and have tried to control it in different ways. While some people give music itself revelatory and even redemptive power, this needs to be rejected:

> Amongst a large number of people it is taken for granted that "music is a theophany" (quoting Martin). But this is demythologized in Christ. Music may not be idolatrously exalted to a redemptive force.
>
> (Pass 1985:63)

This means that no forms of music are by definition secular or sacred. It has to be able to communicate in a religious setting to be recognised as sacred music Reinke 2011:19-20). No form of music should be absolutized or strictly forbidden. This recognition frees us to "explore and use all the musical resources available to the church in the myriads of cultural enclaves all over the world" (Pass 1985:65). However, musical resources need to be assessed critically. Quoting Saliers, Pass writes:

> Musical choices take us either <u>toward</u> or <u>away</u> from such deep patterns of emotion which constitute the Christian life, the "Christ-formed" life, if you will .... Our task is to give concrete character to the musical range of those affections rooted and grounded in the Gospel. The musical styles we employ must sustain doxology, contemplative love and adoration, confrontation with sin and suffering, and the sustaining grace and mercy of God.
>
> (Saliers quoted in Pass 1985:85)

The styles that people feel are appropriate for worship has shifted through the ages, just as the styles that are popular at any given moment shift.

> Music of any given time period has certain special characteristics. As fashions in clothing change, so do tastes and styles in music. Instruments and the manner in which they are used change, and new ways of using melody, harmony and the other elements of music are devised by composers in every period. Composers are constantly searching for new means of expression. Consequently, new musical styles emerge.
>
> The musical style of any period is an imprecise composite of the styles of all or most of the composers of that period. Often stylistic features of music are influenced or shaped by social or political realities of the time. It is not always easy to determine which composers are typical of a particular time and which are behind or ahead of the time. Nor is it easy to give precise dates to any stylistic period, since styles of composition overlap from one historical period into the next. Composers often change their style of composition as well.
>
> (Politoske 1992:63)

As popular musical styles have shifted so have the styles used in worship, or deemed appropriate

82

for worship. Of every style, only some musical pieces (or songs) survive through the style shift into the next generation. The others are no longer performed or sung, though they may be rediscovered by a later generation.   An example of this is the transition from late baroque to the early classical musical style.   The sons of Johann Sebastian Bach were instrumental in this. To be original they had to change the style of their father, which was at the time going out of favour (Politoske 1992:186).   They helped devise a simpler style, which supplanted the complex baroque style. The works of Johann Sebastian Bach went out of favour and were almost forgotten, until the style shifted again, and one of the romantic era composers, Mendelssohn rediscovered and popularised JS Bach again (Einstein 1947:75-76).

A large part of the research for this thesis consisted of sifting through old song-books, determining the general style and discovering which songs have survived the style shift, that is, are still sung today. What characterises these "survivor" songs?

5.3. Elements of a tune that determine its appeal and level of difficulty

It is much easier to recognise a "good tune" than to describe what makes it work. Two tunes may look quite similar from their features, but one becomes a hit, and the next is rapidly forgotten. Writing good tunes seems to be a gift. Manoff in the Music textbook, *Music: A Living Language* describes many aspects of melody: cadences, shape, rhythm, form, but again there is no clear answer to the question, "What makes a tune 'good' ?"

> A question often asked about the analysis of a melody is "Did the person who composed this song really think about all these details?" The answer is often 'No'. The question is a good one, for it shows an innate understanding of the natural unity of musical experience.....
> Melody essentially exists as a natural expression of human musicality. This observation is supported by the fact that no one has ever found a way to teach a young composer to write a good melody: It seems to be a gift.
>
> (Manoff 1982:49)

There is something not quite tangible and predictable about the question of durability in art. With songs there is also the question of how they are introduced and taught. Those who gain wide publicity and distribution through being sung by well-known stars have a head start. But this does not guarantee their survival. One can make general rules about "survivor songs", but every rule that has been made about what makes a "good tune" has been broken at some time with great effect.

Ratner writes about good melodic design:

> No one can be taught to make a beautiful melody. This must be felt deeply within oneself as a meaningful and expressive pattern of the rise and fall of a melodic line. But we can point to certain features of good melodic design and mention some guideposts which can suggest to the imaginative student ways in which he

83

> can set up a firm and coherent melodic framework. This he can then clothe with his own power of invention.
>
> (Ratner 1962: 63)

There are two parts of melodic design which work together: the rhythmic patterns and the rise and fall of the notes, giving shape to the melodic design. And then the question of how the different motives and figures relate to each other in terms of repetition, variation and contrast.

How these features work together determines the level of difficulty and the emotive appeal of a tune. Often what makes a tune more interesting and more appealing also makes it more difficult. It is difficult to determine exactly how this functions, but it seems there is some kind of feedback loop with energy being expended in the more difficult tune line and leaps giving an emotional feedback to the singer.[108]

It goes far beyond the scope of this dissertation to discuss any of these in detail. I will focus on only six elements here which affect the level of difficulty and appeal. As this section aims at finding ways to analyse a tune for musically untrained people I will here not dwell on elements such as underlying harmonies and chord progressions. The elements below are easy to understand and to detect for any person having access to a printed tune:

1) Range and Pitch
2) Intervals – Steps and Leaps
3) Beat and Rhythm
4) Phrasing and Climax
5) Repetition, Variation and Contrast
6) Stylistic elements

5.3.1. Range and Pitch

Most untrained singers cannot sing above top D and below lower A, and generally they prefer to stay within the octave. There is a play-off here again, as pitching a song higher makes it sound more joyful, but also makes it more difficult to sing. Songs with a large range are usually more emotive and dramatic and often more appealing, but also more difficult for untrained singers.

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[108] This complex relationship between emotive intensity and difficulty is something I have picked up from many songs studied, but have not found in the literature. There is no clear one on one correlation, but the different aspects of this relationship will be discussed below.

5.3.2. Intervals – Steps and Leaps.

A tune progresses from one note to the next in intervals. One note up or down is called a step, and an interval of more than one note a "leap". In general, the greater the leap, and the more of them they are, the more interesting and emotive a tune is, and the more difficult it is to sing. When there are too many big leaps up and down, the tune becomes very difficult for untrained singers.

In music theory one speaks of "conjunct" and "disjunct" melodies. "Disjunct" melodies move in large intervals. They are more demanding, and tend to "impart drama, intense emotion and energy" while "conjunct" melodies are those that move in small steps and are generally easier to sing. They have a "sweeter, more lyrical effect" (Politoske 1992: 29).

Not only is the size of the interval important but also the effect of the interval. "Some intervals give impression of firmness and stability, others of unsteadiness or instability" (Ratner 1962:17). Unstable intervals move the music forward, and are usually more difficult to sing. Stable intervals give a feeling of rest or arrival. Thus an octave (eighth) is easier to sing than a seventh, a fifth is easier to sing than a sixth. In describing intervals the letters are counted from the first to the last note of the interval to give a "numerical designation", and then the exact size of the interval is described by the words "Perfect, Major or Minor, Augmented or Diminished" (Ratner 1962:4). For most people the major third is easier to sing than the minor third. The major sixth is fairly difficult and emotive, but easier to sing than a minor sixth. The perfect fourth (two whole and one half step) is a very easy interval, but the augmented fourth (three whole steps) an almost impossible interval for untrained singers. It is thus rarely found in songs for congregations.[109]

The emotional effect of a tune has a lot to do with the intervals. In general one can say that a tune with many perfect fourths (the first interval in *Hark, the herald angels sing*) has a militant, energetic feel.[110] A tune that overuses the major sixth (the first interval in *The Lord's my shepherd*) has a very emotional, even sentimental feel (Albrecht 1995:82).[111] In general the effect of a

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[109] One of the few places I have found the augmented fourth in a song-book, is in a printed (but never sung) version of *How great thou art*. The first time "How great thou art" is sung, there is a downward leap from B to F (MP 506, SF 425). Many song-books and hymnals follow the oral version which has extended the leap down to the C, making it into a leap of a major sixth (ELW 856, LH 881, UMH 77).

[110] Albrecht points out that in many hymns the fourth has the function of a "wake-up call": *Die Quarte hat von jeher als Weckruf Verwendung gefunden* (Albrecht 1995:75).

[111] " Der sechste Ton der Durtonleiter erhält eine besondere Bedeutung (Ausdruck der Sentimentalität)" (Albrecht 1995:82). Konrad Klek comments on the fact that the chord containing the fourth and the major sixth, *der Quartsextaccord,* was considered unacceptable in serious church music when he trained (*als unsittlich gebrandmarkt).* However, in many songs which are popular and deeply felt by many people this chord is indispensible (Klek 2008: 40).

85

particular interval depends on its position and on the underlying harmonies. This is too complex to be discussed in greater detail here. Intervals do not have inherent and absolute meaning, although this has sometimes been argued.[112]

5.3.3. Beat and Rhythm

What beat people relate to is really a question of style and taste and changes with the time. Too complex rhythms often get smoothed over by congregations, even worship teams, and it is a question whether such simplifications make the song sound too trite. Songs that will last usually have a clear, recognisable and not too complex beat.

The rhythm of a piece is how its notes are arranged to flow through time, that is the "particular arrangement of note lengths in a piece of music" (Kamien 1998:32). In Gregorian chant there is no clear rhythm. The music follows the rhythm of the speaking voice. The Genevan tunes and early Reformation hymns also had no fixed rhythm. The basic beat alternated between duple and triple (for example in the well-known "Old 100th", of *Praise God from whom all blessings flow)*. Today in Western music, rhythm is one of the most important elements of a tune.

The rhythm of a piece sometimes matches the natural beat, sometimes it does not. In Western music there is a clear arrangement of "meter", or an arrangement of stronger and weaker beats, with the first beat in a bar being the strongest (Kamien 1998:33). Sometimes to add interest, the stress in the tune is on an "off-beat" note. This is known as "syncopation" and is characteristic of jazz rhythms.[113] It creates a feeling of rhythmic excitement, and makes the tune both more emotive and more difficult (Kamien 34).

Rhythm is one of the important determining factors of musical style. Thus different styles have different basic rhythms, for example marching or dance rhythms, syncopated or dotted rhythms, slow or fast.

5.3.4. Phrasing and climax

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[112] Van de Laar describes how a South African musician, André Kempen, tried to equate biblical numbers with musical intervals. The third, especially the 1-3- 5 chord became the symbol of the Trinity, and the minor third was unacceptable in church music because it "diminishes the person of Christ" (Van de Laar 2000: 80).

[113] "One of the most delightfully surprising effects in music occurs when the meter of a work is upset – that is, when an accent is placed on a normally weak beat or half of a beat. Syncopation as this is called, can be obvious as in Gershwin's 'I've got Rhythm', or it can be very subtle, as in some folksongs eg 'Joe Hill'. In dance music, syncopation creates a strong and distinctive rhythmic pattern. It is an essential aspect of most jazz" (Politoske 1992:24).

86

Good tunes have a progression and a definable climax or high point. This is often the highest note, but not always. The flow of notes up and down gives the music its shape. In a song it is useful if the climax in the music co-incides with a climax in the lyrics. A tune that "peaks" too often is more difficult to remember and sing.

5.3.5. Repetition, Variation and Contrast

Most good tunes have elements of repetition, variation and contrast. Sometimes this is in the melody itself, but it may also be in the rhythm. Rhythmic repetition especially makes a tune easy to remember and learn.

Politoske points out that most of us intuitively expect melodies to have repetition and progression, "a beginning, middle and end ":

> ….without any conscious effort, most of us have learned to expect a fine balance between repeated elements, which provide continuity, and new elements, which provide variety. This is true with even the simplest, most repetitious melodies.   …. We expect a melody to come to rest on a tone that conveys finality – and our ears can supply this tone. We expect melodies to change, to offer new and contrasting material. But at the same time, we want this contrast to be balanced by a unifying repetition. Almost intuitively, we understand some of the basic structural principles inherent in many melodies.
>
> (Politoske 1992:31)

Repetition gives a sense of familiarity, of recognition. However, Meyer points out that even if on paper exactly the same, in music there is always progression:

> As we listen to music we are constantly revising our opinions of what has happened in the past in the light of present events - we are continually altering our expectations. It means, furthermore, that repetition, though it may exist physically, never exists psychologically. Thus, though it may seem a truism, it is of some moment to recognize that the repetition, say, of the exposition section of a sonata form movement or that of the first-theme group in the recapitulation has quite a different meaning from that communicated by the original statement.
>
> (Meyer 1956:49)

This is true also of the very repetitive pieces of music such as Taizé chants or African choruses. There is either a continual heightening of excitement and then again a calming down, as in African chorusses, or there is a deepening of calm, quietening down, often leading into silence, as in Taizé services.

The patterns of repetition and contrast contribute to "form" in music. These patterns can be described by labelling the sections and noting the order in which musical ideas are repeated, for example AABC (Politoske 1992:58).

87

5.3.6. Stylistic Elements

Musical styles, fashions and tastes shift regularly. Innovative musicians try a new style, are creative, use new elements in new ways to great effect. Others copy them because this is now a popular style, until in the end, the elements are not used only for special effect, but as an end in itself, because of its popularity. This easily leads to elements being overused and the style becoming shallow. This will lead innovative musicians again to try something new. A sure indication of a stylistic element being the "fashion" is when it happens that singers use it even where it is not printed in the music.[114] Even there where they are part of the composition, they are sometimes used regardless of whether they fit in with the meaning of the words.

Stylistic elements that have gone into and out of fashion in the periods I studied include the following:

1) slurs
2) large intervals (many sixths and sevenths)
3) militant styles (overuse of 4ths and marching rhythms)
4) dotted notes and syncopated rhythms
5) repeated notes
6) long notes (notes longer than four beats within a phrase).

5.3.6.1. The slur

A slur is a musical arch, binding together several notes. In string instruments, they would be played on the same bow. In songs, this means they will be sung on the same syllable, for example: *The Lord's my ~ shepherd ~ I'll not want* (Tune CRIMOND LH 387). If slurs incorporate steps, or leaps of a third this gives a peaceful lilting effect. These are not too difficult, except if there are many in rapid succession.[115] Slurs of larger intervals or more than two notes are more difficult to sing and give a more emotive or dramatic effect. Such tunes are likely to go out of fashion when the next period no longer has the same emotive fervour.[116]

5.3.6.2. Large intervals

Styles which use many large intervals, especially sixths and sevenths are emotive and rousing,

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[114]   I personally remember a time, for example, when the song, "*Amazing Grace*" was sung with two or three times as many slurred notes as are actually in the written music. In my youth when dotted or syncopated rhythms were the popular style, we sometimes sang syncopated rhythms where they were not in the original compositions.

[115]   The beautiful tune ST.CLEMENT has 10 slurs in 17 bars: "*The day ~ thou ga ~vest Lord ~ is ended*" (LH 549). This is not excessive, but it does become tiring after a few verses and requires a fair amount of voice control.

[116]   One such tune which has survived, though not sung that often today is the tune SAGINA to Charles Wesley's "*And can it be that I should gain*" (MP 33) where 4 slurs of two notes span more than a third (one fourth, three sixths), and there are four slurs of three notes, of which three also span a sixth. It is an extremely demanding tune for a congregation, but is sung enthusiastically by those who love the drama in the text, which actually fits the tune very well (see later discussion).

88

sometimes even sentimental. They demand a fair amount of energy from the singers, and give feedback in emotional arousal. When this element is popular, as it is again at the moment in worship songs, this results in highly disjunct melodies, where sometimes there is much movement up and down the scale without a clear progression and climax in the melody. In some cases, large intervals are not used for special effect or emphasis, but to create a general mood and don't always make sense in their connections with the words, sometimes creating stresses where they are not intended.[117]

5.3.6.3. Militant styles

These are generally going out of fashion at the moment, though some of these tunes have enduring popularity. *Onward Christian soldiers* (MP 543) and *Stand up! stand up for Jesus* (MP 617) are obvious examples, where tune and text have a good fit. Elements used in these tunes are simple marching rhythms, with few slurs, usually no syncopations or long notes. There are many "trumpet fanfare" elements, and many major fourths.[118]

5.3.6.4 Dotted notes and syncopated rhythms

Dotted notes and any kind of off-beat stress generate energy and get the body moving. These are characteristic of jazz, of American spirituals and of much Western music that was influenced by these. Many new worship songs in the seventies and early eighties were inspired by the style of the spiritual. As much as many people enjoy listening to such songs with more complex rhythms, relatively few untrained singers can sing them really well. They are easiest to sing if they follow the natural stresses of words: for example "He's got the whole world in HIS hands " (Praise the Lord 55), or "Let us TA-lents and tongues employ, reaching OUT with a shout of joy " (ELW 674). However, particularly there where the style became fashionable, the off-beat stress is often on unimportant words.[119]

5.3.6.5. Repeated notes

After the highly energetic jazz rhythms, a gradual style shift began to take place towards slower, more soothing and peaceful tunes, which culminated in the Worship style. One of the early innovations of this style shift was using repeated notes. The singer sings the same note, while the accompaniment changes chords and adds variety. An early example of this is the song *Let Your living water flow over my soul* of 1986 (SF 334) which was very popular in the mid 90's in my area. There are repeated notes four times during the verse. Twice a note is repeated five times, once six times, and once eight times. The chorus has long slurs. In general the tune has a peaceful

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[117] Disjunctive tunes often result in stresses on unimportant words such as "of" or "in" or "the", for example the stress on "of" in the second phrase of *You are my hiding place*, (FJ 188).

[118]   Onward Christian soldiers has 10 fourths in 24 bars. *Stand up, stand up* 10 fourths in 17 bars.

[119] This happens in Kendrick's song: *Heaven is in my heart:* Through the syncopation the stresses fall as follows: Verse 1: *The kingdom of – our God- is here, heaven is in – my heart. The presence of- his ma-jesty- heaven is in – my heart* (FJ 23).

89

flowing feel of waiting expectation. This element works well where there is good accompaniment, but is difficult to sustain where there is no accompaniment to add interest.[120]

5.3.6.6. Long notes

With the style change described above, there was also a move to longer notes. While in rhythmic or militant tunes the only long notes are at the end of a phrase or even only at the end of the whole tune, now songwriters drew out the notes within the tune to a whole bar or longer. One of the early examples of this is the song I*n moments like these* (1980, MP 334).[121] Later on notes would become even longer.[122] They give the emotive feeling of standing in awe or waiting to receive something.   This has made this element very effective in worship songs led by strong lead singers. They are not easy for untrained singers to sustain.

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[120] A currently popular worship song is *Once again* by Matt Redman. Within four bars there are two sequences of 10 repeated A quavers, while the guitar chord changes from D to G and back to D. This adds interest and gives an effect of reverent waiting. It does not work well without the instrumental backup.

[121] It is written in ¾ time and 11 notes are held for three beats, that is a whole bar. Another six are two beats, or just more than two beats, and the last note is held for five beats.

[122] See later discussion on Kendrick's *Meekness and Majesty*(written 1986, MP 465). In this song some notes are held for nine beats.   This is hard to sustain for congregants and needs strong accompaniment.

5. 4.   Case studies : comparisons of song-books

5.4.1. The "Life-cycle" of songs

When one compares denominational hymnals of different times or song collections from particular eras, one can trace the shifts in musical styles and in the perceptions of what is acceptable for the worship service. One can also trace the history of different songs, their ascendency and decline.

Lieberknecht speaks of the history of a song in analogy to a human biography. A song is born, gains an identity, grows in stature and acceptance, and then has to pass certain tests (*Bewährungs-Situationen*). (Today this would mean, being selected by producers of CDs at some stage). When the song has demonstrated some quality and staying power, it is selected for the first time by the editors of song-books and hymnals. At some point a more responsible "adult" life begins, where it is chosen at intervals to codify particular emotional and theological content for congregants. This selection is not taken lightly and is a sign that the song has already passed many tests. Then at some stage the song is taken out of the hymnal, "goes on pension", from where it may still be called on now and again before it dies completely (Lieberknecht 1994: 11-12). An important part of Lieberknecht's approach is the idea of different situations where a song has to prove its worth. This may be first in a youth group, then in the song-writer's own congregation, another congregation, different styles of services. If other people than the song-writer him or herself can and are willing to teach a song this is another sign of recognised quality. These stages are there, even if congregations do not use printed hymnals and determine what is passed on and what gains acceptance. If it has passed enough of these stages it has already shown some quality, but the tests continue particularly when new editions of hymnals are produced.   Here other criteria than simply the question what has survived the longest need to be used to determine what stays in and what comes out.

Every editorial team of a new hymnal will not keep the old hymns for the sake of tradition, but re-evaluate if the traditional songs still have meaning or if they need to be replaced or rewritten. In some cases, a favourite tune is given a new or revised text,[123] or some valuable texts are given a new tune, which may give them a new lease on life.[124] In this way the lyrics and tunes often survive separately from each other, just as they were in some cases not originally a unity. Most

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[123] An example of this would be the new version for the tune ST GERTRUDE (*Onward Christian soldiers): Onward Christian pilgrims* by Michael Forster (NAH 531) or the reworked version of Albert Knapp's 1829 *Eines wünsch ich mir vor allem andern*, by Detlev Block 1991 (EG 547).

[124]   Creative song writers sometimes write new tunes to old texts, some of these will become accepted, others not: for example Graham Kendrick's new tune for *Rock of Ages* (SF III:1507) and Keith Getty's new tune to the text by Plumptree (1821-91), *Your Hand, O God, has guided*   (SF III: 1670).

91

songs written in any generation will not survive.

5.4.2. EKG vs EG

An interesting shift in the opinion of what songs can be used in a service can be seen in the selection of the two most recent German Lutheran denominational hymnals. The EKG (*Evangelisches Kirchengesangbuch)* was produced initially in 1950 and used continuously in Lutheran Churches in Germany and around the world until it was replaced by the EG (*Evangelisches Gesangbuch)* of 1994.[125] Work for this edition of the Lutheran hymn-book began in 1979 (EG inside cover).

The EKG was the culmination of a process beginning in the early years of the twentieth century, together with the liturgical movement of the Catholic church, to rediscover the old church traditions and the hymns of the reformation. There was a marked shift away from the emotive songs of the romantic era and missionary movement which focussed on the subjective human response to God's call and on adoration and feelings of love towards God. The shift was towards hymns with less emotive tunes which proclaim the truths of the gospel.[126] During the church struggle of the Nazi era many song-writers drew their inspiration from reformation hymns and wrote in the formal traditional styles, the tunes sometimes drawing on the old church modes and Gregorian chant.[127]   Some of these songs were included.   Many songs were excluded by the EKG which were popular in the congregations but were judged to be too emotive.[128]

When looking up the abovementioned stylistic elements it is noticeable that most of them are scarcely present in the EKG: Only three hymns have a straight major sixth leap,[129] and only three others have arpeggios leading to the major sixth (86, 226, 383). Popular 19th century tunes with many slurs which were written to older texts were rejected in favour of the original tunes.[130] One

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[125] In both cases the German-speaking Lutheran congregations in South Africa use the edition with regional supplement of the Church of Lower Saxony (Hannover).

[126] Albrecht comments about the tunes of the romantic era and their exclusion from the EKG, calling them "not suitable" for the divine service: *Die typisch romantischen Choralmelodien mit ihrer Überbetonung des Gefühls und ihrem aufdringlichen Pathos sind schwerlich für den Gottesdienst geeignet. Das Evangelische Kirchengesangbuch (1950) hatte im Stammteil ganz auf sie verzichtet. Das Evangelische Gesangbuch (1993) hat einige von ihnen wieder aufgenommen* (Albrecht 1995:84).

[127] Klepper wrote a German version to a hymn by Ambrosius *Iam Lucis orto sidere* which made it into the Westphalia supplement of the EKG (543) and into the main section of the EG (453). Tunes by Micheelsen (1937 EKG 13) and Petzold (1939 EKG 14) echo the old church modes.

[128] See discussion in the previous chapter.

[129] *O dass ich tausend Zungen hätte* (EKG 238), the tune also used for *Now I have found for my salvation*   LH 328; the Neander tune: *Open now your gates of beauty*   (EKG 129) and *O sing, my soul, with gladness* (EKG 197).

[130] See previous discussion on *Go out my heart* and *Beautiful saviour.*

92

older tune with many slurs which remained in the EKG[131] became quite popular and was included in the contemporary collection *Jesu Name nie verklinget* (see later discussion). The well-known *Take now my hand and lead me* was included in the supplement of Lower Saxony but completely without the "offending" tune.[132]

The rather rigorous attempt to exclude too emotive songs from divine services had a negative effect on the appeal of the Lutheran services for the average congregation member and led to many unnecessary confrontations, some of which I still remember from my childhood.[133] That emotion in songs is a natural human way of responding to the wonderful message of the gospel was recognised by the editors of the EG. But they did make sure that the songs were not pure emotion but did bring across some faith content.[134]

Although the EG rehabilitated some of the popular songs excluded by the EKG, it was again fairly restrictive in what it selected from the songs of its own era.[135] Much of this is probably simply due to space and the long time it takes for hymnal commissions to come to decisions, but it is also owing to the still untested nature of the very contemporary songs. It is not always easy to tell what has a chance to survive into the next generation. Those songs heavily using the popular styles with many syncopations and dotted notes were generally not taken up.[136] In general it seems hymnal editors seem to wait for the masses of contemporary material to sort itself out a bit, by natural processes.[137] The EG has more emotive tunes than its predecessor, but the more detailed song-book analysis shows that taken as a percentage, it is still a small proportion of the contents as a whole (see song-book Analysis Chart, Figure 2, under 5.4.3).

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[131] *Jesus ist kommen, Grund ewiger Freude* (EKG 53) has 12 slurs in a six line stanza.

[132] It is found in the EKG Supplement Lower Saxony 450 with the note "own tune". There are two other such inclusions in the supplement which leave out the tune judged as too emotive and leave the decision up to the singer, *(eigene Melodie* EKG 449, 455). Perhaps this was done in the hope that someone would write tunes to these words more acceptable for the Sunday service. This did not happen, and two of the three have been included in the EG with their original tunes.

[133] These often centred around the question of whether one was allowed to sing *Silent Night* in church on Christmas eve, or *Take now my hand* at a funeral. See discussion in Klek in GAGF 2008:39-43.

[134] A very popular song which was not included by the EG hymnal editors, lamented by some older congregants in my experience, is the Tersteegen song *O I adore God's loving power (Ich bete an die Macht der Liebe)* with the 19th century tune by Demetrius Bortniansky (KMH 16). It has a highly emotive text of adoration, with relatively little proclamative content.

[135] Of the 535 hymns in the main section, only 12 have both text and tune from 1975 or later (EG 169, 170, 171, 210 ,270, 272, 278, 315, 383, 420, 432, 534). The newest text by Klaus Peter Hertzsch was written in the year of the East German revolution 1989 to a well-known tune and rapidly spread throughout Germany, and was then still included in the EG (395).

[136] There are exceptions such as the psalm songs by Rolf Schweizer: EG 278, 285, 287. But in my experience they are not sung often today.

[137] An example from the Christmas section: The EKG was produced in 1950. Of the 20 Christmas hymns only one is from the 20th century, and none at all from the 19th century, which produced largely folk-song type carols with emotive tunes. The EG (1990) has only two Christmas songs from the second half of the 20th century, the newest from 1967.

93

The EKG has quite a high volume of reused tunes. Its most used tune *Innsbruck* is used 11 times. The EG consciously tried to restrict the number of times the same tunes are used for different lyrics. The commission tried wherever possible to find a unique tune for each text.[138] This was not always possible and there are still tunes used several times, for example the *Old 100th* is used 5 times and the tune for *Wake, awake* 6 times.

5.4. 3. Four popular contemporary song-books

As interesting as comparing two consecutive denominational hymnals, is the exercise of comparing contemporary song collections from different eras. I will do this for the German Protestant realm with four song-books which I have been aquainted with and which have been influential and used even in South Africa. Of course this short comparison cannot go into great detail. The following song-books will be discussed: the *Missionsharfe* (*Große* or *Kleine Missionsharfe* GMH or KMH), the song-book *Jesu Name nie verklinget* (JN), the song-book *Sein Ruhm unsere Freude* (SR) and *Feiert Jesus* (FJ).

Each of the four song-books as well as the two hymnals mentioned above have been thoroughly searched for stylistic elements. The results are recorded on the song-book analysis table below. The study is generally limited to the tunes, but very general comments on theological content will also be recorded below. The tune study has been limited to factors discussed above and ignores issues of harmony and chord progression which are not accessible to people not trained in music.

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[138] In the EKG four Christmas hymns share the same tune: *From heaven above to earth I come* by Martin Luther (EKG 16, 17, 30, 34). In the EG, two of these have been retained (the original Luther hymn 24 and a text by Gellert 42). One was given another tune (the second Christmas text by Luther was given the original popular tune that Luther used to write the former hymn EG 25 see Jenny 1978: 508), and the fourth, a text by Paul Gerhardt was relegated to the supplement (EG 541).

94

	Missionsharfe	Jesu Name	Sein Ruhm	Feiert Jesus	EKG	EG
No of Songs	178	260	408	256	394	535
Large Intervals	108 (61%)	174 (67%)	189 (46 %)	154 (60 %)	166 (42 %)	232 (43 %)
6th / 7th (presence)	83 (47%)	103 (40%)	122 (30%)	90 (35 %)	36 (9 %)	44 (8 %)
Slurs	90 (51%)	71 (27%)	51 (12 %)	22 (9 %)	66 (17 %)	95 (18 %)
Dotted Notes	44 (25%)	94 (36%)	87 (21%)	36 (14 %)	31 (8 %)	54 (10 %)
Syncopation	0	2 (0,7%)	118 (29 %)	138 (53 %)	5 (1 %)	13 (2 %)
Repeated Notes	0	6 (2%)	90 (22 %)	45 (18 %)	3 (0,7 %)	5 (1 %)
Long Notes (include subsequent rests)	0	3 (1%)	58 (14 %)	71 (28 %)	0	2 (0,4 %)

Figure 2:   Song Style Analysis and Comparison

Explanation of Table:

Large Intervals: The number of songs that have four or more intervals of a fourth or larger.

6th /7th presence:_ The number of songs that have at least one leap of a sixth or seventh (generally seen as "emotive intervals"). No distinction is made between a major or minor 6th or 7th.

Other elements: The number of songs which have four or more of the following stylistic elements: Slurs, dotted notes, syncopated notes, repeated notes (four sets of four or more repeated notes), long notes (four notes of a bar or longer than a bar if at the end of a phrase).

5.4. 3. 1. The *Missionsharfe*   (19th and early 20th Century)
My observations are based on the two editions I have at my disposal. This is the *Große Missionsharfe* ("Great Mission Harp" GMH) of 1925. This is a large book with tunes in four parts for choirs, containing 326 songs. It is closely based on the *Kleine Missionsharfe* ("Small Mission Harp" KMH)*,* (my copy is the 79th edition of 1919),   a book with two part tunes for congregations and fellowship groups. This is the copy I searched for the chart mentioned above. Copies on this

95

book are still on sale on the Internet, second hand in various historic editions.[139] This gives a small indication of the importance of this collection which dates from the middle of the 19th century[140] and for many years was reprinted every two years (Gruber 2005:192).

This book brought together songs of the pietist revival and the era of missionary fervour. Many older texts were given new more rousing tunes. Most of the 19th century tunes are disjunctive tunes with great leaps, many intervals of perfect fourths or major sixths, and often many slurs (see Table). In short it was characteristic of the emotional musical style which was rejected firmly by the generation which produced the official denominational hymnal, the EKG.[141]

Themes covered by these songs vary, but most of them centre on praise and adoration of God and on the subjective faith experience. There are also many songs which are calls to witness to those who do not know God. Most of these are addressed to Christians calling for witness and not directly to unbelievers to challenge them to faith.[142] There is relatively little on other traditional themes, for example the church year (except Christmas), morning or evening, sacraments or love of neighbour. Twenty-six of the songs in the KMH are traditional hymns, some of them with more emotive, 19th century tunes. Of the other songs, eleven have been included in the EG.

5.4. 3. 2. The song-book *Jesu Name nie verklinget* (1959)

This influential song-book was produced first in 1959, this means directly in the wake of the publication of the EKG. It gained a large popularity mainly in more revivalist and evangelical Protestant communities in Germany as well as youth groups of the more orthodox Lutheran congregations. According to the preface of the 1979 edition it understood itself as responsible for popularising "Old and New songs of revival" (Subtitle of the Book: *Altes und Neues erweckliches Lied).* The preface points out that these songs should be supplemented by the older more objective chorales, and this is indeed how they were used in many circles, while in some communities this song-book became the only "hymnal". Unfortunately the book is not meticulous in recording sources and dates so it is more difficult to compare the older versus contemporary content of this collection. Some older material and chorales are included and a great deal of material consists of

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[139] For example the 1880 edition (the 17th, was offered for sale online (www.ebay.com August 2011), also the 78th edition of 1917.   In May 2013 editions from 1880 and 1891 and 1920 were on sale.

[140] The 1919 edition includes the Foreword of the first edition of 1852 (KMH 1919:2).

[141]   The EKG includes only 20 hymns from the 19th century, from a total of 394 hymns in its collection.   Of the 39 older hymns that EKG has in common with the *Missionsharfe* at least 6 have different tunes. The *Missionsharfe* includes in total 135 hymns from dates before 1800, but a large part of these older lyrics have been given 19th century tunes.

[142] An example is the song *Es ist noch Raum!* (There is still room), calling for people to go to the streetcorners to fill the banquet hall with guests (KMH 32a).

96

translated English revival hymns: *Just as I am* (JN 58), *The Lord's my shepherd* (159), *O for a thousand tongues to sing* (10), *Blessed Assurance* (247) and many more. The title ("The name of Jesus rings out forever") comes from a song that used the South African tune *Nkosi yam* (JN 1) and in many ways also defines the basic style of the collection.

After the wide appeal of the book, later volumes were produced, with contemporary songs of the second half of the century. None of the later volumes had the wide distribution of the first, and their content overlapped with that of other song-books in use in later years.

Of the 230 songs in the collection, 24 are traditional hymns also found in the EKG. Several of these have other tunes from those found in the EKG.[143] Otherwise it is impossible to differentiate the contents accurately as many are not dated. But the vast majority is still from the 19th century, much of it translations from the English. Relatively few songs of *Missionsharfe* have been taken over into *Jesu Name*. Exceptions are often those from earlier centuries which were excluded from the EKG, for example *Mighty God we praise Your name* (JN 2) or *Ich bete an die Macht der Liebe* *(O I adore God's loving power)* (JN 226). Relatively few of the newer songs of *Jesu Name* have now been included in the EG: four only, and these are mostly from the resistance poets of the confessing church.[144] These are not songs that are in the popular general style of *Jesu Name.*

Musically there is a diversity, but in general songs fall into two categories: There are the lilting songs of revival, emotive but not as rousing and dramatic as those of *Missionsharfe*. They speak mainly subjectively of the experience of the believer and the joy of faith. Many of these are in 3/4 time and often have many slurred notes. Other songs are militant, in marching rhythms with many "trumpet" fanfare effects and texts centred on spiritual warfare. They have texts about the forces of darkness and the victorious conquering of these through the cross of Christ and the militant believer. In the early part of the 20th century this style was popular on both sides of the political divide, with both those of German nationalistic fervour and those opposed to this using militant musical styles and the language of the battle against darkness. Some of these songs continued to be sung, but in *Jesu Name* most nationalistic references have been purged, though general references to "our country" (JN 82) and "German country" (JN 125) remain, as well as phrases such as "fighting in holy war" (124). It goes without saying that very few of these songs survive. The only one to be accepted into the EG is one decidedly from the side of the German resistance to Hitler, Otto Riethmüller's *Herr, wir stehen Hand in Hand (Lord we're standing Hand in Hand)*

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[143] For example the tunes to *O dass ich tausend Zungen* hätte (JN 9) and *Mir ist Erbarmung widerfahren* (JN 242).
[144] For example *Herr, wir stehen Hand in Hand* by Riethmüller (JN 129) and *Er weckt mich alle Morgen* by Klepper (JN 224).

97

(JN129, EG 602), with a very non-militant tune. However, even this inclusion has been controversial. Militant styles and language have been marginalised by the editors of the EG, for very understandable reasons. This is a clear indication how much the social and political environment is a force in what we sing and when we sing it.

5.4.3.3. The song-book *Sein Ruhm, unsere Freude* (1981)

This book was produced at the peak of the style shift towards more jazz-style tunes. Unfortunately the book does not give dates for its songs, so it is difficult to trace a development. This shift probably began in the late 1960s and received much momentum in Germany through the large Church festivals (*Kirchentage*) and ecumenical encounters. Early songs were American spirituals with German words, or in the original English of which the collection contains a fair number, for example *Immer auf Gott zu vertrauen* to the tune *Give me that ol' time religion* (SR 189)*, Komm, sag es allen weiter* to the tune *Go tell it on the mountain* (SR 3), a song that was later included in the EG, *Als Israel in Ägypten war* to the tune *When Israel was in Egypt's land* (SR 221) or *He's got the whole world in his hands* in English (SR 144).   There are also quite a few Jewish tunes, reflecting the post-war conscience and dialogue (for example SR 10, 71, 229, 323, 326). The style is predominantly that of energetic, dance like tunes.   Many have syncopated rhythms (29%) or dotted rhythms (21%). There are early signs of a style shift to smoother, more emotive tunes in the later worship style, but even those tunes which have longer notes or repeated notes are still on average faster than the later worship song style. It is noticeable though that there is a much greater variety of styles in this collection than in the others, with some songs from the earlier styles (many with slurs) carried over (see Table). There are fewer songs which are very emotive than in the previous two books. Themes focus on praise and the call to faith, as well as a fair percentage of songs dealing with love of neighbour or social justice issues.   Though most songs are general praise and proclamation, there are also some songs on more specific themes for example morning and evening, (223,107 and 249, 377), but relatively little on the church year and sacraments.

Of the 408 songs, 13 are older hymns from the traditional hymnal. Only 7 of the newer songs have been included in the EG.

5.4.3.4. The song-book *Feiert Jesus* (1995)

While the two post world war song-books had a decisive new orientation towards the English-speaking world, most of the songs were translations, printed in German. This book is to a very large extent bilingual. It takes up the Praise and Worship tradition and about half the songs are printed in two languages. The shift is decidedly away from the energetic jazz-style melodies, to the slower, emotive songs of adoration. There is a high percentage of syncopated rhythms (53% thus higher than the previous book), but in the context of slower tunes. An example of this is the translation of *You laid aside Your majesty* by Noel Richards which will be discussed later in this thesis (FJ 111). Many are disjunctive emotive tunes with many leaps of 6ths or 7ths. Long notes are found in about a quarter of the songs. Many are typical Praise and Worship songs, some still are in the more energetic style of the previous book. There are fewer songs with social content, or specific themes. Most of them are general proclamation and expressions of love and adoration. There are, however, quite a few songs from other traditions for example the Kiswahili song *A sante sana Jesu* (FJ 17). Of the 256 songs four are older, traditional hymns. Whether any of the songs will survive to be included in a denominational hymn-book remains to be seen.

5.4.4. Issues arising from song-book comparisons

The conclusions drawn from this very brief comparison can only be tentative and subjective. It goes outside the scope of the dissertation to be able to prove anything statistically. This study can suggest trends and possible reasons why some songs survive beyond their generation.

Clear from the study and the chart is that there is a very definite style which characterises the large majority of the songs in each individual collection. Songs which fit the popular style have a greater chance of being accepted at the time. Songs which do not follow the trend are usually less successful, but sometimes (not always), longer-lasting. It is also clear that unlike in the case of hymnals, there is a relatively small overlap between one song-book and the next which means that most of the songs are discarded when the style changes.

It is clear that those songs that fit the popular trend are effective at that time in getting people to sing together and enjoy it, and somehow to "feel touched". In this way these songs are effective evangelistic songs, and thus "good" in the sense that they reach people. The songs that are in the

99

collections are there because they were popular and widespread.

The other issue that becomes clear from the song-book study is that every collection has a very narrow range of themes and there are major gaps. Denominational hymnals try to cover all the major themes. Contemporary song-books have no such aim. They collect what is widely sung at that particular time, regardless of the content.

Contemporary writers seldom have the ambition to write something lasting. Their goal is to write something that will reach people now. That styles shift and songs are discarded is not an issue for them, as their style will shift with it, and new songs will be written in the new style. They ask about evangelistic effectiveness at the present moment and not about durability of songs. They try to stay abreast of the popular styles, or even to be trend setters in the next style.

5.5. Conclusions

This chapter has traced some of the elements of musical style and how styles shift from one generation to the next, leaving most composed music of that era discarded. Contemporary song-books and denominational hymnals track these changes in different ways. Official denominational hymn-books bring stability, but are often not on the pulse of what people in the pews really want to sing. Contemporary song collections bring together the best of their time, but still much of it will not outlast their generation, and has a very narrow range of themes. Today most congregations use the screen and power point presentations, which can respond immediately to new trends, and discard without great financial loss, and results in an even higher turnover of songs than in the case of contemporary song-books. Most congregations still have printed hymnals used to a greater or lesser extent, depending on local tradition.

Is durability an important criterion? Does it matter if there is almost no overlap between consecutive contemporary song-books? In denominational hymnals there is always a very large overlap between consecutive editions as hymnals see their role as preserving tradition. Does it matter if congregations today use and discard songs at an increasingly rapid rate?

I would argue that if one uses both, that is a denominational hymnal together with a contemporary song-book, the lack of "durable" songs in the contemporary song-book is not a problem. Even if

100

one uses power point, there should be a balance of old and new. However, if a congregation sings only the songs from the last 10 or 15 years, then the generations lose their ability to sing together. Flexibility and the ability to learn new songs declines with the years. People need, at some stage, to learn those songs that can sustain them for those later years, when they can no longer learn many new songs. Singing only the songs of one's own generation also deprives one of the theological insights and the breadth of themes that different eras can bring to the singing of the church, and because the music is generally all of one style it begins to get tedious. Of course, singing only from a denominational hymn-book often results in the church losing its youth, and other people who need to be reached in the musical idiom of their day.

Orr argues that hymnologists and professional musicians should not "run from new styles", but "thoughtfully incorporate" them (Orr 1991:35). This means using the elements of the new style for emphasis and special effect, but not just because they are popular. The style should not become "predictable to the point of banality"(36).

> For most of us this means broadening our styles of worship music. Some will need to move beyond using only contemporary styles for worship music. Church musicians who use only contemporary styles in ownership abdicate their challenge to invest worship with vital and varied music. Unrelieved contemporary style in music not only becomes tiresome and repetitious, but soon drains meaning, vitality and genuineness from worship.

<div align="right">(Orr 1991:35)</div>

Worship team leaders, congregational musicians, church musicians and hymnologists and the average congregant will probably continue to have many different ideas of what should or could be sung in church. It is clear though, that hymnologists cannot set down standards without consulting with the congregants who will actually sing the songs. The arrogance of that generation of hymnologists who found that musically ignorant congregants are not qualified to judge what songs are useable for worship is hopefully over.[145]

We continue to need the denominational hymnals for its breadth of themes and musical styles. Of the songs in contemporary song-books a small proportion will make it into these hymn-books, often only 20 or more years after the song-book was printed. Is there any way one could tell

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[145] "K Ameln demanded a distinction between the "church hymn" and the "spiritual folk song" which was suitable for groups and home devotions but not for worship on Sunday. The "authoritarian position of the singing community" should not decide this value and suitability, but only "qualified hymnologists" with the necessary musical and theological know-how" (quoted in Bunners 1984: 246).

101

which of the many songs those could be?[146]

The lyrics of course have much to do with it. But a great deal depends on the tune as well. It needs to be able to be sung by congregants with limited musical training. What is a "good song" for congregations of mixed ages and cultures needs to be a question of balance and give and take. A set of criteria will be developed in the next section.

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[146] Ottermann suggested cheaply bound hymn-books which can be revised more often (Ottermann 1993:76). Most congregations now use powerpoint presentations, taking the texts both out of new and old hymn- and song-books.

CHAPTER SIX – DETERMINING CRITERIA FOR " GOOD SONGS"

6. 1. Different ways of defining "Good"

What songs should we be singing in our Sunday worship? Out of the thousands of songs written, which are the most likely to survive and be counted among the "classics" in years to come (Hartje 2009:370)? Are there understandable criteria which we can use to choose songs?   Is there a "better basis for judgement than our own likes and dislikes" (Schilling 1983:41)?

In the literature, but even more so, in my interaction with people in ministry, I have come across very many different approaches to determining what makes a song "good". All of these have merit to some degree, most of them are limited and lead to impoverishment if absolutised. While there are many variations, the approaches can be roughly categorised into 7 different approaches:

1) <u>The Emotional approach:</u> A song is "good" if it is enjoyed by those who sing it, if it makes them feel energised, excited, emotionally touched in some way.

2) <u>The Evangelistic approach:</u> A song is "good" if it fills the church and helps to spread the gospel by attracting people to worship and evangelistic events.

3) <u>The Aesthetic approach:</u> A song is "good" if it meets artistic (poetic and musical) criteria of quality, that is, if can be seen as a "work of art".

4) <u>The Theological approach:</u> A song is "good" if its text meets high theological criteria of quality and has proclamatory value.

5) <u>The Traditional approach</u>: A song is "good" if it has been sung for a long time and has shown it can stand the test of time.

6) <u>The Personal Meaning approach:</u>   A song is "good" if it has had meaning in a person's life and people have strong personal memories associated with it. A song is "good" if it is like a "good friend".

7) <u>The Integrated approach:</u> A song is "good" if it makes connections, between words and music, between people, between theology and emotion and many other such polarities. This approach tries to bring together the above different approaches.

6.1.1. The Emotional approach

103

This approach is seldom found in literature, but is probably the most widespread among the general population that enjoys different types of music. While theorists reflect on aesthetics and style, the general population either enjoys a style of music or does not. In general this is unreflected and emotional. Hartje calls it, quoting Page, the "religious version of the 'heart is more important than art' belief" (Hartje 2009:370). Often there is no clear reason why a particular song becomes an instant hit and another, quite similar in style, does not. Musical styles provoke strong reactions, people love them or hate them but can rarely explain why. Rational arguments about shallow theology or aesthetically indifferent music rarely have an effect if people enjoy a song on the emotional level. In general, however, the emotional appeal largely rests on the music and not the text.

6.1.2. The Evangelistic approach

This is already a more reflected approach than the former, although the two are related. If many people using approach 1 judge a song to be "good", it will generally have good value in attracting people to a service or evangelistic event. Any planned event meant to attract outsiders particularly probably needs some "attractive" music, acceptable to "category 1" people.

Morgenthaler writes:

> Aside from the Spirit of God, music is the most potent element in a worship service. It has an incredible, matchless capacity to open the human heart to God, accessing the soul more quickly, deeply and permanently than any other art form or human speech … If we want our worship to witness, we need to draw much of our worship material from an entirely new genre of worship music - music that is meaningful and engaging to Christian and non-Christian cultures alike.
>
> (Morgenthaler 1995: 211 & 213)

For some people the quality of the theological content is not that crucial, as long as it attracts people. Once people are in the service, they will then get to hear the preached message, where the "real teaching" takes place. The more critical people who use this criterion will make sure that the songs reinforce the evangelistic message with often short, memorable lines that will stay in people's minds or words that are thoughtprovoking and a challenge to faith. There can, however, also be an element of emotional manipulation through music that tries to influence people to leave their seats at an altar call. Not uncommon is also the unreflected "anything that

104

attracts people is good" approach which led Marva Dawn to comment:

> Our culture is statistical, and, as previously shown, technopoly aggravates the tendency. As relationships, entertainment, and even the news become increasingly superficial, society looks for ways to signify success. Lacking any tools to grade quality, we have to measure quantity..... Consequently, success is inherently linked in our contemporary mind-set with winning the competition for numbers.
>
> The danger to the Church is enormous and, strangely, often not obvious. Quality suffers when the main concern is quantity.   Once, while reflecting with a group on the triviality of a worship song to which everyone in the group objected, I was shocked by the next comment: "But it must be all right. That kind of song in the worship service draws people like flies." Indeed, flies are drawn to sugar, but we wouldn't give our children sugar for lunch!
>
> <div align="right">(Dawn 1995:51-52)</div>

Schilling makes similar comments when he writes:

> … the fact that hymns link ideas with emotion gives them special teaching power. Music has a distinctive capacity to touch the feelings, and this is accentuated when music is a channel for meanings expressed in poetic language, especially when those meanings concern the rich common heritage of Christian faith, with its personal experiences of sorrow and joy, sin and deliverance, defeat and victory, disappointment and hope, and human and divine love. Questionable as well as true ideas may be strengthened when sung ...
>
> ... the very power of hymnody to win a hearing makes it imperative that heed be given to the content of what is heard. Frequently multitudes are attracted by a message in song and sermon that promises individual comfort and peace, makes the Christian way falsely easy, and ignores the wholeness of the New Testament gospel. Hymns that offer a partial, truncated version of the good news may win converts, but not responsible Christians equipped to embody the healing, transforming love of God in a sick and broken world.
>
> Fortunately, there are many hymns, old and new, that can and do offer a wholistic, positive witness. Christian hymnody has demonstrated its ability to strengthen the faith of believers, to move the almost persuaded, and to deepen as well as to symbolize the love that the Christian community exists to incarnate.
>
> <div align="right">(Schilling 1983:27-28)</div>

However critical one may be of this approach, it is clear that no function will have evangelistic potential if there is no music which connects with people on an emotional level. This needs to be kept in mind, even by aesthetically or theologically more discerning leaders.

6.1.3. The Aesthetic approach

This approach can be found among church musicians and professional hymnologists and congregants who appreciate high art. Such people will often gain access to faith and theology through the medium of art and music. Through "good music", the words and the truth of faith can enter hearts and lives. Thus quality church music, good choirs and professionally trained organists are seen as important, and worth investing in. In this approach, only "good music" is

105

an appropriate vehicle to convey the grandeur and glory of God and the deep truths of his saving action. Trite and shallow music, shoddily performed is offensive and even morally wrong. This approach was characteristic amongst others, of Ralph Vaughn Williams, who, as musical editor of the *English Hymnal* argued for the need to sing hymns of quality:

> The usual argument in favor of bad music is that the fine tunes are doubtless "musically correct" but that the people want "something simple". Now the expression "musically correct" has no meaning; the only "correct" music is that which is beautiful and noble. As for simplicity, what could be simpler than St Anne or the Old Hundredth, and what could be finer? It is indeed a moral rather than a musical issue.

(quoted by Fesperman in Meeks 1996: 245)

Vaughn Williams charges the musician with a moral task: to present only what is "beautiful and noble". To do less is to betray the trust placed by the congregation in the teacher. This presumes not only that the teacher will always recognize the "beautiful and noble" but that the teacher also has the trust of the "students" (Fesperman 1996: 245). Carelessness in the execution of the musical task is inexcusable and undermines the noble task of the church. This does not mean that all the music must be old and traditional, but it must meet artistic criteria and not simply be "popular"[147].

The problem with this approach is that it can lead to a worship form that is accessible only to a small group of culturally educated people and can lead to a division between the guardians of quality and the average congregants who want to sing songs that touch them emotionally and are more easily accessible to them. Most likely it alienates the young generation whose tastes in music often do not meet these aesthetic criteria.[148] Nevertheless, having people in the congregation with such an approach can ensure that treasures are guarded and not forgotten. In my experience, quality work with choirs has often been the way that young people gain a new appreciation for traditional hymns.

> To be truly excellent, music in worship must pass two tests: functional and internal. The music of worship should be good music as measured by inherent musical standards, and it should be effective music as

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[147] Bunners quotes K. Ameln in saying that the "experts" in hymnology should decide on the value of a church hymn and not the "authoritarian position of the singing people" (Bunners 1984: 246).

[148] Orr writes: "No matter how noble and elevated our musical intentions were, we kept singing the same songs while the congregation changed keys. Somewhere along the way, slowly and imperceptibly, we let our passion for musical excellence, for the best in worship, shift our real focus from singing *by* the congregation to singing *for* the congregation, from drawing the worshipers into worship to performing while the worshipers sat and listened" (Orr 1991:24).

106

measured by how well it actually works in a given congregation to give voice and expression to praise.

(Long 2001: 63)

6.1.4. The Theological approach

It is not surprising that this approach is characteristic of many pastors and theologians. These people judge a song primarily by its text and theological content and will choose hymns for their message, rather than by the question of what the congregation enjoys singing. The music is seen as a vehicle for content rather than as an important aim in itself.[149] The emphasis on non-instrumental music and unison singing in the reformed theologians' view on music can be seen as part of this approach. The music is a carrier of the words which need to be either biblical (reformed theology) or dogmatically correct (Lutheran Orthodoxy). Music is seen as a good aid to teaching and so metrical teaching texts are written to be sung. Several hymns by Luther fit into this category. Those that are still regularly sung, generally have some emotive value in tune or text (for example *Dear Christians one and all rejoice* LH 322 or the Reformation hymn of Paul Speratus *Salvation unto us has come* LH 324). There, where the tune is unappealing the song is unlikely to survive. There are many examples where excellent texts just do not find a home in the congregation because the tunes do not connect with the congregation[150].

While the theological content is crucial in determining the value of a song, it is very clear that for congregations the tune is much more than just a carrier of content, but integral to the value of the song for them, and this needs to be considered also by the theologians.

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[149] Hawn writes that objective criteria for the theological value of texts were the main hymnological criteria for quality in the 19th century. Then the focus shifted to the context of the writer and placing the hymn in its context of origin (Hawn 2003:24).

[150] Some very moving texts by Jochen Klepper included in the collection of Bavaria (Hofmann 1967 Melody supplement 13 & 14) were not included into the EG, mainly because of the difficult tunes. Another example is a German song about the nature of the church, *Ein Schiff, dass sich Gemeinde nennt* (EG 572) which was enthusiastically received by many pastors because of its text, but has a quite heavy tune, which place a high demand on singers, particularly if all five verses are sung. It has gone out of favour again, used more for teaching purposes than for general congregational singing. It is found in the supplent, but not the main part of the EG.

107

6.1.5. The Traditional approach

A song has value if it has survived for a few decades or even centuries and is still sung. This is a position that characterises traditional congregations, and sometimes members of the older generation. It is a position that has a certain amount of merit. Of all the songs written in each generation, only a fraction survive into the next, and these are likely to be the "best" songs, meaning the most singable and those that were the most meaningful and most often sung in the time when they were written. For denominational hymnals, printed only every few decades, it makes sense to include only such contemporary songs as have already demonstrated some staying power and that have been sung consistently over some years. It is fairly normal that most "contemporary" songs that are included in new hymnals are already about 20 years old. Many weaknesses of contemporary songs become clear with repeated singing, and though they may be great hits in their time, they rapidly reach the end of their life. Those with a strong tune are more likely to survive into the next generation.

However, although time alone can do a lot of sifting, there are many examples of quality music having been forgotten and needing to be rediscovered (for example the music of JS Bach). Also, the fact that people have been singing particular songs for a long time may say something about the quality of the music, but much less about the quality of the text. Much that is theologically problematic has survived because of appealing tunes. Vietzen writes about the low reputation of many hymns, even some that have survived for a while:

> It is said that many hymns are theologically unsound, poetically weak, musically unaesthetic and generally thematically outdated. These shortcomings are aggravated by careless use on the part of ministers and congregations alike.

(Vietzen 1968: 8)

This rather negative view of hymns, which Vietzen herself does not share, shows that in general, just the fact that it has survived does not guarantee the hymn survival into the future. A hymn needs to speak musically and from its words to a new generation to survive beyond its own (see previous discussion on the life-cycle of a song) and into the future.

While the age of a hymn does say a lot about its value, it cannot be used as the only and ultimate test of quality. Space needs to be made for quality contemporary songs.

108

6.1.6. The personal meaning approach

This is the approach I was closest to before I started my more intensive study on hymns. This characterises as "good" those songs that accompany one through life and give meaning and comfort during the different stages. The comparison of a song to a friend was made by the German poet and hymnwriter Matthias Claudius. A song is like a "good friend in your house" (quoted in Lieberknecht 1994:60), whose qualities and function is difficult to exactly define and describe, but whose strengths and weaknesses one knows and with whom one has a shared history. The process of a song becoming a "friend" is similar to the process of "fusion of horizons" described by Gadamer (see previous section). The singer enters in some way into the faith experience of the writer and uses the writer's words to express his or her personal faith experience. Of course these experiences are not identical, but there is sufficient overlap for people to feel, it was written for them, in their situation. Many people will associate songs with certain experiences in their lives where a song was an expression of joy or a comfort in sorrow. Just as it is the case of a good friend, songs can double your joys and halve your sorrows, and they carry the emotional weight of previous experiences with that song. Many people have memories of special songs, sung during a funeral, or when they were going through a difficult time, at birthdays or weddings. Any future singing will carry some of that store of emotion with it. As with friends, one makes new ones all the time, but does not just drop all the old ones because of this. This approach is already integrative of some of the others, as it assumes songs already have a certain history and needs texts which are substantive enough to connect with life experiences. Songs which gain a special meaning for a person are also likely to be songs with tunes that connect on an emotional level. Guardians of "quality" need to listen to testimonies about the personal meaning of songs, and not degrade those that have gained significance for many. This has the potential to do a lot of damage.[151] This criterion is important and cannot be disregarded. However, it is a very subjective criterion about which there can be little discussion if a selection needs to be made. It cannot give any helpful criteria for judging new songs as to their potential to become such carriers of personal meaning for various people.

6.1.7. The Integrated approach

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[151] The song *Take now my hand and lead me* has been mentioned before as having been excluded by the editors of the EKG, though congregations insisted on continuing to sing it. Even in my personal experience there were conflicts between the guardians of quality, who criticised the "infantility" of the song, and those congregants who found it deeply meaningful and wanted it sung at a loved one's funeral. However, this "personal meaning" approach also needs to be given limits, as very problematic songs sometimes become personal favourites.

109

Gifted pastors or worship leaders have this approach instinctively. They know that for effective worship over a long time they need songs with both appealing tunes and theologically valuable texts, they need songs that excite and express joy and songs that comfort. They need songs that are simple enough for everyone to sing, but not so shallow as to be quickly boring. Sometimes this is achieved by a balance of different songs. But there are also songs which unite these various poles within one song.   These are likely in the end to be the most enduring, becoming "friends" for people for generations to come.

It is this connection between text, music and human experience which makes the song such a powerful vehicle of worship and evangelism. Manoff argues that song is the "mother art" (Manoff 1982:97), the first of human expressions that predates poetry and other artistic media, and that there is an "ancient unity between melody and text" (96):

> A song, especially a good one, is much more than a tune with words. It is a neatly contained dramatic world in which a range of human experiences may be created. Since it is produced through the body in tone, rhythm and words, song has an especially human quality. More than any other musical type, it has been the primary medium for encoding and preserving a culture's most sacred traditions.

<div align="right">(Manoff 1982:99)</div>

Vietzen agrees that a song needs to be taken as a "theological-literary-musical unit", and while it "cannot be hoped that every hymn will be qualitatively equal in all three aspects", the hymn needs to be judged "as on whether it, as an entity, acts as a medium of praise for the worshipping congregation. Thus the hymn as a WHOLE becomes a theological and practical problem" (Vietzen 1968:7). Manning comments that in "good hymns, the writers look past their personal experience to the salvation story":

> Full of the intensest and most individual passion as they are, they contain more than that: the writers look back from their own experience to those experiences of the Incarnate Son of God on which their faith was built. This gives them a steadiness, a firmness, a security against mere emotionalism and sentimentality which more recent writers, trying to lay bare their souls, have found it difficult to avoid.

<div align="right">(Manning 1942:138)</div>

Thus in judging the quality of a song one needs to look both at the text and at the tune and at how they fit together. And then it is important to see what other important connections this song can make for the one singing it, to help make worship a holistic and meaningful experience. This will be discussed in the next section.

110

6.2. Making connections: possible criteria for " good songs"

Various hymnologists and worship leaders have tried to come up with lists of criteria for "good songs". Most of them contain criteria both for the tune and for the text.

Morgenthaler uses the acronym "PASS" to discuss her four criteria for quality:

> Regardless of musical style, a well-crafted, cross-cultural worship song has four simple, identifiable characteristics. Songs on your list that exhibit these qualities "PASS" the initial song selection test:
>
> * **Personal** - they relate in some way to people's everyday lives and involve their whole being, including their emotions.
> * **Attractive** - they hold people's attention.
> * **Straightforward** - both Seeker Bob and Saintly Bill can understand and latch onto them quickly.
> * **Substantive** - they have a thoroughly biblical message that is faithful to the whole counsel of Scripture.
>
> (Morgenthaler 1995: 214)

She then continues unpacking these criteria. It should be "singable", "understandable without being trite and innocuous"(215), express "doctrine and devotion" meaning "truth about God and a heartfelt response to God" (216). She goes on to say:

> Worship songs ...that do not meet all four PASS criteria are not necessarily "bad". They simply will not form the core of your worship repertoire. These include songs that veer sharply in the direction of either spirit or truth.
>
> (Morgenthaler 1995: 217)

What should be avoided are "boring" songs, songs which are "too difficult", those that contain "unscriptural" or "confused theology", or "religious jargon", too difficult rhythms or intervals (Morgenthaler 217). However, she does not give clear indications how one judges this.

Schilling gives the following guidelines:

> There should be a **structure** to the song, that is a central theme and progression of thought.
> The lines should be **poetic and aesthetic**, not trite or slipshod.
> The text should generally conform to the rules of **grammar**.
> **Accented syllables** should conform with the meaning of the text.
> There should be a **balance of the intellectual and the emotional**. Both "dry abstraction" and "effusive sentimentality" should be avoided.
> The **language** should be **simple**, not "florid" or "archaic" (42).
> The content needs to conform to the **truth** of the Bible and the way the church has **historically**

111

understood faith (43).
Hymns should **avoid "mixing metaphors** in a helter-skelter way".
They should **not contradict** present-day s**cientific knowledge** unless they are clearly symbolic (47).
The hymn should be "**inclusive"** and "**universal** in outlook" (48).

(Schilling 1983:42-28)

These lists of criteria, each of them usually needing further unpacking, show the difficulty in trying to pin down a song of quality. "Good" songs are easier to recognise than to describe. I have identified four areas for defining criteria of quality, and have tried to name and discuss the important general criteria in each one:

6.3. Criteria for a Good "Integrative" Song

The aim of this section is to develop a set of criteria which can be used by congregants to evaluate songs. The aim is to develop a set of tools which can be used by people who are not musically trained, but have some responsibility in selecting songs. The importance of each criterion will be argued also using examples from songs or song-books studied. Some simple tools and rules of thumb will be suggested which can help to understand how a particular song works and how easy it would be to sing and learn. These criteria will be tested in the subsequent sections, but of course they will need to be tested on an ongoing basis to assess their usefulness.

The following criteria will be discussed and developed below:
A " good integrative song" should have the following characteristics:
1) Good Text
2) Good Tune
3) Good Match of Text and Tune
4) Good Balance of "Polarities"

Each of these areas needs to be examined in turn. The criteria are based on the discussions in the sections that have gone before.

6.3.1. Good Text

112

<u>6.3.1.1. A "good text" is based on the wealth of Scripture in all its breadth</u>

Many songs cover only a small range of the wealth of the message of God in Scripture. While not every song can cover a broad range of scriptural topics, those contemporary (or older) songs are the most valuable that bring something fresh and different from Scripture than most of the other songs in their generation. For example many contemporary songs have as their basis Isaiah 6 "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord", but much fewer Isaiah 40, "Comfort, comfort".[152] In the Scripture index for Songs of Fellowship, only one song is listed for Genesis 1 (SF 557), and only one for the book of Job (SF 51)**.** Similarly many songs take as their basis the second half of the Christ-hymn of Philippians 2 "Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord", but fewer the first part of the hymn, "he emptied himself", and even fewer the first part on the chapter, where Paul challenges the congregation.[153]

There are many possibilities for biblical lyrics. The safest option for musicians who are not so good at writing lyrics are simple biblical quotes. Many Bible passages can be set to music, and talented musicians should look for those more unknown Bible passages that have not been set to music by countless other song-writers. In this way these Bible passages enter the hearts and minds of the worshipping congregation.

The second commonly used type of text is a biblical paraphrase. This is also common and may be metrical or free verse.   In the Calvinist tradition this was the only form of hymnic poetry allowed.   Of course every paraphrase also entails a shift in emphasis and sometimes subtle changes in theology. Note should be taken of the direction of that shift in the evaluation.[154] Christian paraphrases of Old Testament psalms almost always bring a shift of emphasis, often legitimate, but many valuable details simply get lost.[155]

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[152] In the Scripture index of Songs of Fellowship 11 songs are listed for Isaiah 6:1-8, 4 songs for Isaiah 40:1-8. (SF p 1148)

[153] The Scripture index of Songs of Fellowship lists 9 songs for Phil 2:2-8 and 30 for Phil 2:9-11 (SF p 1152).

[154] For example in the case of two contemporary songs, one is a direct biblical quote: "This is the day that the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it " (Ps 118 v24 MP 691), whereas the line in another song is a paraphrase of the same biblical verse: "I will enter his gates with thanksgiving in my heart....I will say this is the day that the Lord has made, I will rejoice for He has made me glad" (MP 307). However, here there is a significant shift in the free quoting of that verse. Not only is there the shift from "we" to "I", although it is speaking of entering the public worship space, but it is also placing the cause of the rejoicing in my subjective feeling, rather than the objective action of God "the day that the Lord has made". There may be a place for such a shift, but one should be aware of it.

[155] In Songs of Fellowship, four songs are listed for Psalm 22, but they all focus on the praise in verse 3, and none

113

The third way of writing biblical lyrics is the free retelling and interpretation of biblical content and the Christian story. For Lutherans this has always been legitimate, even a calling, and is part of Christian proclamation. Whether a song's proclamation remains true to the core of the Christian message will need to be judged on a song by song basis and will be largely a question of one's own theological approach (see next section).

6.3.1.2. A "good" text needs to be theologically sound

a) Be wary of misleading theology

It has been commented on many times that music implants content in people's minds and hearts much deeper than a sermon. For this reason, the theology of the text needs to be carefully looked at.

Schilling writes:

> The effectiveness of hymns as teaching instruments springs not only from the fact that they embody basic beliefs but from the form or manner of that embodiment. Here three considerations deserve mention. First is the *cumulative power of repetition*. The reiteration over the years, of affirmations concerning God, Jesus Christ, the human situation, and the way of salvation affects powerfully if imperceptibly the real beliefs of the singers.

(Schilling 1983: 24)

For this reason one needs to be particularly cautious of wrong or misleading theology in songs. Such songs are very problematic and their singing should be discouraged. This is not always easy as such songs may be very popular, and sometimes stating one's misgivings while allowing them may do less damage. (It is usually more effective to introduce "good" songs than to ban the "not so good"). What is judged to be wrong theology is obviously dependent on one's theological position. Lutheran theology would guard against songs that pressurise people into conversion through threats of hell, or that are too legalistic, or emphasize my own achievement in having attained faith.[156] Theologically problematic are also songs which emphasize success and promise a freedom from problems if we follow Jesus. The most theologically problematic line I found in the course of my research is the line, "In your presence all our problems

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bring a note of lament and questioning (SF p 1147).

[156] The not so subtle pressure of the song *Beinah bekehret!* ("Almost converted") would probably exclude the song from a mainstream Lutheran hymnal (JN 54).

disappear".[157]

A special problem are the folk carols at Christmas time which have little to do with the Christmas message.   Here discretion is advised as there are many emotions involved, but they should preferably not be used in a church service, though they may be used in more informal carol singing.[158]

<u>b) One sided theology should be treated with caution</u>

Most songs are not so much theologically wrong as one-sided. This means they can be used, as long as other songs are also sung which can restore the balance. For example there are many songs which emphasize only the divinity and the glory and power of Christ, without mentioning his humanity and his suffering for us.   Many songs are excessively subjective and emphasize only our action of worship or response in faith, without acknowledging the act of God.   Many of these songs can be used in worship to great effect, but one always needs to acknowledge that what people sing will ultimately affect their theology. One needs to weigh up the positive "enjoyment" value against the detrimental effect it may have on the theology of the singers. Kennel argues that good songs allow people to be drawn in while determining themselves their closeness and distance, enabling dialogue without manipulation (Kennel 2011:32).

Other cases where one needs to be discerning is in the militant Christian songs which make use of images of spiritual warfare. The imagery is biblical, but in some songs more than others, the implication seems to be that we are fighting a flesh and blood enemy out there. This is very dangerous as church history has shown repeatedly.   If it is clear that the imagery speaks of a spiritual battle, and the darkness is also within and amongst us, not only out there with another group of people, these songs are less problematic.[159] Excessively erotic imagery in songs also

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[157] "His Spirit in us releases us from fear,
The way to Him is open, with boldness we draw near.
And in His presence our problems disappear;
Our hearts responding to His love." (Gibson, 2006 in Maranatha Record Company CD 3,2)

[158]   At an congregational Advent singing evening in my former parish, a congregant who very seldom came to church requested the singing of a German Christmas carol about the Christ child coming to earth in deep winter to bring the children gifts (*Kling Glöckchen, klingelingeling*).   I dodged the request by pointing out that this was a church function so we would stay with the Christian carols. It was clear that the visitor was taken aback and did not understand, and I was later unsure, whether I should not have let it go. These are difficult moments and need to be sensitively handled on a case by case basis.

[159] For many years there have been critiques of the popular hymn   *Onward Christian soldiers* (MP 543) which

115

needs to be treated with caution and be judged on a case by case basis. Is the emotion generated serving the goal of increasing faith in Christ or is it an end in itself? Is it, for congregational songs, language that is suitable for public worship where many different people, at different stages in their faith journey, come together?

6.3.1.3. A "good text" takes the depth and breadth of human experience seriously

This point has to some extent been covered above. Good texts take seriously the full breadth of human experience and emotion. There are not only times of joy and upbeat faith, but also times of expressing pain, sorrow and doubt. These should be reflected somewhere in the songs we sing (see the discussion below on "cross vs glory").

6.3.1.4. A "good text" needs to be readily understood; it can be simple or repetitive,
but not shallow

For a congregational song to be sung for a long time, it needs to be embedded in the consciousness of the singers. This can only happen if it can be readily understood, and does not contain too much theological jargon and phrases understandable only to the initiated.   This does not mean that there cannot be phrases which have less obvious biblical connotations and which singers grow to understand as their faith deepens. But the essence of the song should be clear to most of the singers on the first singing. This is different to much poetry which has been written through the ages, which sometimes remains closed to readers or listeners on first hearing and only opens up after some study and contemplation. The text of a congregational song should be immediately accessible. Sometimes this means that texts need to be revised by hymnal commissions. This should always be sensitively done, as revising texts can damage the poetic impact severely, and revisions tend to date much more quickly than poetic originals (Albrecht 1995:132).

Rogal writes about Isaac Watts, who can be regarded as the father of English hymnody. He saw himself as a "writer for congregational purposes" which meant he sacrificed some opportunities for being recognised as a poet of the first rank:

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seems to encourage holy warfare. The tune is so popular that it was impossible to prevent people singing it. A new version has now been published, *Onward Christian pilgrims* (NAH 531) which takes up some of these concerns.

> Indeed on more than one occasion he felt the need to apologize for being so easily understood, for having written poetry that could be read without difficulty.
>
> Watts recognized the difference between the high aesthetic level of divine poetry and the practical environment in which congregational song had to function. There was both the business of worship and the necessary moral questions, directed first to the self and then eventually in an upward direction..... [Watts strove for] clarity of language, simplicity of diction, and sympathy for understanding so that thousands of English worshipers - both within and outside of the establishment - could lean upon his hymns as the natural expressions of their own religious feelings. Watts was a preacher.
>
> <div align="right">(Rogal 1991: 85-86)</div>

On the other hand is the question whether lyrics can be too simple. Many contemporary songs have simple lyrics, sometimes short lines repeated many times. Some of these are very effective, some are so simple as to sound shallow and trite. How can one distinguish?

My rule of thumb has become the following:

If it can be repeated in spoken form many times without sounding trite or ridiculous, then the chorus will probably be sustainable for a while also when it is sung.

6.3.1.5. Memorable Poetic Value

It has often happened that song-writers feel that just because a text is Christian it must be acceptable. Routley comments: "There was a terrible tendency in the evangelical underworld to slam words down on paper in the conviction that the Christian subject of the hymn would cause everybody to overlook its literary crassness" (Routley 1983: 47). Words of songs should have some aesthetic appeal, if they are to last.

Really "good" songs are able to pack theological truth into few words which ring immediately true and are memorable. Some of these almost become sayings in common language. People remember them and are often able to sing at least some of it off by heart. This is one of the most important functions of songs, as in this way biblical truth is easily accessible even when people cannot read or see any more. Memorable songs formulate the theological message in a way that helps people recognise its truth. Routley writes that if a hymn "causes that worshiper to feel or say, 'That is what I wanted to say, but I am grateful to whoever put the words in my mouth,' then it has done its work" (Routley 1983:107).

117

6.3.2. Good Tune

The tune is probably the most important element that determines the success of a song. Even the best text will not be sung if the tune has no appeal, while many mediocre texts survive because of strong, memorable tunes (Rössler 1990: 9). What makes someone judge a tune to be "good", largely depends on the perspective one comes from and of course also musical taste and tradition. There can be no absolute criteria here, only guidelines as to which tunes are likely to be congregation friendly and longer-lasting.

6.3.2.1. A "good tune" should be singable by unmusical people

A congregation-friendly tune which will last some generations should not be too difficult. What is "too difficult" obviously varies from congregation to congregation. However, generally this means, as discussed in a previous chapter, that it should largely avoid too many large intervals and highly complex rhythms, as well as not using too large a range. Some more difficult tunes become very popular and long-lasting after some practice, so some practice is in order. But a congregation is not a choir which can put in several hours to practise one piece.[160] More than one practise session should not be necessary for a normal congregational song. A problem here is that most congregants no longer have hymn-books with tunes in front of them. They have text versions of song-books or the words are projected onto the screen. This makes it more difficult to teach more challenging songs as even for those people who cannot read music, the notes give some guidelines as to the progression of a tune up or down. The lack of song-books with tunes also has a long-term effect on the general musical literacy of congregations.

6.3.2.2. A "good tune" does not depend on accompaniment

A "good tune" which will be sung for many years in a congregation is usually a tune which can stand on its own (Albrecht 1995: 92). While accompaniment is useful, the tune can stand alone and be sung if there is no band, piano or organ. Some tunes sound very good with band or percussion, but fail completely if the back-up is taken away. Not depending on accompaniment means that there will be few long pauses or excessively long notes. Many repeated notes also depend on a change of harmony in the accompaniment to sound interesting, and sound dull *a*

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[160] Darlene Zschech, Hillsong worship leader, has as one of her criteria that the song should be "accessible to the untrained voice" (Zschech 2002:196).

118

capella . The song-book *Der Helle Ton* of 1948 describes in its introduction that one of its criteria of selection is tunes which do not need the "crutch of harmony".[161] Thus a rule of thumb for determining the quality of a song becomes: sing it several times unaccompanied and listen to how it sounds.

6.3.2.3. A "good tune" does not overuse the currently popular stylistic elements

In the previous chapter some of the stylistic elements popular in the past were discussed. Styles shift for example from smooth and flowing to jarring and rhythmic, from syncopation to slow and worshipful.   The question is always if these elements are used for special effect, or just because they happen to be popular.   This is then often characterised by a disregard for the natural flow of the language. This means that off beat stresses in syncopated rhythms fall on words which should not be stressed[162] or, in slow emotive tunes, large leaps or long notes emphasize unimportant words. Highly disjunct tunes are emotive but sometimes no longer have a natural progression and climax. This does not mean that tunes that have a high use of particular elements can not be longlasting, but a more conservative use of stylistic elements for special effect is normally preferable.

6.3.2.4.   A "good tune" creates a balance between the easy and familiar and the interesting

Songs which sound too much like all the others become very boring. While they may be in the current style they should have a dynamic and line of their own. A mix of styles in a service creates interest and reminds one of the unity of the church despite its diversity over generations and cultures. Within the tune there should be a good balance of repetition, variation and contrast.

6.3.3. Good Match of Text and Tune

In contemporary songs, mostly the same person writes the text and the tune, although it is fairly rare to be equally gifted in both lyrics and music.   This means that in many contemporary songs

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[161]   " *Weisen,.. die [nicht] die Krücke der Harmonie bedürfen"* (HT Introduction p5).

[162]   A very popular song in my youth, which I have also translated was Peter Strauchs *Herr, ich sehe deine Welt* (FJ 52).   We enjoyed its joyful tune and meaningful text, but the stresses regularly fell on normally unstressed syllables: *Herr, ich sehe deinE Welt, das weite HimMELSzelt, die Wunder deinER Schöpf-ung.*   All of these are normally unstressed. My translation was marginally more fitting: L*ord, your universe I – see, the heaven's ma JESty , the wonder of CRE -a-tion* (WS 257).

119

the quality of the lyrics falls far below that of the music, and many talented musicians would be well-advised to get help with writing their words. In history, even if a song starts out as a unity by the same person, texts and tunes have had different and sometimes independent life histories. Sometimes a valuable text receives a new tune later in its life, or a poet writes a new text to an old tune. In the German tradition, text and tune have always been associated closely, even though sometimes there were dozens of texts to one tune, which was then given the name of its original partner text. In the English tradition this was quite different. Often books with texts and those with tunes were published separately. The tunes were given names to identify them, some of them totally unrelated to any lyrics, for example names of Saints, like ST ANNE or ST GEORGE or places like REGENT PLACE. Later also there were themes of the initial text matched to the tune, for example EVENTIDE, the tune for "Abide with me" (Index of Tunes SF p 1171). A metrical index indicated which text could be sung with which tune.[163] The choice was usually up to whoever led the worship. This means that until today, some very well-known texts are sung to countless different tunes.

In the song-books I consulted for this research there was wide disagreement on the tune even for very well-known texts:

All hail the power of Jesus' name (4 tunes), *O for a thousand tongues to sing* (4 tunes), *At the name of Jesus* (3 tunes), *O Jesus, I have promised* (6 tunes).

The practise of each community choosing its own tunes was no great problem while people were not yet very mobile and stayed in one congregation for life. Today people are highly mobile, and while some may still stay in their denomination, many do not, and most people will move to another community at least once in their life. In the next community it is likely that well-loved hymns will be sung to a different tune. This can cause frustration.

The relatively random process of "mix and match" according to a metrical index also means that many texts may be singable to a chosen tune but not particularly well-matched in terms of mood and speech rhythm. This means the tune is a carrier of the words, but does not positively reinforce the message of the song. Sometimes indeed the tune may undermine the message of

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[163] The hymn-book *Hymns of Faith* (HF), reprinted as recently as 1982, gives no tune suggestions, but only the designation of the metre, for example CM (which is "common metre, that is 8686) or 7676 D (HF 73,75).

120

the words.

Routley speaks of the "Marriage" of text and tune (Routley 1983:58). This is a good metaphor. Just like in a marriage, there can be a positive synergy where the partners bring out the best in each other, there can be a tension, where one undermines the other, or they can be in an indifferent coexistence.

6.3.3.1. The best songs have a "monogamous" match of only one text for only one tune.

I wish to argue that the best songs have a "monogamous" text-tune match. This is the case in many Christmas carols. Anyone who hears the tune played, immediately remembers the words, and anyone can join a carol-singing event anywhere in the world and join in with *Joy to the World* or *O come all ye faithful* in a tune familiar to them. There are some carols where this is not the case, such as *Away in a manger* and *O little town of Bethlehem* amongst others, where America has a different tune tradition from England.[164] This can cause frustration and confusion. The lack of agreement about the tunes for major hymns has probably severely damaged the cause of hymn singing in our highly mobile world.

Tunes matched to specific texts develop specific associations and evoke particular memories. Overused tunes cannot develop any specific atmosphere or mood.[165] There is a well-known Moravian melody which has been used for both an Easter and a Lenten text.[166] Similarly there were tunes in older German hymnals which were used for joyful songs of praise and texts of teaching or even penitence.[167] Such wide use stunts the specific emotion a tune can carry.

Using the same tune many times undoubtedly has advantages in a congregation with limited musical ability. It is much easier to introduce a new hymn if it has a well-known tune, and lyricists who cannot write melodies very often write their texts to well-known tunes, so they will

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[164] *Away in a manger* is sung to the tune CRADLE SONG in the British tradition (MP 47) and usually to AWAY IN A MANGER in the USA (ELW 277). The ELW has printed both tunes (277, 278). *O little town of Bethlehem* is sung to FOREST GREEN in the British and to ST LOUIS in the USA (MP 503ii and ELW 279). *Mission Praise* prints another tune which I have never heard used: CHRISTMAS CAROL (MP 503i).

[165] Albrecht quotes an example from the hymn-books during the Enlightenment, where the tune for *Wer nur den lieben Gott läßt walten* was used 50 times (Albrecht 1995:115).

[166] *Die wir uns allhier beisammen finden* by CR Zinzendorf (GMH 74).

[167] The tune VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN (used for *All glory laud and honour* ELW 344*)* has been used for various texts. The original *Valet* is a serious text about yearning for heaven. In an old hymnal (PG 580) it is used for the joyful text of Paul Gerhardt, *Du meine Seele singe* (*O sing my soul with gladness*).

121

be easily learned.   However, text-writers need to remember that overuse of tunes comes with a cost, and should spend some time searching for tunes which are good for their purposes, but have not yet had countless others write texts to them.

For the reasons given above, the EG has tried to cut down on duplications in tune (see previous discussion). They have found or written new tunes to hymns or in some cases, rediscovered forgotten original tunes. But there is still much duplication.

6.3. 3.2. The mood of the music should fit with the mood of the text

That the mood of the music should match the lyrics seems an obvious point, but it happens astoundingly often that there are serious mismatches, where serious texts are matched to flippant music, or trite texts to heavy emotional music. Here again there will be differences of judgement depending on musical tastes. The celebrated text of Wesley on the story of the "Wrestling Jacob", *Come, O Thou Traveller unknown,* has been matched to two different tunes in the books I have searched, neither one fitting the struggle in the text.[168]

By contrast, in the famous hymn *Sleepers wake (*or *Wake, awake* ELW 436) by Philipp Nicolai, the trumpet fanfare-type tune in the opening section is a perfect tune-match to the text, which rouses the sleeping maidens on arrival of the bridegroom (Mth 25:1ff) and the rousing climax matches the invitation to the wedding feast. In all three verses, the mood match is near perfect, climaxing in the original with the "Gloria" and "Halleluia" of verse 3. This is why this hymn has gained the reputation of being the "King" of chorales   (Rössler 1990:134). Another tune which is perfectly matched in mood to the text is the tune of *Abide with me*, with flowing sections offset by the stepped tune of "fast falls the eventide*"* which almost evokes a ticking clock (ELW 629).

In the case of *Sleepers wake,* the text and tune were written by the same person, making a match easier. There have also been hymnal editors with the gift to find the right tune to match with a

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[168]   *Come, O thou traveler unknown* has been matched in the *United Methodist Hymnal* with the tune CANDLER a lilting, peaceful, pastoral sounding tune, which has more in common with dancing than with wrestling (UMH 386). There is nothing in the tune to match the words "my misery and sin declare", nothing to intimate a struggle.   Similarly the tune for this text in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* (243) is COLCHESTER a very straight forward tune with mainly crotchets and no interesting rhythms. Again there is nothing in the tune to indicate the struggle in the text.   The text can be sung to the tune, but it is not reinforced in any way.

122

text to make it unforgettable. This happened for example when the editors of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* published the first hymn-book with texts and tunes together, and made some matches which have endured, for example *Hark, the Herald Angels' sing,* and *O God, our help in ages past* (Routley 1983: 55), as well as finding writers who could write matching tunes to good texts. From this attempt came *Abide with me* and *Lead kindly light* among others (Routley 55). However, the importance of a good match is still not universally acknowledged.

6.3.3.3. The Rhythm of the music should fit the natural rhythm of the words

In general, the rhythm in which the song is sung should closely follow the natural speaking rhythm and there should be a minimum of wrongly emphasized words. If the emphasis is continuously placed on unimportant words, or even the wrong words this ultimately undermines the message of the song.[169] Britta Martini laments the general lack of attention to metre in many contemporary songs and sees this as not only a formal flaw but a serious impediment to singability (Martini 2008:60).

When speaking the words in the rhythm in which they are sung, this should sound fairly natural. If the spoken rhythm sounds too strange or ridiculous, the match is poor and should perhaps be changed.

6.3.3.4. The climax of the tune should fit with the climax in the poetry

Some tunes have a very definite climax, others less so. The climax often but not always co-incides with the highest note, and it is usually towards the end. Large intervals also show melodic emphases. The melodic climax should fall on a part of the text that has an important message. At least in the first, most memorable verse this should be the case. Whether all verses have their climax at the same place of course depends on the poet.

6.3.3.5. In summary

The perfect Text-Tune match is probably as elusive as the perfect human marriage. In an "ideal" marriage, man and wife both contribute equally to the success of the relationship. So in a song, the text must be matched with a fitting tune to make an "ideal church hymn" (Reich in

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[169] In the song by David Graham, *In moments like these* the second half has four repeated phrases, "I love you.". In the first two, the longest and highest notes fall on "I". Only in the last two lines, does "You" have a stress equal in length to the "I" (SF 241).

123

Hofmann 1967:32). This ideal is relatively seldom reached, and sometimes the words, sometimes the music are dominant. While the ideal is often unattainable, those who choose tunes to go with texts should take care that the one does not undermine the other.

6.3.4. Good "Balance of Polarities"

In general the issue of balance is one that concerns the worship service overall in the course of a church year. Here new contemporary songs need to be placed side by side with those songs that the congregation knows and sings well. Songs of the individual's faith response need to be balanced by songs of community, those about glory with those of the cross. But the best songs have some of the connections made within them, they span the polarities themselves and in this way help people towards a more integrated, holistic theology.

6.3.4.1 Past vs Present

Most songs will be either songs of the past (traditional hymns) or of the present (contemporary songs). Of course, there are different conceptions as to what is "contemporary" with some people regarding a 10 year old song as "old" and others a 80 year old song as "contemporary". There are, however, songs which consciously try to bridge the gap between past and present, and bring tradition of the past into people's lives. Of course this happens when biblical texts, especially psalm texts are used, though this aspect is usually not intended. More intentional are those contemporary writers who make new versions of historical liturgical pieces, such as the Creed, the *Agnus Dei* or the *Kyrie*.[170] At several times during history people have rediscovered old treasures such as medieval hymns and made translations and contemporary paraphrases of these hymns and prayers.[171]

6.3.4.2 Objectivity vs Subjectivity

Some songs only proclaim, others only give a subjective faith response. But there have been

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[170] For example *We believe in God the father* by Graham Kendrick (MP 720) or new versions of *Christ, lamb of God* (Agape 85, EG 190.3) or the *Kyrie eleison* (for example EG 178.6. 178.11, 178.14).

[171] A good example is *Father we thank you* based on the communion prayer from the Didache (CHCS 672), or the versions of old medieval hymns, which Luther wrote (for example EG 4, EG 126). Also, prominently in the English language, the Oxford movement and especially John Mason Neale made medieval hymns accessible (for example *O come, o come Emmanuel* ELW 257). The new Scottish Hymnal has a modern version of an Early Church Prayer, believed to be the oldest Christian Hymn in existence, from the 3rd Century: *Hail, gladdening Light* (CHCS 219).

124

songs throughout history which have effectively done both. When judging songs in order to make a selection there should be subjective songs which express adoration and love for Jesus and personal faith and commitment. But because we are in public worship there is also a need for songs of proclamation and teaching.

Objective and subjective songs tend to come from different eras in church history: as has been noted in the historical overview, the era of the reformation and protestant orthodoxy was the time of proclamatory songs, the pietistic era the time of subjectivity. Then there was dry rationalism which again gave rise to more objective songs, then the era of missionary fervour. Some song-writers in all eras were able to integrate the two elements, and these are the most worthwhile and lasting songs.[172]

6.3.4.3. Cognitive vs Emotive

Does the song contain something for the "head" and for the "heart"? Does it further one's understanding of the faith and engender an emotive response? This category overlaps with the one beforehand, but more strongly takes into consideration the tune, and also simply the content load, that is the number of lines and verses. Very emotive tunes usually cannot be sustained over many verses.[173] Emotive content of course can also be found in the lyrics, when words are used which evoke a militant or erotic atmosphere.[174] Typical emotive words, which may, however, be integrated into more content-based lyrics are for example "sweet" "hold me close", "soar", "Jesus, lover of my soul", "I love you".

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[172] Paul Gerhardt and Charles Wesley will be discussed later. Some of the best hymns of Luther teach faith content while allowing for personal faith expression (EG 24, 299). There are also many contemporary examples of a good balance of proclamation and response. Two examples would be Stuart Townend's *With a prayer you fed the hungry* where the verses describe the caring ministry of the historical Jesus and the chorus expresses devotion and commitment: "Love incarnate, love divine, captivate this heart of mine till all I do speaks of You." (SF III 1627) Another interesting example is the song: *There is a hope so sure* by Graham Kendrick. The text is based on biblical texts (Col 1:27 and Gal 2:20) thus from an objective source and tells the story of salvation, but appropriated personally " Jesus lives in me, the hope of glory" (SF III 1542).

[173] Wesley and Gerhardt routinely wrote hymns with more than a dozen verses. Even emotive tunes tend to lose their impact after many verses. Normally then, fairly simple tunes would be used which could carry through for 17 or 18 verses, such as the tune by Johann Crüger to Paul Gerhardt's 18 verse hymn *Ich singe dir mit Herz und Mund* (EG 324). Charles Wesley's *O for a thousand tongues to sing* began as verse 7 of a 17 verse hymn. If all 17 verses were sung, the popular tune LYNGHAM would be far too demanding, and one of the simpler less emotive tunes would have to be chosen. Five verses tends to be the upper limit for quite emotive tunes.

[174] Such as in the song by Paul Oakley and Martin Cooper *Romance me*: "Romance me till my heart belongs to you..." (SF III: 1347)

125

Whether a song is too "dry and cerebral" or "too emotive" is again an issue on which there will be differences of opinion. Some people will be deeply touched by a song which someone else experiences as manipulative. Others will be moved by theologically deep lyrics which others find too abstract and distant. If the goal is evangelism, then emotive appeal is very crucial to the choice of music.[175] If the main goal is forming the character of committed congregation members, then there will be a recognition that faith is formed not only by our feelings but also by our understanding of faith content, and there will be more emphasis on cognitive content in songs. But even committed congregation members need some emotive appeal in songs for commitment to continue and to deepen..

6.3.4.4. Community vs Individual

The first issue to be considered under this section is whether a song genuinely draws people together into a singing congregation, or whether the song is a performance song to which people come and listen.[176] Of course the most community building songs are songs that people can sing along to quickly, often repetitive choruses or the chants of Taizé. The latter were developed particularly to enable people from all nations and walks of life to participate in worship together.[177] Then the lyrics need to be looked at whether they speak about a purely individualistic faith, or whether they speak of the congregation or community calling on God together.[178] Some songs have unity and community as their main theme.[179] Some songs manage to hold these two poles together, touching on both the individual and communal aspect of faith.[180] These sometimes move from "I" to "We" or use them in such a way that one easily integrates the other.

6.3.4.5. Familiarity vs Diversity

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[175] Reinke critiques the exclusion of emotion from church hymns and says it is often the feelings which open up people to the encounter with God. Different music works very differently on people (Reinke 2011:20).

[176] Kennel has as one of the main criteria of quality of a song, whether it can build community: "*Welche gemeinschaftsbildende Kraft geht von der Musik aus*" (Kennel 2011: 26)?

[177] On the Wikipedia Website, the songs of Taizé are described as follows: "The community, though Western European in origin, has sought to include people and traditions worldwide. They have sought to demonstrate this in the music and prayers where songs are sung in many languages, and have included chants and icons from the Eastern Orthodox tradition. The music emphasizes simple phrases, usually lines from Psalms or other pieces of Scripture, repeated and sometimes also sung in canon " (Taizé Wikipedia).

[178] Mission Praise, just counting the songs in the index that begin with "I" or "We" gives the following count: 75 start with "I" over against 29 that start with "We".

[179] Examples: *Blest be the tie that binds* (ELW 656) or *Bind us together, Lord* (MP 54).

[180] See later discussion on Kendrick's *Shine Jesus, shine.*

126

This is one of the most important balances to get right when one is choosing songs for worship. There need to be enough familiar songs to enable participation and enough new songs to engender interest and participation from younger members.

Simple choruses from other countries that are repetitive strike a good balance as they are easily learned while bringing a sense of diversity, of being part of a vast global community.[181] Every service should have a core of well-known songs for participation.

When one judges new songs individually this category is also relevant when one answers the following questions:

How familiar is the style? Is it familiar enough to be easily learned, but does it bring something new to the repertoire or does it sound like most other songs already there?

Does the song bring a sense of the diverse global Christian community to this congregation?

Is there enough repetition in the tune to be easily remembered but also enough variation and contrast so as not to become boring?

6.3.4.6. Affirmation vs Challenge

In our preaching as well as our singing we need a balance between affirming faith, proclaiming the grace of Christ unconditionally, and challenging people to faith, to deeper commitment and to love and service for the neighbour.

How a challenge is phrased and whether it is acceptable, manipulative or legalistic is a matter of theological conviction and needs to be judged on a song by song basis. The least problematic way is to phrase the challenge as a prayer to God for change.[182]

When the challenge is more direct, the reactions to it are likely to be a lot more varied. It is less problematic to issue a challenge in the "We" form[183] than in the "You" form,[184] which seems to

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[181] The song-book *Thuma Mina* (Trautwein 1995) tries to achieve this through a collection of short songs from around the world, translated into English and German each time, so people know what they are singing and can sing together with people from other cultures.

[182] A good contemporary example is by Kendrick: *Beauty for brokenness* (SF II 664), where the chorus asks "God of the poor, friend of the weak, give us compassion we pray.....Come change our love from a spark to a flame ".

[183] A challenging Kendrick song is *We are his children* where the chorus is a rousing call to Mission: "Go forth in His name". (MP 955) However, because of the previous "We" the sense is of the church community challenging itself to move.

[184] I have always been uncomfortable with the hymn: *Hark the voice of Jesus calling* (LWB 381) especially the

127

create divisions between the singers and those being challenged. More acceptable are those who stress the call, rather than trying to pressurise a response, but sometimes the line is blurred, depending also on how they are used.[185]

It is important that songs do not only create warm feelings of being loved and accepted but also help to deepen people's faith and commitment. Some songs do both very effectively. Songs can do this in different ways, which should be critically assessed on a song by song basis.

6.3.4.7. Cross vs Glory

When choosing songs for worship, care should be taken that they do not all focus on the glory and exaltation of Christ, but that the cross and the suffering of the incarnated Jesus also has a place. The suffering of Christ also helps us to deal with our own suffering and pain, which should have a place in the songs as well. Jesus does not only help us overcome pain, but is present with us while we are having difficulties.   This is a very important balance which can plunge people into faith crises if it is not taken seriously.[186]

We need songs that remind us of the suffering of Christ and that help us voice and deal with our own suffering and pain. We need to acknowledge, even lament the pain that we experience before we can really experience the new life and deliverance in Christ. Again, the best songs are able to integrate the two effectively and show that the way to glory is through the cross.

6.3.4.8. Transcendence vs Immanence

In our worship we need to balance the awareness of the total otherness of God and our unworthiness with a sense that God is near and that we have immediate and direct access to our Father. These can seem to be mutually exclusive, but to some extent both are needed in our

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line: "Let none hear you idly saying, there is nothing I can do / while the multitudes are dying and the master calls for you" (v4). This seems to come from a singer who needs no challenge to an outsider who needs to be pressurised into action. Whether this is an effective call to mission is debatable.

[185] The song *Just as I am* is a simple song of trust, but it can become very challenging, even manipulative when sung during an altar call: " O Lamb of God, I come*"* (ELW 592). Similarly the song *Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling* (GHF 246) can be acceptable proclamation or become manipulative, depending on how it is used.

[186] In my research article on theological themes in the Top 50 Worship songs (Tönsing 2008:99-115)) I gave points to different theological statements in songs on a CD collection, depending on how often they occurred or were implied. The statement "Jesus is the exalted King, reigns in glory" gained 38,5 points (105)versus 11,5 for the statement "Jesus suffered, experienced pain and humiliation"(115). "God transforms my life from sorrow into joy" scored 17,5 points (109) and the phrase "God comforts me in my sorrow" only 4 (115).

128

songs. Songs can give us a sense of a God who is distanced, before whom we can only grovel, or a God who is an intimate lover or "buddy" who no longer challenges us. Neither of these are theologically helpful. Balancing transcendence and immanence within one song is not easily done.

There are also two ways of expressing the immanence of God: Being aware (feeling) the presence of God within you, and proclaiming that Christ became human to be near to us. Both are important themes to take seriously, but the first is much more prominent in songs than the second.[187] The best songs are able to bring the two together.

6.3.4.9 Vertical vs Horizontal

In the lyrics, is there a purely vertical focus on the relationship of God and the worshiper, or is there also a horizonal relationship of proclamation and awareness that God works in the world?

While it may be argued that worship is all about God, worship is also the place that prepares us for service in the world, so the horizontal dimension should not be left out of our worship and our singing. [188] Is the song able to bring the two together?

6.3.4.10. Universal vs Particular

How far does the song give space to the particular: special contexts, seasons of the church year, other cultures? At least some songs in our worship repertoire should indicate the context and time we are in. We need songs for particular seasons, times of day, periods of life[189], to give us a place in our culture[190]. We need songs that have as their theme some of our pressing issues of

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[187] In the article on the Top 50 Worship songs (Tönsing 2008) the statement, "I (want to) feel God's presence" gains 41,5 points (102) and the statement "Jesus became human" 12,5% (115). The statement "Jesus meets us in our brothers and sisters" has not even an oblique mention.

[188] In the above mentioned article (Tönsing 2008) the statement "I am (or we are) saved" gains 39,5% points (104). The statement: "God wants to save the world" has a score of 10,5 (110).
The song that brings together horizontal and vertical most effectively in the songs of that collection is the song *Shout to the Lord:*
  *"*Rise up women of the Truth, stand and sing to broken hearts,
  who can know the healing pow'r of our glorious King of love" *(*Martin Smith SF 921).

[189] A good example of a "particular" song about ageing is *When memory fades* by Mary Louise Bringle (ELW 792). It becomes an effective way to teach a universal message.

[190] Very popular in South Africa are the two songs by Fini de Gersigny which incorporate African words and ideas into what is generally a Western-style Praise song, *Jabulani Afrika* and *Bayete Nkosi* (De Gersigny online).

129

the day, for example care for the environment.[191] But we should not lose songs which form a universal link to Christians everywhere. Is the message universal enough to appeal to all Christians? Some songs are able to present "particular" messages in such a way that they gain universal significance.

6.4. Conclusion

There is no set of criteria that can absolutely predict the success or durability of a song. Sometimes great weaknesses seem to make no difference to the enjoyment of the song and its enduring popularity, and other worthy and meaningful songs just do not spread. However, the above criteria can point out the strengths and weaknesses of an individual song and perhaps indicate how it should be and can be used. Weaknesses of one song can be offset in another used in the same worship service. Some worship leaders do this instinctively, others may need a set of criteria as guidance. The criteria will be tested in the next chapters. However, their usability in the field will be a matter of experience.

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[191]   Norman Habel has written many texts to familiar tunes on environmental themes, for example *Lord of suns and stars exploding* (second song in "seasons of creation") (Habel 2010 Online).

131

CHAPTER SEVEN – TESTING THE CRITERIA

7.1. Process

In this chapter a path will be mapped to test the criteria developed in the previous chapter. Some tools will be developed which will be used in the subsequent chapters where songs will be analysed as to their strengths and weaknesses. Most of these tools do not come from the literature, but have been developed in the course of this research, in the process of looking at and trying to evaluate scores of songs from old and contemporary song-books.

Some of these tools are objective, others, particularly the theological evaluation will depend very much on the person evaluating and his or her theological perspective. However, the level of difficulty of a tune, the emotional value, the match of rhythm and tune are all indicators for which objective measurements are possible. In the end, the overall weighting of these different criteria remains something to be judged and decided by each worship leader and congregation. As Kennel argues, quality can never be judged once and for all. It is a continuous process of discussion and dialogue (Kennel 2011:35). The process of evaluation embarked on in this chapter can show up strengths and weaknesses of each song, but cannot make absolute predictions on how this song will be received in a particular congregation. This depends very much on the local tradition and the preferences and giftedness of the worship leader.

132

7.2. Summary of Criteria

What follows is a summary of the criteria which were discussed in the previous chapter:

Four Criteria of Quality

A " good song" has the following characteristics:
1. Good Text
2. Good Tune
3. Good Match of Text and Tune
4. Good Balance of "Polarities"

1. Good Text
1.1. Based on the wealth of scripture in all its breadth
1.2 Theologically sound
1.3. Takes the depth and breadth of human experience seriously
1.4. Needs to be readily understood, it can be simple or repetitive, but not shallow
1.5. Memorable Poetic Value

2. Good Tune
2.1. Should be singable by unmusical people
2.2. Does not depend on accompaniment
2.3. Does not overuse the currently popular stylistic elements
2.4. Creates a balance between the easy and familiar and the interesting

3. Good Match of Text and Tune
3.1. The best songs have a "monogamous" match of only one text for only one tune
3.2. The mood of the music should fit with the mood of the text
3.3. The Rhythm of the music should fit the natural rhythm of the words
3.4. The climax of the tune should fit with the climax in the poetry

4. Good "Balance of Polarities"
4.1 Past vs Present
4.2 Objectivity vs Subjectivity
4.3 Cognitive vs Emotive
4.4. Community vs Individual
4.5.Familiarity vs Diversity
4.6. Affirmation vs Challenge
4.7. Cross vs Glory
4.8. Transcendence vs Immanence
4.9 Vertical vs Horizontal
4.10 Universal vs Particular

133

7.3. Tools and Measurements

7.3.1. Good Text

7.3.1.1. Based on the wealth of scripture in all its breadth

Here one can make a list of the main references within a song and see whether it covers some breadth of scripture. Hymnal companions often give references in their write-up and also the song-book *Songs of Fellowship* lists references above the song. Other references can be identified from a careful reading of the lyrics.[192]

7.3.1.2 Theologically sound

Here the central message needs to be theologically evaluated, as well as checking for theologically problematic statements in the sub-messages. One can allow some one-sided sub-messages, but the central message of the song should be judged theologically sound by the worship leader choosing the song.[193] This is obviously a subjective category, where different worship leaders and hymnal commissions will come to different conclusions.[194]

7.3.1.3. Takes the depth and breadth of human experience seriously

What does the song say about human experience? Does it give space to the reality of pain and doubt in the life of faith?[195] This is fairly easy to determine objectively.

7.3.1.4. Needs to be readily understood, it can be simple or repetitive, but not shallow

What difficult phrases are there in the song? Is the central message clear? Are the phrases clichéd or shallow?[196] A simple test that can be used is to repeat the lyrics several times in

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[192] Kendrick states: "I'd like people to be able to read my lyrics and write Bible verse references alongside and spot the connections" (Perona-Wright 2004:13).

[193] Townend recommends that young song-writers have their lyrics checked by someone that they trust with theological knowledge. Sometimes lyrics are misunderstood theologically, though the author had different intentions (Perona-Wright 2005:7).

[194] Kloppenburg mentions the debate within the commission of *Liedboek voor de Kerken* over the inclusion of a pietistic hymn, *Hoe glans bij Gods kindren het innerlijk leven*. Different members of the commission were of different opinions about whether the song was too "vertical" and turned away from the world. In the end it was included, a fact which is welcomed by the author (Kloppenburg 1998:270).

[195] Reinke laments the fact that although songs can have "therapeutic value", this is not taken seriously enough by church music, and too little contribution is made in dealing with difficult human situations (Reinke 2011:22).

[196] Hofmann speaks of songs being "repeatable" and "s*trapazierfähig"* (able to bear stress) (Hofmann 1967:11). This of course is not easily determined when a song is new, but the spoken repetition test does give some indication of texts which will "wear out" quickly.

134

spoken form, and evaluating whether they sound trite in that way. Some complex phrases or thoughts do not disqualify a song, but may need more careful introduction.[197]

7.3.1.5. Memorable Poetic Value

There are few objective ways to measure poetic value. But here phrases can be listed that express faith in a new and powerful way,[198] as well as investigating the use of poetic devices such as metre, assonance and alliteration and imagery.[199]

7.3.2. Good Tune

7.3.2.1. Should be singable by unmusical people

In this section one can mention range, the number of larger leaps in the music and the complexities of the rhythm. The acceptable level of difficulty is of course very much a question of the congregation's ability and of the skill of the worship team at one's disposal.[200]

7.3.2.2. Does not depend on accompaniment

This is very much dependent on the flow of the melody and of such elements as very long and repeated notes or long rests. These can be counted up objectively. A tune that is difficult to sustain unaccompanied can still be a favourite with congregants as long as there is good accompaniment, but it probably will not last as long in the congregational repertoire.[201]

7.3.2.3. Does not overuse the currently popular stylistic elements

Here one can make a statistical count of certain elements, for example long notes, syncopated or

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[197] Kloppenburg pleads for time to prepare and practice new songs and if needed give some interpretation of the lyrics, perhaps through sermons on hymns (1998:271).

[198] In an interview with Stuart Townend he quotes a line from Graham Kendrick's *The Servant King:* " One of my favourite lines.....'hands that flung stars into space, to cruel nails surrendered'. It isn't a line of scripture, but it is a fantastic image that clearly understands the truth of scripture and expresses it in a powerful way" (Perona-Wright 2005:7).

[199] Jürgen Henkys who has translated countless international songs into German describes the challenges of doing justice to poetic structure in translation, and says that any good translation will have to be a aware of metre, and the various poetic devices but will of necessity be a new poetic creation (Henkys 1998:186-187).

[200] Albrecht distinguishes between the characteristics of a " spiritual solo song" and congregational hymns. The former became popular in the baroque era and were characterised by a large range and more complex rhythms. However, some "solo songs" do become popular in congregations and are sung and loved despite the greater complexities. Examples he quotes are the only tune by Bach in the hymnal (*Ich steh an deiner Krippen hier* EG 37) and the tune to *Jesus ist kommen (Jesus, our Saviour)*, (EG 66) (Albrecht 1995:84).

[201] Townend states: "Whatever I write, my main aim is that it has to be accessible for a congregation – and if the melody and lyrics are strong enough then you can adapt a song to many different musical styles and contexts" (Perona-Wright 2005:6). He recommends writing melodies without an instrument (2005:7).

135

dotted rhythms or slurs to determine this. Of course the decision when such a count indicates overuse will be a matter of taste (see style analysis of Chapter 5).

7.3.2.4. Creates a balance between the easy and familiar and the interesting

A tool is needed to measure repetition in music. Variation is harder to measure as there are so many different types of variation.   In poetry as well as music, letters are often assigned to sections to show up the poetic or musical structure. This system is used here for both the melody as a whole and the rhythm: A letter is assigned to each musical phrase and the same letter to repeated phrases. A very close variation on the same theme is indicated by *a'*. Note that this does not measure variations which deviate substantially from the basic tune. This notation is repeated for the rhythmic pattern, to measure the times a rhythmic pattern is repeated.   Quite a lot becomes clear through this exercise.   In this way, the song *Abide with me* (Tune EVENTIDE, ELW 629) would have the following notation:

a) Melody pattern

Abide with me, fast / falls the eventide	*- ab*
The darkness deepens / Lord with me abide	*-cd*
When other helpers / fail and comforts flee	*-ab '*
Help of the helpless, o , / abide with me.	*-ea''*

There are three places where the initial phrase is recognisable, and the third line repeats the melody pattern of the second phrase just one note lower. There is a good level of variation in the tune.

b) Rhythm pattern

Abide with me, fast / falls the eventide	*- ab*
The darkness deepens / Lord with me abide	*- ab*
When other helpers / fail and comforts flee	*- ab*
Help of the helpless, o , / abide with me.	*- a' c*

There is great consistency in the rhythm, with alternating patterns of minims and crotches (double beat and single beat notes), with only the very last phrase being completely different rhythmically with its three long notes. The rhythm in the last line starts in the same way as the other three " a" sections, but then adds more shorter notes.

Such a regular rhythm pattern makes a song very easy to learn, but in this case not boring, as there is sufficient variety even in the rhythmic pattern. Some very popular hymns have complete

136

regularity in the rhythm. This is very easy to learn but can get tedious over time.[202]

As a rule of thumb I have now found in this notation system: if the letters go beyond "*j*", that would mean more than 10 different patterns in the melody or rhythm, the tune is usually beyond the capacity of the congregation to learn and remember easily.

7.3.3. A Good match of Text and Tune

<u>7.3.3.1. The best songs have a "monogamous" match of only one text for only one tune.</u>
This is fairly easy to determine, at least in the most commonly used song-books of an area. This is of course not the case for most well-known traditional English hymns.

<u>7.3.3.2. The mood of the music should fit with the mood of the text</u>
Whether the mood of the tune matches the text is a matter to be subjectively determined and will probably lead to differences of opinion.[203] However, a general classification of "upbeat" or "more meditative" should be possible.

<u>7.3.3.3. The rhythm of the music should fit the natural rhythm of the words</u>
This is something that one can objectively measure. Are there incorrectly stressed words? This can be determined by speaking the text aloud in the rhythm or by the notation developed here (see 7.3.3.5.). If there is a constant flow of incorrectly stressed words, this undermines the message of a song (Albrecht 1995:90).

<u>7.3.3.4. The climax of the tune should fit with the climax in the poetry</u>
The match of the climaxes is also an element that can be determined objectively. Most tunes have one clear climax, sometimes also secondary climaxes. Do these, at least in the first most memorable verse, fall on important words and serve to underline the message of the song? Each higher note or note reached by leap up or down also gives a slight stress. Are these appropriate?

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[202] An example is the later version of Johann Crüger's tune to *Now thank we all our God* which has a rhythm pattern of *aa' aa' aa aa*. Crüger's original is more interesting, but difficult to teach to congregations used to the simpler tune (EG 321 gives both versions). However, even in the simpler version the melody line gives enough variety to sustain interest:
Melody pattern *ab ab cd ef*

[203] See later discussion on the tune by Michael Haydn to Paul Gerhardt's *Commit the ways you travel*. The EKG editors rejected the very popular 19th century tune to the text *Geh aus mein Herz* which has been included in the EG 503.

137

7.3.3.5. Notation for Text-Tune match

In the song analysis, I indicate the emphasis in the text-tune match by the following notation which I have developed:

" ~ "   indicates a slur (two or more notes per syllable)

"- "   a long note

CAPITAL -   the main climax of musical phrase (often highest or longest note)

italics   a lesser musical emphasis

" / "   a leap (4th or more) upwards

" \ "   a leap (4th or more) downwards

(Climax)   indicates the main climax of the tune.

An example: O Jesus, I have promised:

Of the many tunes to which *O Jesus, I have promised* has been set, the locally most well-known one is called DAY OF REST (MP 501 and SF 418). See Figure 3a.

This will be compared to another tune, ANGEL'S SONG in the analysis below (NCH 493). See Figure 3b.

138

Figure 3

O Jesus, I have promised

Tune: DAY OF REST (SF 418)
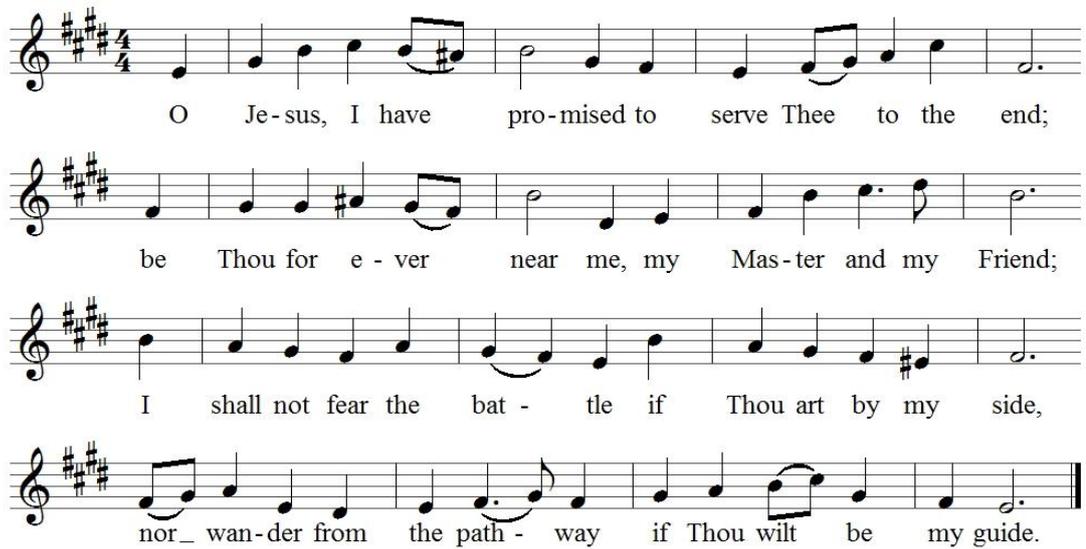
O Je-sus, I have pro-mised to serve Thee to the end;

be Thou for e-ver near me, my Mas-ter and my Friend;

I shall not fear the bat - tle if Thou art by my side,

nor_ wan-der from the path - way if Thou wilt be my guide.

O Jesus, I have promised

Tune: ANGEL'S SONG (NCH 593)
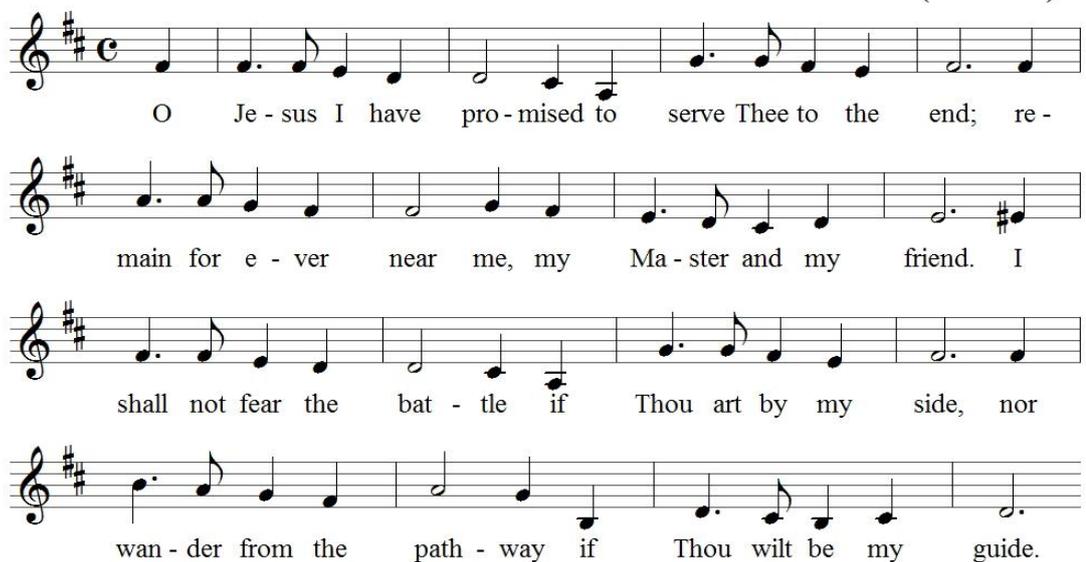
O Je-sus I have pro-mised to serve Thee to the end; re-

main for e-ver near me, my Ma-ster and my friend. I

shall not fear the bat - tle if Thou art by my side, nor

wan-der from the path - way if Thou wilt be my guide.

In the notation developed above the text matched to DAY OF REST looks as follows:

 O Je-sus, *I* have~ *pro-* mised, to serve Thee~ to THE \ *end*;
 re-main for e-ver~ / *near -* \ me, my Mas-/ter AND MY Friend;--
 I shall not fear the *bat*~-tle / *if* Thou art by my side--
 nor~ wan-\ der from the *path*~ -way
if Thou WILT~ \ be my guide.   (Climax)

 The same text matched with ANGEL'S SONG (*New Century Hymnal* 493) looks like this in

the same notation:

O *Je* - sus, I have *prom* - ised to / SERVE- Thee to the *end* - ;
 re-MAIN- forever *near -* me, my *Ma* - ster and my Friend - :
 I - *shall* not fear the *bat-* tle if / THOU art by my side-,
 nor / WANDER from the *path*-way   (Climax)
if *Thou* wilt be my guide.

It is immediately clear that the second tune is a much better match when it comes to reinforcing
the main message of the song.   There is no word emphasized which would not naturally carry an
emphasis in speech. This is different in the former example where many normally unstressed
words carry an emphasis. In the first line the word "I" has a higher emphasis than the word
"Jesus."

In the second example above, the two largest intervals (7ths) come before two central words:
SERVE and THEE, reinforcing them. All the longer notes reinforce important key words like
"promised", "near", "struggles" and "path".   The highest notes of the tune similarly land on
important words ("wander" - high E, and "remain"- high D).   In the former example the
highest notes fall on "THE", "AND MY" and "WILT".

The main climax in the first version is on an appropriate phrase, but the main emphasis is on the
word "wilt" rather than on the more important "Thou".   The climax on the second last line in the
second version is perhaps less fitting, but the stress is on an appropriate word.

7.3.4. Good "Balance of Polarities"

7.3.4.1 Past vs Present
This is easy to measure objectively: How old is the song? How has it survived. Does it add to a
"past-present" balance, or is it on the same side of the polarity as most of the others in the

140

repetoire?[204] But there is also the question of whether the song uses older tradition, for example a tune, or an older text or a piece of liturgical tradition, for example "Lord have mercy", or "Lamb of God". Any song that uses biblical references to some extent has a past focus, though there may be no intentional historical consciousness. More intentional are pieces of tradition and giving older texts or tunes a new match.[205]

7.3.4.2 Objectivity vs Subjectivity

This requires the lyrics to be examined as to how much proclamation and how much response they contain. Where are faith truths communicated and where does the singer articulate his or her experience of faith and make a faith response?[206]

7.3.4.3 Cognitive vs Emotive

Measuring this polarity means looking at the lyrics and the tune. What emotive words are contained in the lyrics? How content-heavy is the song? How many verses does it contain? Does the song avoid "both dry abstraction and effusive sentimentality" (Schilling 1985:42)?

Most central to judging the emotive value of a song is judging its tune. The elements in the tune which convey emotions need to be examined. While it is easy to statistically total up the number of large leaps, slurs or long notes, it will be a matter of personal judgement as to whether this amounts to acceptable or excessive emotion or sentimentality.

7.3. 4.4. Community vs Individual

Here one can record whether the song uses "I" or "We" or changes between them, and one can look for the theme community and unity within the lyrics. One needs to judge also the "I" songs whether they are an "I" that a whole community can identify with, or whether it will exclude part of the congregation from identification and thus not integrate the singing community.[207] The tune contributes in that simpler and more repetitive tunes are better at building community.[208]

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[204] Guy Jansen in his discussion on criteria for choosing songs calls both an excessive focus on the past and an excessive focus on the present "chronological snobbery" (Jansen 2005:17).

[205] There are several examples in *Songs of Fellowship IV*, where older texts are given new tunes, for example *Come unto me,* a 19th century text by William Dix given a new tune by Ian Hannah (SF 4:1742) or *Lift up your heads* by James Montgomery to a new tune by Godfrey Birtill. This usually shows a conscious interest by a song-writer to make valuable tradition accessible to a new generation.

[206] In the language of Pass, there need to be "kerygmatic" and "leitourgic" elements in the songs (Pass 1985: 116).

[207] Of course every song that makes some subjective claim will probably exclude someone in the congregation who at that point cannot whole-heartedly join in the praise or declarations of adoration, but the more heavily emotive it is, the more people will probably feel that they cannot fully enter into this declaration and will become spectators. Probably more people will have a problem with the words of the song *I'm in love with You* (SF 231) than with the more conventional *I love You, my Lord* (SF 227).

[208] Songs which have the ability to draw people together into a community are what Pass calls songs in the

141

7.3.4.5. Familiarity vs Diversity

The first question is obviously how well the song is already known in the community. This needs to be answered by every congregation. Some songs in every service should be well known, well enough to be memorized at least for the first verse.[209] But variety is also needed, so being unknown does not necessarily count against a song. If it is not well known it needs to be seen how easily it could become familiar. Here the level of difficulty needs to be assessed. The tool discussed above for measuring repetition and variation in the tune can be used.   Questions need to be answered as to whether the song adds themes and emphases that are not yet well represented in the congregation's repertoire. Does it add something not yet contained in other songs?   Does it broaden the congregation's sense of being "church"? How does it add to the balance in the repertoire of the congregation? [210]

7.3.4.6. Affirmation vs Challenge

This is a section where the lyrics need to be studied. Do they affirm, do they challenge, or do they do a bit of both? In what ways do they affirm or challenge? Is the challenge to faith or to action, and how does this relate to the central message of grace?[211]

7.3.4.7. Cross vs Glory

This is to a large extent a category that requires study of the lyrics: How much does the song acknowledge the reality of suffering, both of Jesus and of humanity? Does it "take into account disequilibrium, incoherence and unrelieved assymetry" (Dawn 1995:176)?   How much does it praise the glory of God, and witness to His power to overcome pain? Does it exclude the one or the other? A tune can also have elements of cross and glory, for example if it is written in the minor key or is excessively triumphalist.

7.3.4.8. Transcendence vs Immanence

This section requires evaluation of the lyrics. Is God a holy, transcendent God, or a close, loving God? Is there a focus on the incarnation and the revelation in human form? In what way is God

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"'koinoniac mode" (Pass 1985: 145).

[209] See the discussion in Marva Dawn on the importance of memorized tradition (Dawn 1995:120-21).

[210]   "A dialectical tension is required that must be carefully maintained by worship planners - to maintain a liturgical form, whatever style that might involve, that actually frees worship participants to focus on God without being distracted by either novelty or monotony" (Dawn 1995:246).

[211] Van de Laar sees as one of the strengths of Wesley's music the integration of the call of the followers to Christian service and commitment to the poor (Van de Laar 2000:161).

142

close: as "lover of the soul" or as companion on our journey, or as brother who shares our human pain? Is there an awareness of the totally otherness of God and the unworthiness of humans to enter His presence? Is there a balance between these two?[212]

7.3. 4.9 Vertical vs Horizontal

In the lyrics, is there a purely vertical focus on the relationship of God and the worshiper, or is there also a horizonal relationship of proclamation and awareness of community, social responsibility and faith that God works in the world?[213]

7.3.4.10 Universal vs Particular

Is the message a universal message for all times and all Christians, or is there an awareness of a particular group of people and their need? Is there a particular situation in mind, which perhaps speaks something universal to Christians? Is it aimed at a particular season or situation? Does the song give a sense of the universal church, beyond just the own community?[214]

7.4. Choice of Song-writers and Songs

To test the criteria and tools developed in the previous sections, some songs were chosen for a thorough analysis. So that it could be assessed whether the method is helpful for songs in different styles, two contemporary and two traditional song-writers have been chosen, and three songs of each song-writer will be analysed. The choice was determined by personal preference and general popularity.

Both Paul Gerhardt and Charles Wesley are probably the most widely sung hymn-writers in their respective traditions. Though Luther and Watts are credited with establishing hymn singing in the German/Lutheran and in the English tradition, it is these later writers which are most present in popular consciousness and also in my personal experience. The contemporary writers have

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[212] Kramp argues that the songs of Paul Gerhardt and his contemporaries have such comforting power precisely because they were aware of the awesome unbridgeable gulf between God and humanity, but had the audacity to believe that it had been bridged in Christ and that they could sing against it (Kramp in Hofmann 1967: 60).

[213] The song *Blessed Assurance* (SF 44) has a purely vertical focus, whereas *To God be the glory* (SF 559) has the lines " so loved He the world" and " all may go in" .

[214] Jansen challenges the church to show "solidarity... with the saints of other cultures" through our singing (Jansen 2005:17).

143

been chosen less for their present popularity, which is in both cases waning, but because they have been included in the Hymn-makers' CD series (St. Michaels' Singers 2006 &2007). This shows that their songs have already passed certain quality tests. The song analysis will follow a brief background sketch on the hymn-writer's life and general style and influence.

144

CHAPTER EIGHT - PAUL GERHARDT (1607- 1676)

8.1. Background and Life History

Paul Gerhardt is second in importance in Lutheran hymnody only to Martin Luther himself. While there may be slightly fewer hymns of his in the *Evangelisches Gesangbuch*, 26 printed hymns to Luthers 30 the Paul Gerhardt hymns are generally more popular and widely sung (Rössler 1990:10). Luther wrote both words and music. Gerhardt was a poet only, but his hymns have higher poetic value than those of Luther whose rhythm and rhyme is clumsy in some places, and dry and dogmatic in others. While there are probably only three or four Luther hymns of which most Lutherans know verses by heart, the count is undoubtedly much higher in the case of Gerhardt. He is represented in hymnals of many denominations[215] and in spite of the fact that his poems lose a lot in translation, he is widely represented in English hymnals and in other languages.[216] His most widely printed hymn *O Sacred Head* is included in every English hymn-book I have looked at, even the contemporary collections *Mission Praise* and *Songs of Fellowship*.[217]

In spite of his importance, Gerhardt had an inconspicuous and difficult life. There is no indication that he was aware of his great importance as a hymn-writer (Geiger 2007:9). Indeed, if church musician Johann Crüger in Berlin had not discovered his talent and set many of his poems to music, it is doubtful whether his work would have survived at all (Rössler 1990:18). Gerhardt was born in Gräfenhainichen on 12 March 1607 and grew up in the time of the Thirty Years' War in Germany (1618-1648). He experienced the loss of both his parents, saw the devastation of his home town and lived through hunger, deprivation and outbreaks of the plague (Geiger 2007:29). He went to school in Grimma where he learnt to write Latin poems, which according to his teachers were "tolerable"(Geiger 28). He studied theology in the centre of Lutheran Orthodoxy, in Wittenberg, but waited many years for a post, working as a private teacher in Berlin, where he met Johann Crüger and also his wife-to-be Anna Maria Berthold. In

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[215] Greule mentions how the 400th Birthday of Paul Gerhardt was noted in the Catholic media, even while stating that he was an uncompromising Lutheran (Greule 2008:63).

[216] The ELW contains 9 hymns by Gerhardt (ELW Index p1190), the *United Methodist Hymnal* has 4 (author's index), and the *Liedboek* of the Reformed church 9.

[217] MP 520, SF 446

145

1651 Gerhardt finally was called to the parish in Mittenwalde and married in 1655. He saw himself primarily as a counsellor, serving his parishioners during the post-war years of great hunger and turmoil, seeking to comfort them with his sermons and poems (Hesselbacher 1982: 48-49). These were fulfilled and productive years in which most of his hymns were written, the large majority being published in the 1653 edition of Crüger's collection *Praxis Pietatis Melica*.[218] But they were also years of personal pain. The first child of the couple died within the first year. He was then called to Berlin where he served in the church of Johann Crüger, St. Nicolai. Three more children were born of which only one son survived. New pain awaited him in 1666 when he decided for reasons of conscience not to sign the Edict of Tolerance demanded by the Prince-Elector of Brandenburg, because he believed it amounted to a suppression of Lutheranism (Hesselbacher 1982:86). He resigned his post and was unemployed for two years. He stayed in Berlin supported by friends and benefactors (Geiger 2007:86). After Johann Crüger died, Johann Georg Ebeling took over as church musician in St. Nicolai. He continued collecting Gerhardt's poems, setting many to music, and published a complete edition of his hymns (Hesselbacher 1986:99). In 1668 Gerhardt's wife Anna Maria Gerhardt died after a long illness. He could still comfort her with his hymns, however, he wrote no more from then on. He was then given another post at Lübben, where he lived with his son and widowed sister-in-law. After her death he became increasingly lonely, until his death on 27 May 1676.

8.2. Overview of Work

Paul Gerhardt belongs to a generation of baroque poets who tried to give expression to the pain and hope of their time. In contrast to previous generations, which tried to imitate the poetic examples of the ancient classics, these were original poems, with original themes. There was also a revived interest in writing in German rather than in Latin, and in developing a perfect German poetic form of smooth rhyme and rhythm with regular stresses in the verses.[219] Paul Gerhardt became a master of smoothly flowing verse of many varied metres, as well as of the

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[218] Because the selection for singing in the service was more or less closed, private collections were the first to publish new hymns. One of these private collections were the various editions of *Praxis Pietatis Melica* by Johann Crüger (Albrecht 1995:109). Crüger was really the person who discovered Paul Gerhardt's poetic talent and made his work accessible to the public (Rössler 1990:18). He either set them to music himself (for example the tunes to *O how shall I receive thee* LH 10 and *Awake, my heart, rejoicing* LH 100) or chose tunes of earlier origin, (the tune to *O sacred head* LH 52 and *A Lamb goes uncomplaining forth* LH 57).

[219] This was known as the poetry reform by Martin Opitz. Paul Gerhardt followed these rules. His verses are smooth with few wrongly stressed syllables (Geiger 2007: 38-39).

146

use of poetic elements such as assonance, alliteration or repetition used for special effect.

But above all Paul Gerhardt was a pastor, a counsellor steeped in Lutheran Orthodoxy, but with an interest in the awakening movement of personal piety expressed in the work of Johann Arndt (Geiger 2007:33). This makes his hymns incorporate both the proclamation and confession of Christian truth in the Lutheran understanding as well as the personal answer in faith of the believer. Initially he did not write his poems for the use in the Sunday Service. At this time there was a limited canon of hymns for use in the service, which were mainly by Luther and other Reformers (Albrecht 1995:40). He wrote mainly for use in home devotions and special family functions. This shows itself in his spread of themes. Gerhardt's hymns cover almost all classical themes of hymnody, beginning with metrical psalmody.[220] Those themes that are most closely associated to the Sunday Service are the most weakly represented: Hymns about the church and the sacraments are few and largely no longer sung.[221] As it was taken for granted that most people were Christians there are no hymns about conversion and calling people to faith. During this time there was little separation of the secular and the sacred (Geiger 2007:38). Hymns for Church festivals are well represented, and show a spread of "teaching" and "personal response" hymns.[222] There are hymns for morning and evening devotion, for praise and thanksgiving and for many personal occasions, weddings, illness, mourning. Paul Gerhardt is, however, at his best in his hymns of comfort. His personal faith has been through the crucible of pain and this is what gives him the strength to comfort others.[223] A true Lutheran, the cross stands firmly at the centre of his theology (Luther 1957:40).   The cross of Christ is what gives his personal suffering meaning and gives him hope (Hesselbacher 1982:103)**.** He makes personal statements which become universal statements of faith. About two thirds of his hymns are written in the "I" form, rather than the "we" of the congregation, but it is always an inclusive "I" which invites others to identify with it. Experience has shown that since then thousands of

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[220] Kaiser's complete works of Paul Gerhardt *Sämtliche Geistliche Lieder* lists 24 metrical psalms (Kaiser 1907: 384 – 457) .

[221] There is one hymn on Baptism (Gerok 1890: 114) and one on Holy Communion (Gerok 1890:117).

[222]   Paul Gerhardt has a hymn in every section of the EG's selection on the Church year except Ascension, Trinity and End of the Church year. Of the Passion hymns, one is fairly objective, teaching about the meaning of the passion for the world, with some later verses of Adoration *Ein Lämmlein geht und trägt die Schuld* (EG 83) and the two others are very personal, with proclamation about the meaning of the passion for me, *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden* (EG 85) and *O Welt, sieh hier dein Leben* (EG 84).

[223]   The complete edition of Gerhardt by Karl Gerok has 29 hymns under "Cross and Comfort" (Gerok 1890: 171 - 266) and another 13 passion hymns (37-87).

147

believers have done so,[224] among them Dietrich Bonhoeffer and other people involved in the resistance against the Nazi Regime.[225]

8. 3. Motivation of choice of songs

The three hymns that have been chosen from Gerhardt's work are firstly his most famous hymn and the most widely sung in the English language: *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden / O sacred head.* Secondly the hymn which is probably his most well-known hymn of comfort and also one of the most well-known hymns in the German hymnal: *Befiehl du deine Wege / Commit the ways you travel.*

Choosing the third hymn was more difficult. One of Gerhardts more joyful praise hymns needed to be added. I have chosen the one, which in my experience works best in English, which is Gerhardt's joyful morning hymn: *Die güldne Sonne / The golden morning.* For all three hymns I have made revised translations, but verses from the German and published English text are also reproduced here.

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[224] Examples quoted by Hesselbacher include the verse of Gerhardt quoted by Johann Jacob Moser, when arrested and imprisoned on the Hohentwiel in Württemberg, for resistance against excessive taxation (Hesselbacher 1986: 176) and several quotes from letters of soldiers during the Second World War, from combat or prison (179-80).

[225] Henkys recounts how Bonhoeffer was originally critical of the Individualism in Lutheran Hymns, which he saw as already starting with Gerhardt (Henkys 2011: 54), but in prison, Gerhardt's hymns became his main source of comfort and he memorised many of them. In his first letter to his parents he mentions first Paul Gerhardt then the Bible and then other literature as what sustains him in the cell (Henkys 53). Another person executed for involvement in the resistance was Elisabeth von Thadden, whose final words were the last verse of *Befiehl du deine Wege* (Hesselbacher 1986:183).

148

8. 4. Evaluation of *O Sacred Head (O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden)*

8.4.1. Text and Tune

8.4.1.1. Tune: HERZLICH TUT MICH VERLANGEN (Rhythmic)

Hans Leo Hassler 1601
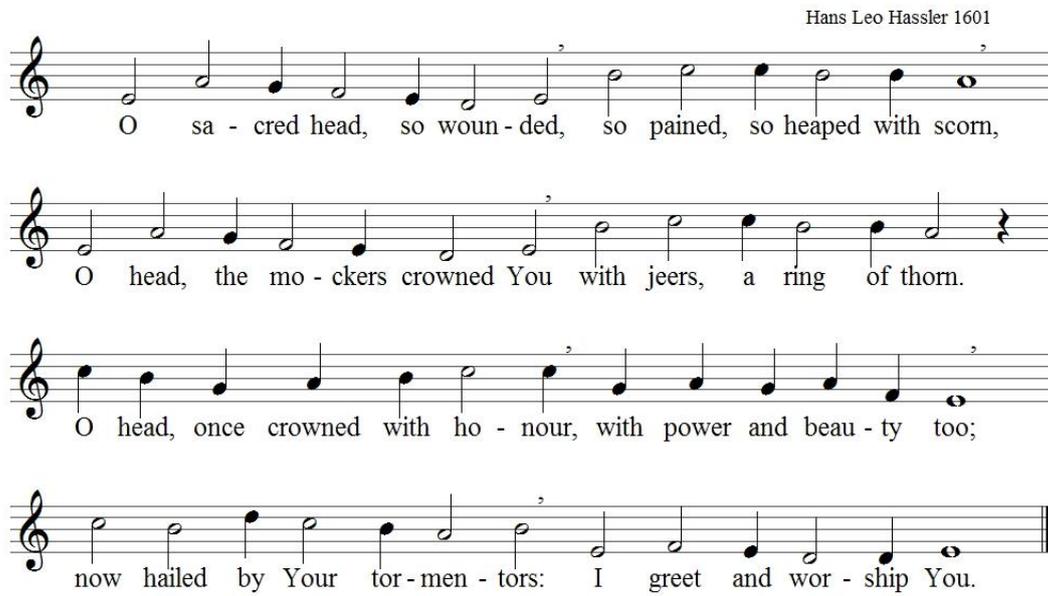
O sa - cred head, so woun - ded, so pained, so heaped with scorn,

O   head, the mo - ckers crowned You with jeers, a ring   of thorn.

O head, once crowned with ho - nour, with power and beau - ty   too;

now   hailed by Your tor - men - tors: I   greet   and wor - ship You.

8.4.1.2. Tune: HERZLICH TUT MICH VERLANGEN (Isometric)

Tune: Hans Leo Hassler
Arr: J.S. Bach
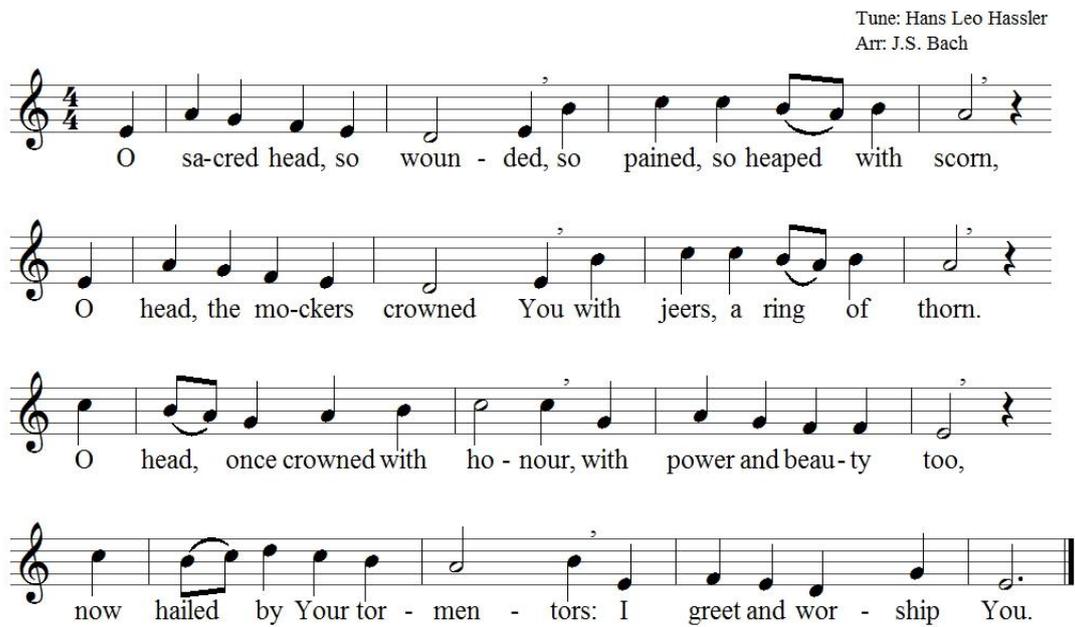
O sa-cred head, so woun - ded, so pained, so heaped with scorn,

O   head, the mo-ckers crowned You with jeers, a ring of thorn.

O   head, once crowned with ho - nour, with power and beau - ty too,

now hailed by Your tor - men - tors: I greet and wor - ship You.

149

8.4.1.3. Text: German version currently sung EG 85
(only verse 1 and 2 of 10)

1. O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden, / voll Schmerz und voller Hohn,
o Haupt, zum Spott gebunden / mit einer Dornenkron,
O Haupt, sonst schön gezieret / mit höchster Ehr und Zier,
jetzt aber hoch schimpfieret: / Gegrüßet seist du mir!

2. Du edles Angesichte, / davor sonst schrickt und scheut
das große Weltgewichte: / wie bist du so bespeit,
wie bist du so erbleichet! / Wer hat dein Augenlicht,
dem sonst kein Licht nicht gleichet, / so schändlich zugericht?

Paul Gerhardt 1656

8.4.1.4. Text: published English translation LH 52
(verse 1 and 2)

1. O sacred head, now wounded, / with pain and scorn weighed down,
in mockery surrounded, / with thorns Thine only crown:
O sacred head, what glory, / what bliss, till now was Thine!
Yet, though despised and gory, / I joy to call Thee mine.

2. Men spit upon and jeer Thee, / Thou noble countenance,
though mighty worlds shall fear Thee / and flee before Thy glance.
How art Thou pale with anguish, / with sore abuse and scorn;
how doth Thy visage languish / which once was bright as morn.

Tr .based on James Waddell Alexander 1849 and John Kelly 1867

8.4.1.5. Text: unpublished new translation - 5 verses

1.O Sacred Head, so wounded, / so pained, so heaped with scorn,
O Head, the mockers crowned you, / with jeers, a ring of thorn.
O Head, once crowned with honour, / with pow'r and beauty too;
now hailed by Your tormentors: / I greet, I worship You.

2. O noble face, so royal, / Your awe-inspiring brow
made earth's foundations tremble. / It's spat and laughed at now.
Who made Your features pallid, / so weak and pained Your breath?
Who dulled these eyes once radiant / and marked their light with death?

3. For what You, Lord, have suffered / I surely, take the blame.
My sin and guilt, my failings / have caused Your grief and shame.
Though I deserved Your anger / I come before Your face;
grant me, Lord of compassion / Your mercy and Your grace.

150

4. I want to stand beside You, / reject me not, I pray.
And while Your life is fading / beneath Your cross I'll stay.
I want to wait beside You / until death pales Your face
And hold Your head, so wounded / In worshipful embrace.

5. Lord, when I am departing / I pray, do not depart.
Stay by me with Your comfort / when death has gripped my heart.
When darkness is around me / I'll see Your cross again;
then tear me from my anguish / with power from Your pain.

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8.4.2. Background of Song

This poem of Paul Gerhardt is a translation of a Latin original from the Middle Ages: *Salve caput cruentatum (*Kulp 1958: 116). This Latin poem was one of a series of 7 poems in the mystic tradition, addressed to the different parts of the body of the crucified Christ. They all include the word "Salve" (Hail). Paul Gerhardt translated all seven of them: to the feet, the knees, the hands the side, the breast, heart and head (Kaiser 1907: 143-156).   Originally these poems were ascribed to Bernhardt of Clairvaux. However, the oldest discovered documents ascribe them to Arnulf of Leuven (before 1250), monk in one of Bernhardt's monasteries (Kulp 1958:116).   They were very popular in Gerhardt's time, and there were many attempts at German translations. Gerhardt was the only one who managed really to transpose them into the German way of thinking. The poem addressed at the head of the crucified one is the only one still sung today.   The Latin original consists of five verses (Köhler 1967:128). Gerhardt made two verses out of every Latin one. My translation is limited to five of Gerhardt's verses.

The tune by Hans Leo Hassler was given to this text by Johann Crüger in his 1656 edition of *Praxis Pietatis Melica*. It was originally a descant line to a love song to Mary (Kulp 117).   The tune was first used for the hymn text *Herzlich tut mich verlangen* by Christoph Knoll, and the tune still carried this name in the *Evangelisches Kirchengesangbuch* (EKG 63). Now the tune is known primarily for Gerhardt's "Passion Chorale", and carries this name in the English indexes of hymn tunes (MP 520, 723).[226] Two other texts in the EG use this tune, both under the topic "Death and life" (EG 529, 531). One of them is the Gerhardt text *Ich bin ein Gast auf Erden*

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[226] The LBW lists it under both names (ELW Tune Index p 947 &948).

151

(EG 529). The EG prints two versions of the tune. The original by Hassler without time signature, which moves between duple and triple time, and a simplified later version in 4/4 time (EG 85). The *Lutheran Book of Worship* also prints two versions of the tune: the original (rhythmic) Hassler tune and the isometric tune in 4/4 time, which, however, follows the version popularised by Bach in his St. Matthew passion by adding in slurred quavers (LBW 116 & 117). However, the LBW adds in only one slur in the first line. Most hymnals add in four, as did Bach (MP 520). This is the second version I will be using below.

O Sacred Head is found in all English hymnals I searched , though usually in slightly different translations.[227] All of them are still in old English, and no longer very accessible. The closest to the Gerhardt original is that in the *Lutheran Hymnal* which is printed here.

8.4.3. Evaluation of Text

8.4.3.1. Based on the wealth of scripture in all its breadth

The hymn is primarily based on a poem of medieval mystical devotion, and it follows its original very closely.[228] But there are also many biblical references, which are sometimes more clear in Gerhardt's expanded translation than in the original. The hymn has allusions to the whole passion story, but particularly, in its key word "Salve", "Hail King of the Jews" to the mock coronation by the soldiers (Mth 27:29 / Mk 15:18 / Jn 19:3).   Both in the Bible and in the hymn this mockery is deeply ironic, as the soldiers unknowingly proclaim the truth. Gerhardt's version is based on the German Luther Bible translation: *Gegrüßet seist du, der Juden König* and I have used the word "Greet" which is closer to the German in my translation. The "Salve" reference is missing in the published English translations.

There are many other biblical references to aspects of the passion story: the mocking and spitting, the crown of thorns, and of course the theological message of this happening "for us". Besides the passion story itself the central reference is probably Isaiah 50 v 6: "...I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting", as well as Isaiah 53 v 5: "But he was wounded for our

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[227] The translation most used is that of James Waddell Alexander (1804-59) SF 446, UMH 286, NCH 226,, others are by HW Baker (1821-77) HAM 68 but many hymnals have composite or modified translations.

[228] Its focus is the adoration and contemplation of the wounds of Christ. This in medieval piety is a way to gain assurance of salvation (Grosse 2001: 242).

152

transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities".

The hymn has a depth and wealth of biblical references and thus meets this criterion for Good
Text. Whether they are perhaps too difficult to understand for contemporary singers will be
discussed under point 4.

8.4.3.2. Theologically sound

The theological centre of this hymn is the recognition which is the centre of Lutheran Theology
and Christian Theology as a whole: Jesus' death on the cross was necessary for my personal
salvation. Jesus died in my stead, because I would have deserved death for my transgressions.
Here Paul Gerhardt's text reflects the heartbeat of Christian theology.

8.4.3.3. Takes the depth and breadth of human experience seriously

While the centre of this hymn is the theological proclamation of atonement, the cross is also a
source of comfort in personal suffering, particularly the fear of death. Human experiences that
are referred to are the guilt and shame of recognition of sin, the fear of death and suffering and
the comfort of knowing God.   This hymn takes human experience seriously.

8.4.3.4. Needs to be readily understood, it can be simple or repetitive, but not shallow

Is this hymn readily understood? Many may deny this, and without a doubt, this hymn would be
little use in evangelism. It is, however, accessible to people who are steeped in biblical tradition
and understand the biblical references. It is a hymn of devotion of committed Christians. Even
for services with outsiders it can have its place because the text and tune does transport the depth
of devotion, even if not every word is understood.

In my opinion, the published English text is fairly dated.   Whether the German text needs
changing is a more controversial question. The EG has reversed some earlier attempts to
modernise Gerhardt, because some of the beauty and power of the language gets lost in such
attempts. For example the words *hoch schimpfieret* for "severely mocked" have gone
completely out of use, but have been left in the text because of their ironic value - no other word
combinations can bring out the irony of the mockery which is actually proclaiming Jesus' true
status. Some minor language changes which do not change the metre have been made (see later
discussion).

153

This is, however, the hymn's greatest weakness for contemporary singers: It is not immediately accessible for singers today. However, even contemporary singers can grow to understand and love this hymn, which happens most often when singing Bach's choral version, which is high on emotive elements.

8.4.3. 5. Memorable Poetic Value

The hymn is characterised by very smooth rhyme and rhythmic metre, as is all of Gerhardt's poetry. There is seldom a grammatical error for the sake of rhyme. Other poetic devices are used strongly in this hymn, for example assonance, with phrases loaded with either dark or bleak, high vowels, depending on the meaning[229] and the repetition of key words such as *O Haupt* and others[230]. The language paints pictures, one can visualise the face and see oneself as directly under the cross.

8.4.3. 6. Evaluation of Text

The hymn meets the criteria of Good Text, but its weakness is that it is no longer easily accessible to many people attending worship. The decision on whether and where it is sung needs to weigh up its value with the question of how far removed people will feel from this hymn which comes to us not only from the time of Gerhardt, but from the deep Middle Ages. However, for those able to enter into its language, it transports the depth of spirituality from countless generations.

8. 4. 4. Evaluation of Tune

8.4.4.1. Should be singable by unmusical people

The fact that the tune has gone around the world testifies to its quality and singability - but usually it is the version by Johann Sebastian Bach - all in 4/4 time. The original does not have a

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[229] In the first half of Stanza 1 in the German original there is a strong use of "u" and "o" in the lines dealing with suffering. In the second half of the stanza where it speaks of Jesus' past glory and ironic mockery there is a predominance of higher vowels, "e's and "i's" and the *umlaut* of o and u.
In the second stanza, the many "i's", " e's" and " ei's" underline the bleakness of the face marked with death. In the third stanza, the predominance of "a's" contrast the past glory which has been taken away and present bleakness.

[230] There is also a lot of repetition which creates emphasis. I try to recreate some of this in my translation with the repetition of "head" and "so". In the original first stanza there is a three fold repetition of *O Haupt* (O Head), and *voll* (full). In Stanza 2 there is the repetition of *wie bist du so...?* emphasizing the question "How could this happen?"

154

time signature and varies in rhythm from 3/4 to 3/2 to 2/2. This is a much more dynamic tune but more difficult to sing. Most hymnals today print the simplified tune popularised by Bach, sometimes also with the slurs he added in[231]. Some hymnals print both the rhythmic and the isometric version (EG 85, ELW 351,352).   In many German congregations the original is still sung. But if people know the isometric version it is very difficult to teach them the original which is stranger to our musical sense.

The tune is generally a conjunct tune, with few large leaps. There is a fifth in each of the first two lines. The second to last line is heightened with a large leap upwards before and down after it – (a sixth up and a fifth down), which is probably the most emotive part of the tune.

8.4.4.2. Does not depend on accompaniment

Both versions of the tune can easily stand on their own. There are no long notes or rests which require instrumental back-up.

8.4.4.3. Does not overuse the currently popular stylistic elements

This hymn comes from a different era and is written in a different style from what is currently popular. The original is from an era where the hymn is shaped by speech flow rather than a constant rhythm. There are no overused elements.

8.4.4.4. Creates a balance between the easy and familiar and the interesting

In the original the patterns of repetition are as follows:

Melody pattern: *abab cdef*

Rhythm pattern: *a a′ a a′ bb′ aa′*

The Rhythm pattern is constant enough to make it easily familiar. It is just the shift in basic rhythm between *a* and *b* which may cause difficulties.

In the more popular tune (with all slurs) the patterns of repetition are simpler:

Melody pattern: *abab cdef*   (the LBW version with one slur would be   *abab′*)

Rhythm pattern: *a a′ a a′ a″ a′ a″ a*

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[231] UMH 289 with slurs, MP 520 with slurs, LBW 117 with only one slur, EG 85b without slurs but in 4/4 time.

155

Both tunes could be said to meet the criterion with the original one more interesting and the popular one the easier. There is enough variation in the melody that even the popular version does not become boring.

8.4.4.5 Evaluation of Tune

Both versions of the tune meet the criteria for quality. The simpler tune meets it sufficiently well that there does not seem to be a pressing reason to introduce the more difficult version where it is not known. However, there where the original is known, one should try to continue using it, particularly for reasons of text-tune match (see below).

8.4.5 Match of Text and Tune

8.4.5.1. The best songs have a "monogamous" match of only one text for only one tune.

This is not the only hymn to this tune. Before the Hassler tune was matched with Gerhardt's Passion Hymn it was matched to the hymn *Herzlich tut mich verlangen* and afterwards to many other texts. Even today, new texts are being written to this famous tune.[232] However, Gerhardt's hymn is the most readily identified with this tune, and other texts stand very much in its shadow, such as the other text by Gerhardt, much less often sung: *Ich bin ein Gast auf Erden* (EG 529). Johann Sebastian Bach uses the tune in various places in his Cantatas and Oratorios, amongst others also for a Gerhardt text *Wie soll ich dich empfangen,* in his Christmas Oratorio (EG 11). While there are other texts for the Hassler tune, there has been no alternative melody written to the text *O Sacred Head.* So when one reads the text, one is likely to have this tune in mind and when one hears the melody, the first words likely to come to mind are those of Gerhardt.

8.4.5.2. The mood of the music should fit with the mood of the text

The tune comes from a secular background and would have originally expressed longing and devotion. But this is appropriate to a hymn expressing devotion and adoration of Christ, and confession and contemplation of the cross. Interestingly because the original tune has passages

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[232] Timothy Dudley-Smith wrote *We come as guests invited*, a Communion hymn, to this tune PASSION CHORALE (MP 723).

156

in 3/2 time they have a lilting, almost dance-like quality in places which is surprising. But this
fits in with the emotive expressions of adoration. The fact that the tune gained the name
PASSION CHORALE shows that in the public mind it is closely matched to Gerhardt's text.

8.4.5.3. The rhythm of the music should fit the natural rhythm of the words

Both tunes have no incorrect stresses. The original tune is heavier and lays stress on more
words, for example in the first line on *Haupt*, *Blut* and *Wunden* - (Head, blood, wounds) and
there is a first climax on *Schmerz* (pain) in the second line. The heaviness is contrasted with the
more lilting second part, focussing on the past glory, to come back to the present with the
climax on *hoch schimpfieret (*highly mocked). This is an almost perfect match. The match is
less impressive in the popular version, but there is no inappropriate stress.

In my tune-text match notation the two versions would look as follows:

a) Rhythmic:

O /SA - cred *Head-* , so *woun* -ded,
/ so PAINED - , so heaped -with *scorn*,
O / HEAD - , the mo - ckers *crown* You,
/ with JEERS-, a ring- of *thorn*
O Head, once crowned with HO- NOUR,
with pow'r and *beauty* too.
/NOW HAILED - *by* Your tor- MEN -tors: (climax)
I GREET, I worship You.

b) Isometric version with 4 slurs:

O /*sa* cred Head , so *woun* -ded,
/ so PAINED , so heaped~ -with *scorn*,
O / *head*, the mo - ckers *crown* You,
/ with JEERS, a ring~ of *thorn*
O Head~ , once crowned with HO- NOUR,
with pow'r and *beauty* too.
/NOW HAILED~ *by* Your tor- MEN -tors: (climax)
I *greet*, I wor /SHIP You.

Both versions have a very good rhythmic text-tune match. The isometric version does smooth
out the stresses, but introduces new ones through the slurs. In general, however, the heavier

157

stresses, contrasted with the later lightness are a better match.

<u>8.4.5.4. The climax of the tune should fit with the climax in the poetry</u>

The climax of the tune is in the phrase with the highest notes which is the second to last line: "Now hailed by Your tormentors". The original *"Jetzt aber hoch schimpfieret"* is a highly ironic line: The words (meaning "highly mocked") almost sound like a celebration. *"Schimpfieret"* has a ring of triumph as it is similar to the German "*triumphieret*" (triumphed). This line carries the irony of the Johannine: "I will be lifted up" on the cross, as well as the irony of the label on the cross. For this reason the old German word has probably been retained. The tune carries this irony well. Then it drops down low to the greeting of the reverent person before the cross: *Gegrüßet seist du mir* (I greet, I worship You) where also the tune fits the words very well. This is carried less well in the published English translation with the climax on " Yet, though despised and gory".

Of course the climax is not always in the same place in every verse, but usually the second to last line of the Gerhardt verses does carry a weighty text, for example in verse 9, *so reiß mich aus den Ängsten"* (verse 5 "then tear me from my anguish").

<u>8.4.5.5. Evaluation of text-tune match</u>

The text-tune match is a good one for both tunes, though slightly better for the original tune. However, the difference is not so great as to make it imperative to reintroduce the original tune. As the text is already quite difficult, it is probably better to stay with the simpler, less heavy tune when teaching this hymn in a congregation. Of course, where the congregation already knows the original its use can be encouraged.

8.4.6. Evaluation of "Balance of Polarities"

<u>8.4.6.1 Past vs Present</u>

This hymn has a strong focus on the past, being a medieval poem and an attempt to make it accessible to his generation. It also draws heavily on the Bible itself and the traditions of Lutheran Orthodoxy and confessional writings. However, it also takes the then present concerns

158

seriously, particularly the ever-present fear of death and need for comfort of the post Thirty Years' War generation in Germany. For us, singing this hymn is an attempt to connect with the spirituality of many different past generations.

8.4.6.2 Objectivity vs Subjectivity

There is some objective faith content in that the basic passion story and theology of the atonement are shared, but there is a stronger emphasis on the subjective elements of personal devotion, adoration, and knowledge of forgiveness. The hymn is based on the Latin original which is rooted in Medieval mysticism and in rituals of adoration of the crucified one and some of this has been retained, though shaped by the objectivity of Gerhardt's training in Lutheran Orthodoxy. This makes for a fairly good balance.

8.4.6.3 Cognitive vs Emotive

As in all Gerhardt's hymns, the content load is high. There are 10 verses, and they are dense with allusions and theology. However, there is a fair amount of emotion, not only in the tune but also in the text itself. Reference to the colour of cheeks and lips have sensuous connotations, other words have emotive value like "sweet" *mit...süßer Kost,* or heavenly delights / *mancher Himmelslust,* and images of embracing Christ ("worshipful embrace): *alsdann will ich dich fassen in meinen Arm und Schoß* or *da will ich glaubensvoll, dich fest an mein Herz drücken*. Exclamations and repetition also heighten the emotive appeal of the text.

The tune is slow and lilting and this makes it emotive. There are some large leaps which add drama, but not excessively so. In general it is a reflective, worshipful tune.

8.4.6.4. Community vs Individual

This is a highly individual hymn. The focus is on the individual believer under the cross and on the message that Jesus died for me, personally. The world is not in view, not even in a passing reference, unlike in Gerhardt's other two passion hymns which are also largely in "I" form, but show an awareness that Christ died for the world, not only for me personally.[233] The Church or community is not in view either, nor are the consequences of atonement and faith, that is a life of

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[233] For example the hymn: *Behold a lamb* which has the line: "it bears the sins of all the world" (my translation) in ELW: " to save a world of sinners" (340).

159

Christian love.   The vision narrows to just the believer and the crucified Christ. This is a weakness of this, and also of other Gerhardt hymns and there needs to be a consciousness of a need to balance out this weakness in the choice of other hymns to be sung.

8.4.6.5.Familiarity vs Diversity

For many Lutherans this hymns is a "must sing" on Good Fridays, while it is seldom sung through the rest of Lent. This means to regular church-goers it is familiar and it creates a very specific atmosphere on that day, but of course also means that it is less familiar to those who do not attend every Good Friday service. There is little danger for the hymn to be "oversung". Having hymns which are kept aside for particular occasions creates diversity on the high festival days. The tune has a good balance between familiarity and diversity with repetitions and regularities in rhythm, particularly in the popular version (see section 4.4 above).

8.4.6.6. Affirmation vs Challenge

The hymn is adoration but also confession and acknowledgement of sin. Underlying the confession is already the assurance of forgiveness and salvation. Christ is addressed as *mein Erbarmer* ("the one who has mercy on me", translated as "Lord of compassion") who only needs to still grant his word of mercy and grace, which the singer seems very certain of receiving. The challenge lies in the very strong words acknowledging one's own sin and guilt. These challenge the singer to identify with them, make them their own and enter into the spirit of confession and knowledge of forgiveness.

8.4.6.7. Cross vs Glory

This is a hymn about the cross, about weakness and suffering, but also about the underlying power that God has revealed precisely there. Here Gerhardt is close to the Lutheran theology of the cross, which insists that God reveals his power precisely in the defeat of the cross. This is not stated directly, more through the irony of particularly the first verse.   It is the King of the World who is hanging on the cross in pain and facing death. "Earth's foundations trembled" before him, and the implication is they will tremble again. The glory of Christ is in the past, but there will be future power, which in this case comes not from the resurrection but from the pain that Christ endured.

160

8.4.6.8. Transcendence vs Immanence

Here is a very good balance: Jesus is the transcendent Lord before whom the earth shakes and before whom I need to bow down to greet Him with awe. However, he is also very close and intimate, my personal saviour, the one who nourishes and comforts me[234] and whom I embrace.

8.4.6.9 Vertical vs Horizontal

This is mainly a vertical hymn. Emphasis is on the relationship of Jesus and the believing individual. Except for the reference to "earth's foundations" there is no horizontal element, nor any awareness of consequences of faith.

8.4.6.10 Universal vs Particular

While this hymn has a universal message it is not a hymn that can be sung everyday. It has particular relevance to Good Friday and is often sung at sickbeds and deathbeds, or funerals. The particular focus also makes it able to comfort in great despair. It addresses a very particular human need, namely the fear of death or dying. In the St Matthew Passion of JS Bach, the words of this hymn are used to signify the response of the Christian congregation to the story of Christ's death, a "universal" response.

8.4.7. Overall Evaluation

In many German Lutheran congregations this hymn is sung every Good Friday. It is not a hymn that readily speaks to the young and the uninitiated, but one which draws people into its depth and devotion the more they get to know it. It has been a great comfort on many deathbeds, able to convey the comfort and power of the cross. It should be used, treasured and taught, but it needs to be balanced with other hymns about the cross which are more immediately accessible, and which stress the more horizontal aspect of reconciliation with the world and one another under the cross. Through experience it is clear that young people will most readily gain an appreciation of this hymn through involvement in choirs and the settings by JS Bach.

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[234] In some of the not translated verses, the aspect of comfort and nourishment comes out strongly for example in the fifth verse with its imagery of the shepherd: *Dein Mund hat mich gelabet mit Milch und süßer Kost* (Your mouth has fed me with milk and sweet food).

161

8.5. Evaluation of *Commit the ways you travel (Befiehl du deine Wege)*

8.5.1. Text and Tune

8.5.1.1. Tune: BEFIEHL DU DEINE WEGE

Bartholomäus Gesius 1603

8.5.1.2. Text: German version currently sung EG 361
(v 1 and 2 only)

1. BEFIEHL du deine Wege / und was dein Herze kränkt
der allertreusten Pflege / des, der den Himmel lenkt.
Der Wolken, Luft und Winden / gibt Wege, Lauf und Bahn,
der wird auch Wege finden, / da dein Fuß gehen kann.

DEM HERREN mußt du trauen, / wenn dir's soll wohlergehn;
auf sein Werk mußt du schauen, / wenn dein Werk soll bestehn.
Mit Sorgen und mit Grämen, / und mit selbsteigner Pein
läßt Gott sich gar nichts nehmen, / es muss erbeten sein.

Paul Gerhardt 1653

8.5.1.3. Text: published English translation LH 409

Commit whatever grieves thee / into the gracious hands
of Him who never leaves thee, / who heaven and earth commands.
who points the clouds their courses, / whom winds and waves obey;
He will direct thy footsteps / and find for thee a way.

Translation based on Arthur Tozer Russell

162

8.5.1. 4. Text: in another metre UMH 129

Give to the winds thy fears; / hope and be undismayed.
God hears thy sighs and counts thy tears, / God shall lift up thy head.

Translation by John Wesley 1730

8.5.1.5. Text: unpublished new translation:

1. COMMIT the ways you travel / and all the pain you bear
to God who rules the heavens / in mercy and in care.
He gives the clouds direction, / no winds will go astray.
You too can trust His guidance / He'll find for you a way.

2. YOUR WAYS, O Lord are wondrous / more than we understand.
Your works give untold blessings, / we're nurtured by Your hand.
We should not cling to worries / but come in prayer to You
For You bring to completion / what You have planned to do.

3. TO GOD give all your troubles, / your worries and your pain.
Cast on Him all your burdens, / rise up and hope again.
You cannot be controller / with power to bid and tell.
God only is the ruler / and He'll do all things well.

4. So TRUST IN HIM believer, / and do not be dismayed.
God gives you peace and comfort / and makes you unafraid.
His times and thoughts are wondrous, / His promises are true.
In his own way He'll lift it / what now is troubling you.

5. HE WILL not always answer / what you would like to hear.
You may think He's forgotten / and is no longer near.
But never give up trusting / that He is close to you;
And when you least expect it, / He'll strengthen and renew.

6. DO THIS, God our deliverer. / O come and end our pain.
Give strength to soul and body / and make us whole again.
To those who trust with patience / You've promised victory palms,
and in your presence glorious, / we'll sing our grateful psalms.

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8.5.2 Background of Song

This is one of Paul Gerhardt's most well-known and well-loved hymns (Axmacher 1999: 190).

However, the circumstances around its writing are not known. There are moving anecdotes

163

around its origin which are not necessarily historical. Hesselbacher recounts one, which places its origin in years of hardship in Mittenwalde, when Paul Gerhardt had no money to give to his wife to buy food (Hesselbacher 1982:52). However, what is known is the year of its first publication in Crüger's *Praxis Pietatis Melica* which is 1653.[235] The early years in Mittenwalde were very productive years for Gerhardt in terms of hymn-writing. He saw his role as one of comforter and counsellor and this hymn fits in well with this. But although his wife-to-be visited him there, they only married in 1655 (Hesselbacher 50). It is clear though, that it was written in the post-war years in a time of deprivation and worry to be a source of comfort.

The hymn is based on Psalm 37 v 5: "Commit your way to the LORD; trust in Him and he will do this." It is an acrostich where every verse begins with one word from the Bible text, 12 verses in the German original. While acrostiches were fashionable during this time they were usually written in honour of prominent people, using the initials of rulers or benevolent donors as a base.[236] This one is the result of deep meditation on a Bible verse, perhaps the result of a sermon Gerhardt had to preach.

The tune it is generally sung to was given to it by Johann Crüger on publication in his *Praxis Pietatis*. It is a tune by Batholomäus Gesius which he wrote for a metrical Psalmtext on Psalm 150, based on a tune in the Genevan Psalter. Georg Philipp Telemann modified it in 1730 to how we sing it today (Author reference EG 361, Kulp 1958:460). Another tune by Michael Haydn gained popularity in the 19th century and is sometimes sung to this text, especially at birthdays, as it is more cheerful. But most hymnal editors reject it as not fitting.

The hymn gained entry into the English speaking world firstly through a free translation by John Wesley, then later a metrical translation by Arthur Tozer Russell.

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[235]   This is the year referenced in the EG 361. Kulp places first publication earlier at 1648 (1958:460). This would make the background the years of the Thirty Years' War. But most scholars seem to agree on 1653.

[236]   Philip Nicolai's two famous hymns were acrostiches on the name of the same ruler. In the *Morningstar* hymn each verse starts with a letter spelling the name: *Wilhelm Ernst Graf und Herr zu Waldeck.*   The first letter of the 3 Verses of *Sleepers Wake* spell backwards W,Z,G: *Graf zu Waldeck* (Rößler 1990:127 & 134).

164

8.5.3. Evaluation of Text

8.5.3.1. Based on the wealth of scripture in all its breadth

The whole song is a meditation on one verse in the Bible, and is an acrostich of this text: Psalm 37 v 5. But there are many other scriptural allusions in the verses. The following could be mentioned: Matth 6, 25ff in its message, Do not worry about the future: (v 2), Rev 2,10: "Be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life" (v11), Matth 7,7: "Ask and it shall be given unto you" (v2), 1 Pet 5, 7 "Cast your anxieties on him" (v 1 and 7) and also Ps 55,2 (v1 and 7). The song meets this criterion of quality.

8.5.3.2 Theologically sound

The basic theological statement of this song is: God holds our life in his hands and can change our lot if we stay faithful and pray. Suffering is seen as a test of faith. The key theological statement is in verse 7: *Gott sitzt im Regimente und führet alles wohl* (God only is the ruler, and he'll do all things well). It is a strong challenge to trust in God's providence. Here Paul Gerhardt is close to the Lutheran Orthodox dogmatics of his day.[237]

Criticism may be levelled at this theology as no space is given for real lament and protesting one's suffering. Even in the case of Paul Gerhardt's time terrible suffering and deprivation was caused by human power struggles and human greed. Is some of Gerhardt's other hymns the note of meek acceptance is even more pronounced.[238] Does this acceptance of suffering as God's way and God's test not sometimes take away the incentive to protest against the causes of suffering and also the possibility to express one's anger at circumstances and even God? While this hymn has demonstrated its ability to comfort the afflicted it is necessary to balance it with other songs which open up the possibility of lament and protest. This does happen albeit muted in some other Gerhardt hymns[239] and in some of the verses of this hymn for example *ER wird*

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[237]   *De providentia Dei* is a fixed theme in Lutheran Orthodox dogmatics (Axmacher 1999:197) .

[238]   The hymn *Gib dich zufrieden und sei stille* (Content yourself and be quiet)   is still in the EG, (371) but very seldom sung. It has a very strong note of meek acceptance, which seems to discourage lament and any form of questioning and protesting suffering. This is generally seen as problematic today.

[239] Most of Gerhardt's hymns have the strong message of trust, but others say less about having to accept suffering. They express the pain and leave it standing, expressing the hope and trust that God will end it, as in the prayer for the end of year: *Schließ zu die Jammerpforten / und lass an allen Orten / auf so viel Blutvergießen / die Freudenströme fließen.* (Close the gates of lament and let the streams of joy flow over all these places where so much blood has been spilt) (EG 58).

165

zwar eine Weile mit seinem Trost verziehen.... als frag er nichts nach dir. (v9) - "you may think he's forgotten, and is no longer near...." (v4) Here the reality of doubt and wrestling in faith is acknowledged.   In some ways Gerhardt goes beyond what most other song-writers do in taking suffering seriously. The challenge to integrate lament and protest into Christian songs is a lasting one and only few songs do it well.

8.5.3.3. Takes the depth and breadth of human experience seriously

This aspect is the greatest strength of this hymn.   A whole range of human emotions and experiences are expressed: Trust, pain, worry, doubt, hope, awe. There is an awareness that to let go of one's worries does not come naturally but is a challenge. Particularly in verse 7 the series of imperatives challenges the believer to let go of anxieties and put their trust in God. It is quite clearly not an easy action but one that requires a leap of faith: *Auf, auf gib deinem Schmerze und Sorgen gute Nacht...* ("To God, give all your troubles, your worries and your pain..." Eng v 3)   There is an awareness both of human frailty and mortality and the infinite dignity of being cared for by the almighty God: *sterbliches Geblüt... v2 dein Arbeit darf nicht ruhn, wenn du, was deinen Kindern ersprießlich ist, willst tun v3* (not directly translated).

8.5.3.4. Needs to be readily understood, it can be simple or repetitive, but not shallow

In the language itself there are few insurmountable problems to understanding. The basic message of the hymn is simple enough, even if certain phrases have complex, perhaps outdated grammatical structures or expressions (for example the term *sterbliches Geblüt* for mortal humanity). Even in translation the basic message comes across clearly. The acrostich structure is usually a help for people to get into the hymn as it stimulates interest, even among young people. This was lost in most English translations and has been reconstructed in my translation. Even though the basic message is readily understood, the thoughts and allusions are very dense and it takes time for people to grow into the hymn and discover the depth of meaning behind the images. In general, however, it is much more readily accessible than *O Sacred Head* and is sung much more widely in its German original, particularly at funerals, but also at birthdays.

8.5.3.5. Memorable Poetic Value

The verses are easy to memorise, as Gerhardt again uses smooth verse, rhythmic language and many poetic devices. His images are strong: God finds paths for winds and clouds and also for

166

the individual human being. Alliteration and assonance are used in several places.[240] There are also some repetitions for special effect, for example in v1 the word *Wege* (paths) is repeated three times, in v7 there is the duplicated *Auf, auf* (rise up, rise up) or in v 8 *Ihn, ihn* (Him, Him allow to take charge...).   In some places there are parallel structures almost similar to Hebrew poetry.[241] These are, of course, all very difficult if not impossible to recreate in translation.

In general, Gerhardt's language is so strong and memorable, that some of his phrases, also of this hymn, have entered the German language as figures of speech.[242]

8.5.4. Evaluation of Tune

This section confines itself to a discussion of the tune by Gesius. The tune by Michael Haydn, though popular in some circles will not be discussed here.

8.5.4.1. Should be singable by unmusical people

This tune is widely known and sung, often at funerals of largely secular people. This shows the tune's ability to speak to many people. It is a tune written in a minor key which sometimes has made people experience it as fairly heavy. But it is not difficult in itself. The range goes from the lower to the higher D - exactly one octave, which is what most people should be able to sing. It is written in a smoothly flowing 4/4 time.   There are no big leaps or complex rhythms. The rhythm varies very simply between crotchets and minims (notes of one and notes of two-beat value).

8.5.4.2. Does not depend on accompaniment

The tune can easily be carried without accompaniment, although it may feel increasingly heavy when singing more verses. However, it is true for all Gerhardt's hymns that they feel increasingly heavy when more verses are sung. Normally congregations do not sing all verses of

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[240]   For example in verse 1: the threefold "W" and double "L" in *Der Wolken, Luft und Winden gibt Wege, Lauf und Bahn* and the repeated "e" or "ei" in v2: .... *mit selbsteigner Pein / läßt Gott sich gar nichts nehmen, es muß erbeten sein..*

[241]   For example in verse 3 *Dein Tun ist lauter Segen, dein Gang ist lauter Licht* (Your actions are all blessing, Your paths are all light).

[242]   For example the phrase used even sometimes in my own family: *bist du doch nicht Regente, der alles führen soll….* (v7) (You cannot be controller with power to bid and tell (v3).

167

Gerhardt hymns anymore. But where many verses are sung, a good and varied accompaniment is essential.

8.5.4.3. Does not overuse the currently popular stylistic elements

There is no stylistic elements which are being overused. The hymn is not written in a currently popular style.

8.5.4.4. Creates a balance between the easy and familiar and the interesting

There is both repetition and variation in the tune.

Melody pattern: *abab cdef*
Rhythm pattern: *a a' a a' a a' a a'*

The rhythm is very regular and easy to learn: straight crotchets except for a minim on the last or second to last note of the line. The only difference between *a* and *a'* is that the one phrase ends on an unaccented and the other on an accented syllable. However, the melody has enough variation, that the regular rhythm does not make the tune boring.

8.5.4.5. Evaluation of Tune

The fact that the rhythm is so regular and the melody flowing and without difficulties is probably the reason that so many secular people remember this hymn, some from their confirmation class, others simply from funerals they have attended. However, the relative heaviness of the minor key tune has ensured that it has its place more at funerals than in normal everyday life, where it could also be a comfort in sorrow.

8.5.5. Evaluation of Text-Tune Match

8.5.5.1. The best songs have a "monogamous" match of only one text for only one tune.

In general there has been consensus among hymnal editors that the tune originally given to this text by Crüger is the best one to print. However, the metre of this hymn is such a typical one for Gerhardt (7676 D) that the words have on occasion been sung to other tunes, for example the tune for *O sacred head* .

168

The 19th century tune by Michael Haydn is more cheerful, in a major key and with many leaps and slurs. It became reasonably popular and is still sung, even in some South African congregations. Most editors of hymn-books reject it as not fitting the serious text. However, it is included with this text in the collection *Feiert Jesus* (FJ 136 Melody 2)*.* In my experience, people sing the minor key tune at funerals, but often want the major key tune at birthdays.

While not completely "monogamous", there is a fairly clear text-tune match for this hymn.

8.5.5.2. The mood of the music should fit with the mood of the text

The minor key tune is thoughtful and withdrawn. It fits with the inward looking text. The singer is either speaking to himself, reminding his own soul of the comfort of faith, or in intimate conversation with someone else, trying to speak to them the comfort that faith brings. The Gesius tune fits this mood very well.

The major key tune in most places does not really fit the words in most of the verses and can make them feel quite superficial. However, it does match the words of confident hope and trust, such as verse 7 in the German original (v3 in new translation).

8.5.5.3. The rhythm of the music should fit the natural rhythm of the words
Throughout there are no wrongly stressed syllables. The long notes always fall on naturally stressed words. This is true in the German original and I have tried to recreate this in my translation.

Com*mit* the ways you TRA -vel
and *all* the *pain* you bear
To *God* who rules the HEA -vens
in mercy and in *care*.
He gives the clouds di-RE -ction, (climax of tune)
No winds will go as-*stray*.
You too can trust his GUI -dance
He'll find for you a *way*.

8.5.5.4. The climax of the tune should fit with the climax in the poetry
There is no dramatic climax in the tune which gently rises to the highest note (*Luft)* and then the

169

next-highest long note which falls on *Wind:* Der *Wolken, Luft und WIND-en gibt Wege, Lauf und Bahn* ("he gives the clouds direction, no winds will go astray"), the strongest image in the verse. The climax in the text comes in the last line, ("You too can trust his guidance, he'll find for you a way.") which is again a lower, more restrained and thoughtful line in the tune. This is not inappropriate.

8.5.6. Evaluation of "Balance of Polarities"

8.5.6.1 Past vs Present

Gerhardt takes up a psalm text and other biblical references, thus honouring the tradition that shapes him, but it was a hymn centred very much on present reality when it was written. Now of course it is a hymn of comfort that draws upon the experience of countless generations that have been comforted by this hymn and most people who sing it, will already have made their experiences with this hymn at other occasions. It is a hymn which can locate the singer in a whole "cloud of witnesses" that have gone before (Hebrews 12:1).

8.5.6.2 Objectivity vs Subjectivity

While the hymn has a lot of content based in subjective experience, there is a strong element of proclamation of God's power and providence. That God is in control is proclaimed against all subjective experience at that moment. In effect the hymn is a sermon against subjective experience of abandonment by God and hopelessness. One could question whether the subjective experience of suffering is sufficiently expressed (see section 3.2). However, its proclamation of meaning in suffering is a great strength of the hymn.

8.5.6.3 Cognitive vs Emotive

There is a high content load, 12 verses, much proclamation and biblical allusions. The language is not highly emotive, but does allow for the expression of experience. Phrases describing the suffering show that the writer knows what suffering is, for example *mit Sorgen und mit Grämen und mit selbsteigner Pein...* which is much stronger than in the translation "your troubles, your worries and your pain" or in the LH: "self-tormenting care, anxious sighs and grieving" . Emotion is found in the text where people recognise their experience in the words. No specially emotive words are included. Some emotion also comes from the tune, but there are no emotion-

170

creating stylistic elements.

8.5.6.4. Community vs Individual

This is very much an individual hymn, but it does create community where people use it to comfort one another. It is only the last verse that goes into the plural (Axmacher 1999:196). Pain and trials are a universal human phenomenon. The last verse is a prayer of deliverance directed at God, no longer at the sufferer. It is a prayer for deliverance for all of suffering humanity. It shows a view beyond just the individual believer to the whole world.

8.5.6.5.Familiarity vs Diversity

The hymn is easily learnt with its constant rhythm. It is a very familiar hymn to many people, but this is waning in the younger generation. Many people know the hymn only from funerals and its potential as a comforting hymn throughout life is no longer appreciated. The minor key is often unfamiliar to young people who are more used to upbeat songs in the major key. Axmacher stresses the "foreignness" of Gerhardt's hymns and his thoughts for us today (1999:191). How accessible is this hymn to people who have not grown up with it? Do we still think the same way about God's providence and how he tests our faith? Here there are fairly foreign thoughts and language. Is it worthwhile to make the effort to introduce a generation unfamiliar with Gerhardt to such hymns? In our culture of mostly upbeat songs, such a hymn can introduce a vital element of diversity by taking suffering, pain and worry seriously, and by its more subdued, introspective style, which can help people to reflect on their faith. But it will not easily become familiar to people who have not grown up with it.

8.5.6. 6. Affirmation vs Challenge

Both these aspects are strongly present in this hymn. There is both the affirmation that God is in control, that he will care and guide us, and the challenge to put our trust in God, against everything we experience. In prayer, singers do what they are challenged to do in the previous verses (Axmacher 1999:196).

8.5.6.7. Cross vs Glory

This hymn does not speak directly of the cross. It speaks of human suffering and darkness. It

171

speaks more of the almighty Creator than of the Redeemer. Christ is not mentioned. As such it can almost be taken as a metrical psalm even though it concentrates on the one verse only. While it speaks of suffering it speaks also of the glory and power underlying the providence of God: *Dein Gang ist lauter Licht; dein Werk kann niemand hindern....*(v4) (no direct translation - For you bring to completion / what you have planned to do (v2).

8.5.6. 8. Transcendence vs Immanence

This is a hymn mainly about the transcendent God, the almighty, omniscient controller of human destinies. There is little of the intimate language that Gerhardt is also capable of, of the near God, the comforter and friend. This is one of the problems that contemporary people could have with this hymn. God seems to be fairly distant, a benevolent ruler, but not a personal comforter. Nevertheless, people continue to draw personal comfort from this hymn. It is, however, probably not wise to use it to try to comfort people who do not already know and love it. They may feel even more distant from a God they do not understand.

8.5.6.9 Vertical vs Horizontal

Emphasis is very much on the God above it all, but there is an awareness that he is in charge not only of my personal life and destiny but of the entire world, and its natural phenomena and human inhabitants. There is also an awareness that suffering is a pervasive human condition which does not only affect me, but all of God's children, (*mach Ende mit aller unserer Not v10* – O come, and end our pain v5). God is, however, not seen in suffering humanity but as the ruler "above".

8.5.6.10 Universal vs Particular

This hymn was probably born in a situation of particular need and suffering, but speaks to it in univeral language.   However, the universal language does not water down the experience of suffering, so that it is fairly easy to place any other particular situation of need into this language.

8.5.7. Overall Evaluation

This is a "good song" which can provide solace to people in great need. Its weakness for today's

172

Christians may be its lack of images expressing the nearness of God in suffering, which is a strength of many other Gerhardt hymns. For some people the hymn is reserved for the more solemn occasions, like funerals and sickbeds, making it more difficult to gain comfort through it in everyday problems and anxieties.   It is not a hymn which is easy to introduce to people today, as its thoughts and styles are foreign to many. It is nevertheless very worthwhile. Beginning with the acrostich to stimulate interest has opened up this hymn to many, even young people in its original.   This could be attempted with the new translation.

8.6. Evaluation of *The Golden Morning (Die güldne Sonne)*

8.6.1. Text and Tune

8.6.1.1. Tune: DIE GÜLDNE SONNE

Johann Georg Ebeling 1666
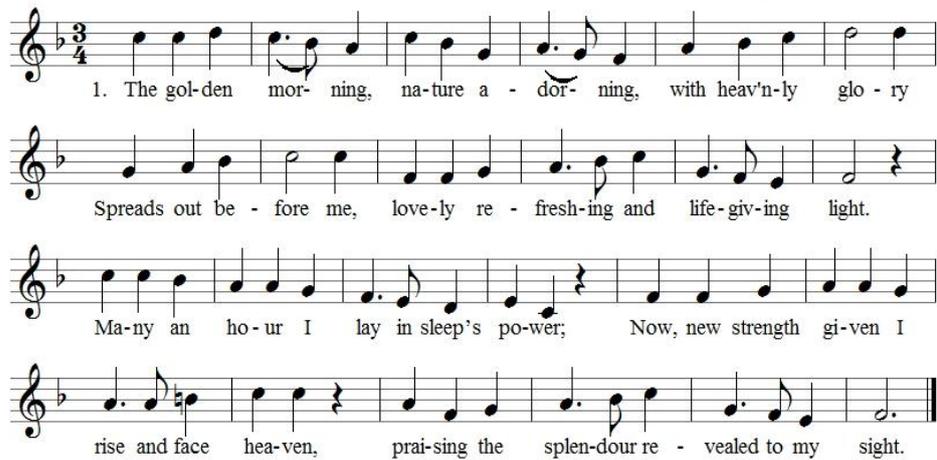
1. The gol-den mor-ning, na-ture a - dor- ning, with heav'n-ly glo - ry
Spreads out be - fore me, love-ly re - fresh-ing and life-giv-ing light.
Ma-ny an ho-ur I lay in sleep's po-wer; Now, new strength gi-ven I
rise and face hea-ven, prai-sing the splen-dour re - vealed to my sight.

8.6.1.2. Text: German version currently sung EG 449
(v1 only)

Die güldne Sonne voll Freud und Wonne
bringt unsern Grenzen mit ihrem Glänzen
ein herzerquickendes, liebliches Licht.
Mein Haupt und Glieder, die lagen darnieder;
aber nun steh ich, bin munter und fröhlich,
schaue den Himmel mit meinem Gesicht.

Paul Gerhardt 1666

8.6.1.3. Text: published English version LH 524

The golden morning, nature adorning
with heavenly glory, spreads out before me
lovely refreshing and life-giving light.
My weary members lay wrapped in deep slumbers;
joyful I wake me, to prayer I betake me,
praising the splendour revealed to my sight.

 Tr. Strelan & Massie

174

8.6.1.4. Text: unpublished new translation

1.The golden morning, nature adorning,
with heavenly glory spreads out before me
lovely refreshing and life-giving light.
Many an hour I lay in sleep's power;
now, new strength given, I rise and face heaven,
praising the splendour revealed to my sight.

2. Evening and morning, sunset and dawning,
wealth, peace and gladness, comfort in sadness,
these are your gifts: Lord, all glory to You.
Times without number, awake or in slumber,
Your hand has guided, sustained me, provided;
poured out Your mercy and love ever new.

3. All things will perish, God's word I cherish.
It changes never. Its truth forever
built on foundations eternal and strong.
God always seeing, can touch our deep being;
in love revealing His comfort and healing;
curing our heart from all anguish and wrong.

4. God, to creation You'll bring salvation:
a new tomorrow, no cross and sorrow,
all winds and tempests are stilled by Your might.
Joys still increasing, and peace never ceasing,
beauty and glory will end Your great story
when we forever will stand in Your light.

GT, based on Strelan & Massie

8.6.2 Background of Song

This hymn was first published in 1666, in Berlin after many of Gerhardt's personal tragedies. Two of his children had died, and his personal friend Johann Crüger had also passed away in 1662. However, Crüger's successor Ebeling took over the work and became the publisher and composer for Gerhardt (Hesselbacher 1986:98). Ebeling composed the tune for this hymn. 1666 was also the year of the conflict with the Prince Elector. While the hymn was probably written before Gerhardt lost his post, it is probable that it was written at a time of growing tension. Taking all these factors into account, the tone of joyful praise in this hymn is astonishing. There is a strong undercurrent of longing for paradise, but also still an acceptance

175

of this life and a commitment to live it responsibly. There are several verses on Christian living and ethics which I have not translated. One cannot translate all 12 verses, and these verses are less poetically strong than the others. Nevertheless they show a lot about Gerhardt's deep commitment to life in spite of all its trials. His focus on jealousy in verse 6 may have taken up an important post-war problem, where some people had managed to lift themselves above financial hardship while others were struggling. This could have been a particular problem in Berlin, the regional capital and seat of government, where there was probably already a form of concentrated wealth in a time of economic upswing, while many were still trapped in poverty.

This hymn has an unusual metre, labelled PM (peculiar metre) in the metrical tune indexes: 5 5 5 5 10 5 6 5 6 10. This metre was taken from a newly published love song by Adam Krieger and was probably intended to be sung to that tune (Kulp 1958:533). Gerhardt's hymn was entitled *Morgensegen* (Morning blessing), and was probably based on a morning blessing by the devotional writer Johann Arndt. Other morning hymns of the time have similar beginnings and might have been based on the same text.[243] In spite of the beauty of the tune and the joyful nature of the text, the hymn only gained slow acceptance in official hymnals and only became generally accepted in hymn-books in the 19th century. A boost in the popularity of the hymn might have come through the popular children's classic *Heidi* by Johanna Spyri, which relates how Heidi read this hymn to Peter's grandmother and quotes many verses in full.[244]

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[243] For example *Die güldene Sonne bringt Leben und Wonne* by Philipp von Zesen 1641 (EG 444).

[244] In August 2008, in connection with the 400th Birthday Celebrations, a Swiss congregation advertised an evening: *Heidi bringt den Menschen die güldene Sonne* (Heidi brings "The golden morning" to the people"). This explored in an evening of music and book recitals the connection between the author Johanna Spyri and the hymns of Paul Gerhardt (Novitats 2008 website).

176

8.6.3 Evaluation of Text

<u>8.6.3.1. Based on the wealth of scripture in all its breadth</u>

The language is intensely biblical and there are many biblical allusions, though most of them are not obvious. In general the language of praise is close to that of the Psalms, verse 3 having allusions to Psalm 95, and the first verse to the language of protection in the night of Psalm 91. There is a reference to Psalm 139 v 3: "You discern my going out and my lying down" (v4). Köhler quotes the reference of Proverbs 16 v 3 "Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed" probably referring to verses 4 and 9 (Köhler 1967:503). More obvious are the references to human frailty and mortality verses 7 and 8 (Is 40:6-7 and Psalm 103:15) and the words *Freude die Fülle* in verse 12 which are a direct reference to Ps 16 v 11: "You will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand".

It is clear in this hymn that Paul Gerhardt is deeply steeped in scriptural language and draws on it probably not even consciously. Again there are no direct references to Christ, but to God the creator and ruler of the universe.

<u>8.6.3.2 Theologically sound</u>

Within categories of dogmatics this hymn belongs in the first article of the creed, thanking God the creator for life and for enabling life anew every day. The hymn thanks God for new opportunities and reminds the singer of our dependence on God and his providence and presence. It asks for God's guidance and help to live a responsible, ethical life, banishing vice and jealousy (not included in translation). It acknowledges the frailty of our life, but proclaims God's steadfastness and eternity. In the later verses God is asked for guidance, for perseverance to carry difficulties and for a thankful heart.   The last verse speaks of the great hope of eternal joy in the "heavenly garden". This hymn does not pose any serious theological problems.

<u>8.6.3.3. Takes the depth and breadth of human experience seriously</u>

Evening and morning, sleep and waking are daily reminders of the cycle of life with death and new life. This is a human experience well expressed in this hymn. The human being becomes vulnerable when lying down to sleep, but God is present and wakes us, giving us a new day. The daily cycle is a reminder of the change and decay of life, of human mortality. However, the new

177

day and the presence of God gives us a hope for eternity beyond the frailty of our existence. Here the hymn touches on very fundamental human experiences, acknowledges them, but points beyond them to the eternity of God and our own hope for eternal life. The hymn also expresses the knowledge that at the beginning of a new day we know there will be things to be thankful for and experiences that will be painful. The hymn acknowledges the difficulties of daily ethical living. Everything is placed into God's hand and under God's guidance.

8.6.3.4. Needs to be readily understood, it can be simple or repetitive, but not shallow

The basic message of the hymn is reasonably easy to understand, its use in a popular children's classic testifies to that. However, there are many formulations which are not immediately accessible to people who have not grown up with it. This is true for the German original but also for many of the translations. Some of the ideas are reasonably complex or expressed in unusual ways, for example the formulation *Laß meine Schulden in Gnad und Hulden aus deinen Augen sei abgewandt,* (Let my debts, through Your mercy, be turned away from Your eyes) for the concept of forgiveness of sin. While some verses are not easy to understand, usually singers make a selection of verses which will then often include the most straight forward texts.

8.6.3.5. Memorable Poetic Value

Like all Gerhardt hymns, the hymn has smooth rhyme and rhythm although it is in a much more complex metre. Perhaps because of this slight grammatical irregularies happen more often in this text, some outdated words, carry-overs of thoughts into the next line and a double negative, which is no longer used in German. However, otherwise the language is as smooth and regular as generally is the case in Gerhardt's poetry. Again alliteration plays a part, particularly alliterated word pairs for example *Grenzen und Glänzen* (boundaries and radiance), *Wort und Wille* (Word and will)*, Freude die Fülle und selige Stille* (fullness of joy and blessed silence), in verse 3 there are 6 main concepts with "G": *Güter und Gaben, Gotte, Güter, Gemüter, ergötzt* (goods, gifts, God, goods, emotions, delights).

In its original Gerhardt is very easy to memorise and the images are strong: the joyful sun which brings new light and life, the eye looking at the vast sweep of God's creation, visions of decay and visions of heaven. This hymn definitely meets the criteria for poetic value.

178

8.6.4. Evaluation of Tune

8.6.4.1. Should be singable by unmusical people

All the tunes by Ebeling are more difficult to sing than the sensitive Crüger tunes, which usually move within the octave. Ebeling's tunes are closer to the aria and solo singing, which was the style of much baroque composition. Only three of his tunes have survived. They are all much more exuberant than those of Crüger, moving up and down in large intervals. This hymn does not have the greatest range of Ebeling tunes. It has the range of nine notes, just above the octave. The lowest note is Middle C, the highest, top D. This is still fairly manageable. Contrast this with the tune for *Du meine Seele singe* - which has a range of 11 notes (from low B flat to upper E flat). [245] Such a range requires fairly competent singers. Average singers will probably leave out either the highest or the lowest notes.

Not only do Ebeling's tunes have a big range, they have more rapid movement up and down with larger leaps than in Crüger's tunes. In this tune it is still fairly manageable with three leaps of a fourth and three of a fifth. No bigger intervals are present.

The rhythm is varied, including slurs (2) and dotted notes (7). This makes it joyful, but not so easy to learn. Its level of difficulty may explain why it took so long to establish itself as the favourite it is today.

8.6.4.2. Does not depend on accompaniment

This is a joyful tune which lifts up the singer and does not need accompaniment. It is often sung in morning devotions in the home.

8.6.4.3. Does not overuse the currently popular stylistic elements

Ebeling, much more than Crüger, wrote in the popular style of his time which was much more emotive and exuberant than that of previous generations (Rössler 1990: 23). Characteristic were large ranges, leaps and slurred notes. These tunes were much less suited to congregational singing. This is one of only 3 of Ebeling's tunes that has survived, and it probably has because

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[245]   Not only does this tune by Ebeling have a large range, it also moves rapidly up and down, beginning with an arpeggio up the octave and later a whole octave leap. It is a popular hymn among German Lutherans but not easy to pitch unaccompanied (EG 302).

179

it does not overuse the large leaps and slurs and is still manageable for a congregation.

8.6.4.4. Creates a balance between the easy and familiar and the interesting

While the melody has great variation, there is enough repetition in the rhythm for the tune to be learned by untrained singers.

Melody pattern: *abcde fghie′*

Rhythm pattern: *aabbc dedec*

This is a fairly balanced tune which needs some practice but can be learned by a congregation.

8.6.4.5. Evaluation of Tunes

For many lovers of Gerhardt this is their favourite of his various morning hymns, and this has a lot to do with the joyful tune. While it is more difficult than the Crüger tune to the morning hymn *Lobet den Herren, alle, die ihn ehren* (EG 447), it is also more uplifting. It is well worth learning and very memorable.

8. 6.5. Evaluation of Match of Text-Tune Match

8.6.5.1. The best songs have a "monogamous" match of only one text for only one tune.

This tune was composed specifically for this text. The text is of a peculiar metre so no other tunes are available if someone should find it too difficult. To my knowledge also, no other text has been composed to this tune. It is thus a "monogamous" match.

8.6.5.2. The mood of the music should fit with the mood of the text

In general the exuberant tune fits the text very well, particularly in the first four and the last stanza. Some of the other stanzas have more somber themes, but even there the tune does not constitute a mismatch, as it can also be sung in a quieter, more reflective way, particularly after the more joyful verses. A perfect fit is the rising line in verse 1 on *Aber nun steh ich, bin munter und fröhlich (*now, new strength given, I rise and face heaven*),* which shows in the music the rising to a joyful beginning.

180

8.6.5. 3. The rhythm of the music should fit the natural rhythm of the words

In general there are no incorrectly stressed words, though a couple of times the longer notes or first notes in the bar fall on less important words. In most of the stanzas the rhythm of the music fits very well to the rhythm of the text.

1. The golden MORN ~ ing, Nature a-*dorn*~ ing,

With heavenly GLORY \ spreads out be*fore* me

\ Lovely refreshing and \LIFE -giving *light*.

Many an hour I LAY - in sleep's power;

/ Now, new strength *given*, I rise and face HEAVEN (climax)

Praising the SPLEN- dour re-*vealed*- to my sight.

8.6.5. 4. The climax of the tune should fit with the climax in the poetry

The best match is in verse 1 which is normal for most songs. The tune begins on a high note and it's first peak is reached on the word *Sonne* (sun) or "morning" in the English translation. It then goes down when describing the night's slumber and up again when describing the rising for the new morning and the praise, climaxing in the original with the words *munter und fröhlich* (awake and joyful), in the translation "rise and face heaven". Of course this musical descriptiveness does not fit every verse. It is clear that the tune was written for this specific text.

181

8.6.6. Evaluation of "Balance of Polarities"

8.6.6.1. Past vs Present

Paul Gerhardt takes up biblical tradition as well as spiritual traditions from his time. "Morning blessings" have a long Christian tradition, even before the monasteries. Martin Luther tried to retain some of this tradition and wrote his own morning blessing (included in Morning suffrages LBW p163) . This hymn is probably based on a morning blessing by the influential spiritual writer Johann Arndt (Henkys 1976: 128). By putting it into hymn form he has made some of this thought available to generations who never got to know Arndt's writings. He also takes up some of the contemporary problems of his day: the feeling of the vulnerability of life and awareness of human mortality, worries about the future, jealousy of others and the need to trust God's providence. In Gerhardt's time then this hymn would have brought together past traditions and contemporary issues. Today of course, it gives a "past" focus to singing.

8.6.6.2 Objectivity vs Subjectivity

There is a good balance of the proclamation of God's presence and care and expressions of the subjective experience of joy, hope and trust.

8.6.6.3 Cognitive   vs Emotive

As in all of Gerhardt's hymns, the content load is high. There are 12 verses, densely packed with allusions and proclamation. They aim at understanding the faith and challenges of life. Most of the emotion comes from the joyful tune, but there are also emotive words in the text itself which express joy and adoration: for example in verse 1 *Freud und Wonne* (Joy and delight), *munter und fröhlich* (awake and joyful), expressions of devotion and giving of gifts in v3, the radiant descriptions of paradise in verse 12.   This is a hymn of both high emotional and cognitive value.

8.6.6.4. Community vs Individual

The hymn begins with the I, but then changes between I and we: Verse 2-4 are written in the plural, 5 and 6 again in the "I", 7 and 8 are about the general human condition and are again in the plural. Then verses 9 to 12 are again written in the singular.   There is an awareness of community, also of the responsibility of the individual believer to the community. The prayer

182

for an end to jealousy and avarice is a prayer for community. In general the hymn is sung by the individual with a view of the world and the community around him or her. This is a strength of the hymn.

8.6.6.5. Familiarity vs Diversity

In many Lutheran congregations I know this is a favourite and well-known morning hymn even among English speakers. The tune is manageable and not difficult to teach and has a good balance of repetition and variation.   The original text poses some problems in terms of familiarity for our contemporary congregations as there are many unfamiliar phrases, this is the case too with the printed translations.   In the context of most of our hymns the exuberance of the tune brings in an element of diversity.

8.6.6.6. Affirmation vs Challenge

There is a strong element of affirmation, an assurance of God's presence, guidance and providence. But there is also an element of challenge: The challenge to trust God and to lead a life of obedience and selflessness. The hymn also is a challenge to accept what God will give.

8.6.6.7. Cross vs Glory

The last verse mentions the cross as a symbol of human suffering (*Kreuz und Elende das nimmt ein Ende...* / no cross or sorrow). The reality of death and suffering is the background of the celebration of the morning and new life. There is, however, no direct allusion to the cross and the salvation of Christ. The hymn remains with the first article of the creed. The singer celebrates the new day in awareness of the presence of death and decay: "All things will perish...". The glory of God is seen in the morning sun, in God's eternal reign, and in the hope for eternal life in the "heavenly garden". This hymn thus unites both aspects.

8.6.6.8. Transcendence vs Immanence

Here there is a very good balance. God's constant presence with us is affirmed "when lying down or getting up" (v4) , and as the one "healing our heart"(v8). But he is also portrayed as the great transcendent, powerful God who blesses and cares, and who has the power to send me anything: that which sustains, but also trials and suffering (v11). Most of all he is portrayed as the one with the power to finally end all suffering and lift us up into his glory (v12).

183

<u>8.6.6.9 Vertical vs Horizontal</u>

This is largely a "vertical" hymn, but it has a strong horizontal dimension - speaking of the whole world, the general human condition, the believer's place in it, the mortality of all life and God's answer to it.

<u>8.6.6.10. Universal vs Particular</u>

The hymn is particular in that it is written for a particular time of day, for morning devotion and mentions particular human and social problems. However, it is general enough that we can enter into it, hundreds of years later, even though our specific issues may be different.

8.6.7 Overall Evaluation

Considering the emotive and theological value of the hymn, one is surprised to learn that it took so long to be accepted into the hymnals. It is definitely a hymn that still speaks to people today, in spite of some of the more difficult formulations, and one can hope the same for the updated English translation. It is a well-balanced hymn in most of the categories of worship polarities and well-matched with an uplifting tune. It has the potential of still reaching many people for many years to come.

8.7. Evaluation of Gerhardt's Work within his context

Through Johann Crüger and Johann Georg Ebeling, the church musicians at the church St. Nicolai, Berlin, Paul Gerhardt's texts became published and made known to the general public. It was a gradual process of first being sung in the homes. It took about 50 years for the hymns to be incorporated into the Sunday Service and then the official hymnals (Hesselbacher 1986:170-71). However, particularly in the area of Brandenburg the hymns were well-loved, even among adherents of the Reformed tradition which incorporated some of the hymns into its hymnal. It is said that the Prince Elector, Friedrich Wilhelm, who in the end saw it necessary to depose Gerhardt, had as his favourite hymn Gerhardt's *Befiehl du deine Wege* (Hesselbacher 1986:95).

However, Gerhardt never became famous and celebrated in his time - at least not far beyond

184

Berlin. He was far too humble to promote himself and his work. This was very different from his more ambitious and emotive contemporary Johann Rist, who won awards and was knighted by the emperor for his achievements (Rössler 1990: 54).[246] Gerhardt was through and through an orthodox Lutheran. He seldom went into excessively emotive language. Mystical tones are present in his writing but always muted. Perhaps for this reason, his hymns were initially not so popular, but have survived longer: Their carrying force is not sentiment, but their proclamation of God's love and salvation. Rist was the most prolific writer of his time, with 650 sacred poems to his name against Gerhardts 120. But over the centuries there was a gradual shift from Rist to Gerhardt. Today there are 26 Gerhardt hymns against only 5 of Rist in the main section of the EG.

8. 8. Evaluation of Gerhardt's Work for us

Here one needs to distinguish between Paul Gerhardt texts in the original German and in translated versions. In the German speaking world Gerhardt still speaks very much to the heart of many people. The prominence of the celebrations of his 400th Birthday in Germany bears witness to this.[247] Experience also shows the importance of these hymns to people in sickness and on their deathbed. Nevertheless even the German text is sometimes difficult to understand and there are many verses which are still printed, but no longer sung. Some of the theology comes to us as foreign, such as the idea of the testing and punishing God,[248] and sometimes his verses come across as dry and dogmatically loaded.[249] Gerhardt's hymns always have many verses, seldom below 6 and up to 18.[250] These are unsingable in their entirety for people today and one always has to make a selection.

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[246] Rist (1607-1667), was a more typical person of the Baroque age and often used very emotive and flowery language. He spoke in the idiom of his age. Rist spoke more to popular sentiments and held himself apart from the dogmatic controversies of his day, focussing less on teaching than on aesthetics and emotion. This was celebrated at the time, but today most of his verses are experienced as clichéd and are no longer sung (Roessler 1990:55).

[247] See the internet site, which documents events and resources for the commemoration (Paul Gerhardt 2007).

[248] An example is verse 8 of hymn EG 325 which speaks of his " punishments, which may be bitter for me, but are actually signs of love and correction. God is leading me to Him through the cross" .

[249] Most of the hymns with dry and dogmatically orthodox teaching are no longer in the hymnal. But there are hymns with many verses which become dry and dogmatic if one tries to sing them all, for example the central verses of the hymn EG 497 about work and God's blessing or the passion hymn 84 with its reflection on the meaning of Christ's death for me in the later verses.

[250] *Ich singe dir mit Herz und Mund* has 18 verses, (EG 324), *Geh aus mein Herz* 15 verses (EG 503) .

185

It is a question how young people gain access to these hymns. There are two main ways that give young people access to old hymns: Firstly through involvement in church choirs and being exposed to beautiful settings of the old hymns which heightens their emotional appeal. And secondly by people witnessing to the importance of certain hymns in their lives. It is fairly certain that the hymns will continue to play a role in many people's lives.

English translations of Paul Gerhardt hymns are still found in many hymnals, even though they lose much in any translation. *O sacred head* is found in *Songs of Fellowship* and *Mission Praise*, though one cannot know how often it is actually sung. In general, English translations are fairly dated, the English quite far from what is spoken from day to day. The survival of Gerhardt hymns in English is probably dependent on new translations, something that I have attempted.

CHAPTER NINE - CHARLES WESLEY (1707-1788)

9.1. Background and Life History

Charles was the younger brother of John Wesley, founder of the Methodist movement. He was born in Epworth, Lincolnshire as the eighteenth of nineteen children of rector Samuel and Susanna Wesley (Ryden 1961: 279). Only ten of the children survived to adulthood. His mother laid a solid foundation in his education and the family sacrificed much to be able to pay for an education for the three surviving sons. Charles was educated at Westminster School and Christ Church in Oxford, where his elder brother John had also studied. He studied the classics and was active in Christian students' groups (Dallimore 1988: 33-35). Charles formed a religiously devout group among his fellow students in 1727 (Dallimore 36). It was a time of thirst for religious revival. The dogmatic controversies and the religious wars of the previous era had given way to a new search and hunger for deeper and authentic religious experience. The pietist movement had taken hold in Europe (Routley 1983: 33). John Wesley joined the Oxford group in 1729 and soon became its leader. They were called "Methodists", which was originally a nickname because of the method they employed in prayer and daily life (Wilson-Dickson 1997:185)[251]. At the end of their studies John decided to travel to Georgia in America, and persuaded Charles to come along. He was ordained deacon and shortly afterwards priest (Tyson 2007: 21). On the ship to Georgia the brothers met a group of Moravian Christians. Their faith and courage greatly impressed the Wesleys. Even during a storm at sea they kept calm and sang hymns (Wilson-Dickson 185). The Wesley brothers realised that although they had gone to Georgia to convert others, they did not have the certitude of faith of these Moravians (186). Later the brothers also got to know their leader count Zinzendorf and the community at Herrnhut, through whom they also encountered the writings of Martin Luther (Routley 1983:38). On the Day of Pentecost 1738 Charles experienced conversion and a new peace and joy in faith. John experienced conversion a few days later. Charles composed his first hymn two days after his conversion and never stopped writing hymns. Charles became the indispensable partner to John, writing hymns for open air revival meetings.   He was extremely

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[251] This " Method" included direct reading and literal application of the Bible, reading the church fathers and devotional classics, prayer and charitable works (Tyson 2007:15ff).

prolific and produced over 6500 hymns in his lifetime[252]. His hymns were to become the Methodist movement's greatest strength giving rise to the saying: "Methodism was born in song" [253]. One of his most famous hymns *O for a thousand tongues to sing* was written on the anniversary of his conversion (Tyson 2007:51).

Charles was a fervent evangelist, though not as well-known a preacher as John[254]. He travelled extensively, sometimes preaching as much as four times a day. Addressing thousands in open air gatherings, he faced much hostility and persecution, but always encouraged the Methodists not to answer violence with violence (Tyson 2007: 135ff). In this way he won many critics over. The brothers worked well together, Charles being an invaluable support to John, but there were also times of tension, where Charles was critical of his brother. For example he wanted to avoid the breach with the Anglican church and sharply criticised any move that seemed to lead to separation (Tyson 2007: xi). He also differed with John in the question of the role of lay preachers in the movement and in the question of the choice of marriage partner. John did not experience a happy marriage as Charles did (Tyson 171). In 1749, Charles married the much younger Sarah Gwynne, daughter of Marmaduke Gwynne, a wealthy Welsh squire who had been converted to Methodism (Dallimore 1988:157). The first publication of Wesley's hymns was to help Charles gain the financial means to marry Sally (Tyson 2007:161). Initially Sally would accompany Charles on his travels, but with the arrival of children and miscarriages this happened less, and also Charles was less willing to travel so extensively. Of their eight children only three survived to adulthood (Tyson 199). Charles died in London, March 29 1788, and was buried in Mary-le-bone churchyard. This had been his wish as he had never in his understanding left the Church of England (Tyson 337).

9.2. Overview of Work

Charles Wesley's hymns were born out of the fervour of revival and became the motor of this revival. They were initially not used in official services as the Church of England was critical of the Methodist movement, although the Wesleys initially saw their movement as a renewal

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[252] There is disagreement in scholarship as to how many hymns Charles wrote. Tyson writes: " He wrote between six thousand and nine thousand hymns and sacred poems (depending upon what one is willing to call a hymn or sacred poem), and more than four hundred of these continue in contemporary Christian hymnals (Tyson 2007: viii).

[253] This is the first sentence of the Preface to the *Methodist Hymn Book (Stainer 1933 Online).*

[254] Tyson speculates that the reason that Charles was not as well remembered as evangelist as he deserved to be had to do with some of the controversies, where he had unpopular views, but also simply an issue of temperament, as he shunned the limelight and was often content to support his brother in the background (Tyson 2007: x).

189

movement within the church (Tyson 2007:215). His themes are wide and varied, but they centre in the conversion experience and the joy of faith and adoration of the glory of God. They gave "creative expression to the central themes of the Methodist movement" (Tyson 252). There are songs about the experience of the individual Christian and the journey from the acknowledgement of sin and need of redemption, to the experience of forgiveness, the gift of new life and sanctification. Many hymns are songs of praise and adoration (Wilson-Dickson 1997:186). While the individual believer is central, there are many hymns written in the "We" form, and an awareness of the importance of community.[255] Many hymns are poetical commentaries on specific Bible verses (Tyson 252). The importance of Charles in shaping Methodist theology has sometimes been overlooked (Tyson 253), however most commentators agree that his hymns are theological statements and take clear sides in some doctrinal controversies (Tyson 253). In Wesley's preface to the 1780 *Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists* he describes the hymnal as a "little body of experimental and practical divinity" (Tyson 254).

Some commentators have compared Wesley and Isaac Watts, the two greatest names in English hymnody, and have pointed out, that while Wesley was the more accomplished poet and his verse is much more smooth and varied than Watts, Watts has the wider outlook, as he "surveys the whole realm of Nature" and finds the crucified Creator at the centre (Manning 1942: 43). Watts is conscious of the passing of time and the future dimension of faith[256]. Wesley is focussed perhaps too narrowly on the individual believer and their relationship with Jesus.

> Wesley is obsessed with one theme: God and the Soul; for the stage in space and time on which that drama is set he has little concern. He is always at Calvary; no other place in the universe matters, and for him the course of historic time is lost in the eternal NOW. This is partly because of the urgent poignancy of his own evangelical experience. It is partly because his education, if more polished in classical form than Watts was less wide, less philosophical, less sweeping.
>
> (Manning 1942:43).

However, Manning also sees something positive in this narrow focus:

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[255] Examples are *Christ, from whom all blessings flow* UMH 550, *And are we yet alive* UMH 553, *All praise to our redeeming Lord* UMH 554, *Blest be the dear uniting love* UMH 566 and others, all in the section " United in Christ".

[256] A well known example is *O God, our help in Ages past* UMH 117, also *Come, we that love the Lord* UMH 732

190

> It was perhaps well for Wesley that, in his more Deistic generation, he wore so constantly the blinkers that restricted his view to the essentials of the Christian faith. A cosmic view in his time was more difficult than in Watts' to combine with passionate orthodoxy.
>
> (Manning 43)

Manning argues that Wesley showed himself up as man of his time when speaking of society and the world[257] and that Wesley is indeed at his best, where he focuses on the centre of Christian faith, the incarnation, passion and resurrection and the response of the individual believer to this.

His is the achievement of breaking out of the straightjacket of writing in only a few simple meters (short, long and common metre)[258]. He wrote in many varied metres and his verses are usually smooth with only few ungrammatical sentences for the sake of rhyme. He uses many poetic devices, amongst these often parallel or chiastic constructions (Manning 1942:19). His verses are dense with theological content and scriptural allusions. They reveal his theological position which is evangelical: realistic about the depravity of the human condition but very optimistic about the possibility of change under the influence of God's spirit. In the hymn: *O for a heart to praise my God* the believer asks for a renewed heart from God, and in verse 4 for *"a heart...perfect and right and pure and good: a copy, Lord, of Thine."* This is an optimistic view of transformation through faith, that Luther did not share, as he insisted we remain sinners. Wesley does advocate a path of an ever-closer walk with God in greater holiness and purity[259]. He was very much against the Calvinist notion of predestination and insisted that grace is available for everyone (Tyson 2007: 99ff). Like Luther, he saw the great value of hymns as a teaching tool and wrote not only to praise God but also to instruct believers:

> These hymns were composed in order that the men and women … might sing their way not only into experience but also into knowledge; that the cultured might have their culture baptized and the ignorant might be led into truth by the gentle hand of melody and rhyme.
>
> (Routley 1952: 70)

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[257] He argues that he has a very classist English view of the relationship of masters and servants, but no verifying quote was found in the time available (Manning 1942: 14).

[258] Besides many hymns in " common metre" (8686), short metre (6686), and long metre (8888), Wesley has many hymns in the metres 7777 (77) or 8787. More unusual metres are 76 76 77 76 (*O the depth of love divine* UHM 627), 87 87 47 (*Lo, he comes with clouds descending* UMH 718) and 10 10 11 11 (*Ye servants of God* UMH 181).

[259] Dallimore describes how in the early years the concept of Christian perfection was important to the Wesleys and separated them from other contemporary evangelists (1988:99). Later they modified this to mean not a condition of sinlessness, but of spiritual maturity (132).

191

9.3. Motivation of choice of songs

The choice of the first song to study was relatively easy. Probably Charles Wesley's best known and best loved hymn in the ecumenical community is his Christmas Hymn, *Hark the herald angels sing*. It was also the only Wesley text I searched that had only one tune matched to it. The other two equally well-known hymns in Lutheran circles are *Love divine* and *O for a thousand tongues to sing.* Both had six different tunes matched to them in the song books I searched. However, the decision which tune to study in greater depth was easier in the case of *Love divine.* The third song needed to express Wesley's intimate spirituality. Here the choice was between *And can it be that I should gain* and *Jesus, lover of my soul.* Both of these are in the *Lutheran Hymnal* (LH 67, 158) but with different tunes from most other song books. They are both left out of the American *Lutheran Book of Worship.* They are both not very well known in Lutheran circles. Many hymnologists describe *Jesus, Lover of my soul* as the best loved hymn of Charles Wesley. However, in this case, my personal preference dictated the choice. I can more readily identify with the spirituality of the former, and again the tune selection is easier.   It also has an autobiographical component which makes for interesting study.

192

9.4. Evaluation of *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

9.4.1. Text and Tune

9.4.1.1. Tune: MENDELSSOHN

Tune: F.Mendelssohn-Bartholdy 1809-1845
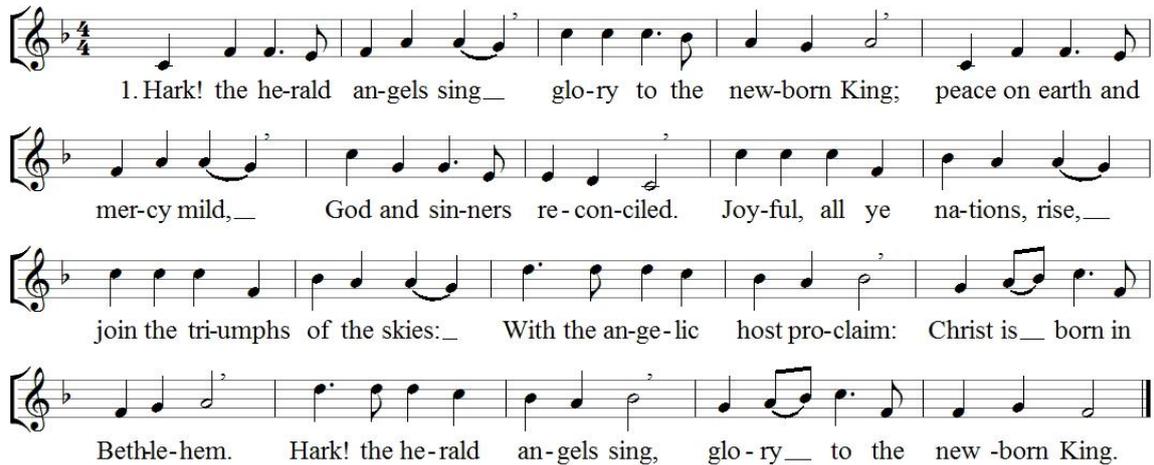
1. Hark! the herald angels sing / glory to the new-born King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, /God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, /join the triumph of the skies:
With the angelic host proclaim: / Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Hark! the herald angels sing / Glory to the new-born King.

2. Christ, by highest heaven adored, / Christ the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come, / offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; / Hail, the incarnate Deity,
pleased as man with man to dwell, / Jesus, our Immanuel!

3. Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! / Hail, the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, / risen with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays his glory by, / born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, / born to give them second birth.

Charles Wesley 1739, alt by George Whitefield 1753 and others

9.4.2. Background of Song

Nowhere is Wesley's poetic and theological ability more powerfully demonstrated than in his

well-loved Christmas hymn: *Hark the herald angels sing*. Unlike many other Christmas

carols which simply retell the Christmas story, this hymn explores the theological

193

significance of the incarnation in a tightly knit web of scriptural references.   However, the hymn did go through some changes before its rise in popularity. Wesley himself wrote*: Hark how all the welkin rings / Glory to the King of Kings.* "Welkin" is an old English word meaning the skies. A colleague, the Calvinist Whitefield, substituted the familiar opening line in spite of the protests of the author (Colquhon 1985:58).

The hymn is one of the few Wesley texts which has only one tune. This is a tune by Felix Mendelssohn. Dr. William Cummings put the words and music together in spite of evidence that neither author nor composer would have approved. Wesley had specifically requested slow solemn music for his words. Mendelssohn had written the tune for a cantata which commemorated the invention of the printing press by Johann Gutenberg, and had made it clear that he considered this music as not for sacred use (Colquhon 1985:58). William Cummings slightly adapted the tune and added a refrain to the text.   However, the "trumpet fanfare" tune fits the words so well that today no hymn commission would ever consider printing an alternative tune.

9.4.3. Evaluation of Text

9.4.3.1. Based on the wealth of scripture in all its breadth
Like many of Wesley's hymns this one is tightly packed with scriptural allusions to the mystery of the incarnation. *Songs of Fellowship* notes the following references:
Is 7: 14 - "Offspring of a virgin's womb", 9:6 - "heaven-born Prince of Peace!", Mal 4:2 – "Hail the sun of righteousness…Risen with healing in His wings",   Luke 2:13-14 - " Hark the herald angels sing….Peace on earth..", John 3:3 - "born to give them second birth", Phil 2:7 - "Hail, the incarnate Deity… mild he lays his glory by".

Others that could be listed: Luke 1:78 "mercy mild", 2 Cor 5:18-21 - "God and sinners reconciled", Luke 2:10-11, Matthew 1:4-6, Micah 5:2 – "Christ is born in Bethlehem" ; Gal 4,4 (old version) - "Late in time, behold Him come", Is 7:14 – "Jesus our Immanuel", 1 Corinthians 15:35-57- "Born to raise the sons of earth", John 3:3, 6 – "Born to give them second birth ".

194

The dense scriptural basis of Wesley's texts is one of the greatest strengths of his hymns, and of this one in particular. Even though most singers will not pick up all the references, it leads the singers into biblical language and thinking.

9.4.3.2. Theologically sound
In this hymn Wesley is on fairly Orthodox Christian grounds in his teaching on the meaning of the incarnation. The only question one may ask is if "God and sinners reconciled" happens at the incarnation or the crucifixion. However, no-one would challenge that the incarnation is a crucial step in this process of reconciliation.

9.4.3.3. Takes the depth and breadth of human experience seriously
This hymn speaks less of the human experience than of the mystery and marvel of incarnation. But it is clearly human reality which makes the incarnation necessary: The reality of sin, of pain and death underlies the awe at the miracle of the incarnation: "God and sinners reconciled"... "risen with healing in his wings"... "born that man no more may die".

9.4.3. 4. Needs to be readily understood, it can be simple or repetitive, but not shallow
The main message is very clear and repeated in the refrain: "Glory to the newborn King". Some specific phrases are less accessible, but they do not obscure the central message. People enjoy and sing it often enough that they can "grow into" and gradually discover the meaning of the more difficult passages. Probably not all scriptural references would be immediately understood by people not steeped in biblical language, for example "late in time behold him come", "mild he lays his glory by" and others. But the more difficult phrases do not obscure the central message or enjoyment of the hymn.

9.4.3.5. Memorable Poetic Value
There is no mistaking the power of the poetry of this hymn which has its firm place on Christmas day. The lines and rhymes are very smooth, with only the exception of "with th'angelic hosts proclaim" and "Hail th'incarnate deity", and the word "risen" which is sung on a single note. However, these irregularities do not seriously impede one's enjoyment of singing.

There are many memorable poetic lines:
"Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled", or: "Veiled in flesh the

195

Godhead see, Hail the incarnate deity". The iconic first line is of course not Wesley's own, and perhaps one can question whether the hymn would have been as successful with Wesley's original *Hark how all the welkin rings*. The language is triumphant and exuberant without being in any way triumphalist. There are poetic devices such as repetition: the first line is repeated as a chorus. There are three "Hails", and three phrases beginning with "born" giving the meaning of the incarnation. There are a few effective instances of alliteration: "Hark, the herald..." in the altered line, "mercy mild", "highest heaven" "light and life", "Joyful...join" .

A thorny issue is the one on inclusive language. Should one change outdated, androcentric language in old hymns? Should one do it where it affects the poetry and the metre? Some hymnal editors are beginning to show sensitivity to this issue, especially where it refers to believers. The *United Methodist Hymnal* (UMH 240) has changed some of the texts of this hymn: "Pleased as man with man to dwell" becomes "Pleased with us in flesh to dwell" ; "born that man no more may die" becomes "born that we no more may die"; "born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth" becomes: "born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth".

In each case the original is the more poetic, with alliteration and repetition, although the substitute is very singable. The merits of changing the text need to be carefully considered. Changes to an original historical text should always be made with care and caution. Changes should never destroy the metre and make a song less singable, but the slight loss of poetic force may be worthwhile if it makes a big difference to women, who can then sing this hymn more joyfully.

9.4.4. Evaluation of Tune

9.4.4.1 Should be singable by unmusical people

Given the fact that Mendelssohn never set out to write a tune for congregational singing, his tune fits the requirements remarkably well. The tune is not easy, but has proved extremely popular. The range is from middle C to upper D, a range of nine notes, which is manageable for most singers. There are several large interval leaps: 8 leaps of a fourth, 5 fifths, one sixth downwards and one octave leap upwards (to the word *Joyful*). This requires some input of energy, and produces a rousing effect. However, none of the leaps are in themselves difficult. There is a fair amount of repetition.

196

9.4.4.2. Does not depend on accompaniment

The tune can easily stand on its own. There are no long notes or pauses which cannot be sustained on their own. The hymn has proved its worth at Carol services in the open air without instrumental back-up.

9.4.4.3. Does not overuse the currently popular stylistic elements

The tune was written at the height of the romantic era of the 19th century (1840) and is firmly within the style, with many larger leaps, some slurs and dotted notes and an emotive feel. The slurs which were very popular in this era are sparingly used (only 5 in the 10 lines), similarly the dotted notes (6). There are many leaps which is typical for this era, and one could ask whether this is an overuse (8 fourths, 5 fifths, 1 sixth, 1 octave). Particularly the many fourths give the tune the sound of a trumpet fanfare. But it is not yet militant and it fits with the theme. Ultimately this is a matter of taste. Mendelssohn's tune never became a sacred tune in Germany where the hymn-writers probably agreed with Mendelssohn's own assessment of his tune, as not being "suitable for sacred use" (Colquhon 1985: 58).

9.4.4.4. Creates a balance between the easy and familiar and the interesting

There is enough repetition to make the hymn easily learned. Besides the full repetitions there are patterns in the tune which repeat themselves, for example the repetition of three identical notes (this happens 5 times) which evokes a trumpet call.

Melody pattern: *abac ddef ef'*

Rhythm pattern: *abab ccde de*

It can be easily seen by this that there is both an underlying consistency and repetition and enough interest and variety.

9.4.4.5. Evaluation of Tune

The tune is very singable and stirring and emotive enough to fit the mood of Christmas day. For some, it may be too emotive and triumphalist.

197

9.4.5. Evaluation of Text-Tune Match

9.4.5.1. The best songs have a "monogamous" match of only one text for only one tune.

This is one of the only truly "monogamous" Wesley hymns. There is a nearly perfect match between text and tune, even though this was never intended by either of the authors (see introduction). No hymnal editor is likely to change it. When one hears the tune it evokes the joy of Christmas day and the image of heralding angels. When one reads the words one has this tune in mind. The atmosphere of the tune is so intimately interwoven with the specific text, that it is unlikely that any text writer would choose it for different words.[260]

9.4.5.2. The mood of the music should fit with the mood of the text

The emotive nature of the tune evokes the joy of Christmas. The trumpet-like nature of its motifs give the atmosphere of a royal procession with the angel heralding the arrival of the new King.

9.4.5.3. The Rhythm of the music should fit the natural rhythm of the words

On the whole in this hymn the stresses fall on the right places throughout and one can easily speak the words in the rhythm without it sounding forced or unnatural. The one exception is the longer stress on the word "to" in *"Glory to the newborn King"* and the " with" in line 7, but this is not very disturbing in the whole context. The irregularities already mentioned in 4.3.5. are irregularities of the text itself, not of text-tune match.

Hark! /the *her*-rald ang-els *sing~*
GLORY TO the new-born King;
Peace /on *earth* and mercy *mild~*,
GOD and sinners reconciled.
/JOYFUL, ALL ye nations, rise,
/JOIN THE TRI \ umph / of the skies:
/ WITH the angelic host proclaim:
Christ is BORN \ in Bethlehem.

*/ HARK ! -the he*rald angels *sing* (climax)
Glory TO- \the new-born King.

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[260] I was convinced of this until quite recently, when at a conference someone chose this tune for another fairly
well-known text. For me it was a serious mismatch, and I no longer remember which text it was.

198

9.4.5.4. The climax of the tune should fit with the climax in the poetry

The overall climax is the Chorus: "HARK, the herald angels sing..." with the word "Hark" getting the highest and longest note, which is very fitting. Within the verse there is another high point at "Joyful all" again very fitting. The next line "with th'angelic host proclaim" on the high D is not such a strong line in this verse, but in the next two stanzas the notes again mark a textual highlight: "pleased as man with man to dwell' or "born to raise the sons of earth".

9.4.6. Evaluation of "Balance of Polarities"

9.4.6.1. Past vs Present

Singing this hymn now takes up a tradition from the past, and even in its own time it took up biblical tradition and the concept of Jesus coming as the fulfilment of historical promises ("late in time behold him come"). However, it is also a "present" centred hymn in that it makes Christ's birth present for us. The incarnation is not depicted as something that happened a long time ago, but that happens for us today. Its continuing popularity at Christmas time shows that people accept that it speaks to us today.

9.4.6.2. Objectivity vs Subjectivity

This is a fairly "objective" hymn. Christ is not born for the individual but for all humankind, and it is not the individual who responds but the "nations" which are being called on to respond to a praise that the angels and "the skies" have initiated. The emphasis of the hymn is on proclamation of the meaning of the incarnation. The responses are also more formal and from tradition: "Hail the heavenborn Prince of Peace, Hail the Sun of Righteousness!" or "Jesus our Emmanuel." There is no outpouring of adoration, worship and love from the believer, but praise and awe underline the whole hymn. The hymn in its emotive nature allows for a subjective response from the singer.

9.4.6.3. Cognitive vs Emotive

There is a heavy content load of proclamation and theological reflection on the meaning of the incarnation. The phrases are not shallow but a challenge to deeper understanding. But there are emotive exclamations in the text and triumphant phrases. The most emotional value

199

of the hymn comes from its tune which evokes joy and enthusiasm.

9.4.6.4. Community vs Individual

This is a "we" hymn. The concern is salvation of the whole earth: "light and life to all he brings...", or "born to raise the sons of earth" and "Jesus our Emmanuel". Here Wesley does not have the individual in view, nor even the church but the whole world. He believes that God offers his salvation to all. This countered the Calvinist doctrine of double predestination. The individual, through singing it, is taken up into a drama which affects the whole world and not only his or her soul.

9.4.6.5. Familiarity vs Diversity

This hymn is very familiar to many people, even to the young generation who no longer know many hymns. It is closely bound up with many people's Christmas tradition. People who do not know it, can learn it relatively easily (see discussion of tune). Within the Christmas tradition it offers an element of diversity because it is so solidly doctrinal and theological, against many other Christmas carols, which focus on only the Christmas story or on very general "goodwill" themes.

9.4.6.6. Affirmation vs Challenge

This hymn affirms the salvation offered to humankind. It proclaims it and celebrates it. The only challenge is to join in the praise.

9.4.6.7. Cross vs Glory

While the main emphasis is the glory of the newborn infant Christ, the theme of incarnation is clearly spelled out as a process of "coming down" from glory. While there is no direct mention of cross, it is clearly implied that the reason for the incarnation is the suffering of humankind and its destiny of death. Suffering is taken seriously as the reason for Christ's coming.

9.4.6.8. Transcendence vs Immanence

The great theme of the incarnation is that the transcendent becomes the immanent. This is at the centre of this hymn. The great eternal God, "by highest heaven adored" and "everlasting

200

Lord" becomes the "Emmanuel" the "God with us" who dwells with humankind "in flesh". However, it does not have the emotional intimacy of other Wesley hymns, and the image is that of King and not of close friend, guide or even lover. There is a great emphasis on the transcendent and a great sense of wonder at the possibility that this God could come near to us.

9.4.6.9. Vertical vs Horizontal

The vertical movement is clearly marked: Christ comes down from heaven to earth. But there is also a horizontal dimension with the whole earth being taken into the promise of salvation. There is a vision of the whole, beyond just the individual salvation of the soul.

9.4.6.10. Universal vs Particular

This hymn is particular to the Christmas season and not sung any other time during the year. This also ensures that the hymn retains its freshness and exuberance, unlike some other songs which get overused and stale. This too is a strength of the hymn and shows the value of retaining a church-year centred singing tradition. However, its message is a universal one for the whole world.

9.4.7. Overall Evaluation

This hymn has many strengths in all the four categories: It has a biblically based, theologically sound text which is accessible, even though not all easy. Its tune is singable, with a good balance of repetition and variety. Most people would today agree that the tune is not too emotional for the joyous occasion it is used for. One of the greatest strengths is its excellent match between text and tune. It brings a good balance of polarities to Christian singing. There is little doubt that the hymn will retain its fixed place on Christmas day for many years to come.

201

9.5. Evaluation of *Love Divine, all Loves Excelling*

9.5.1. Text and Tunes

9.5.1.1. Tune: HYFRYDOL

Rowland H. Prichard, 1811-1887
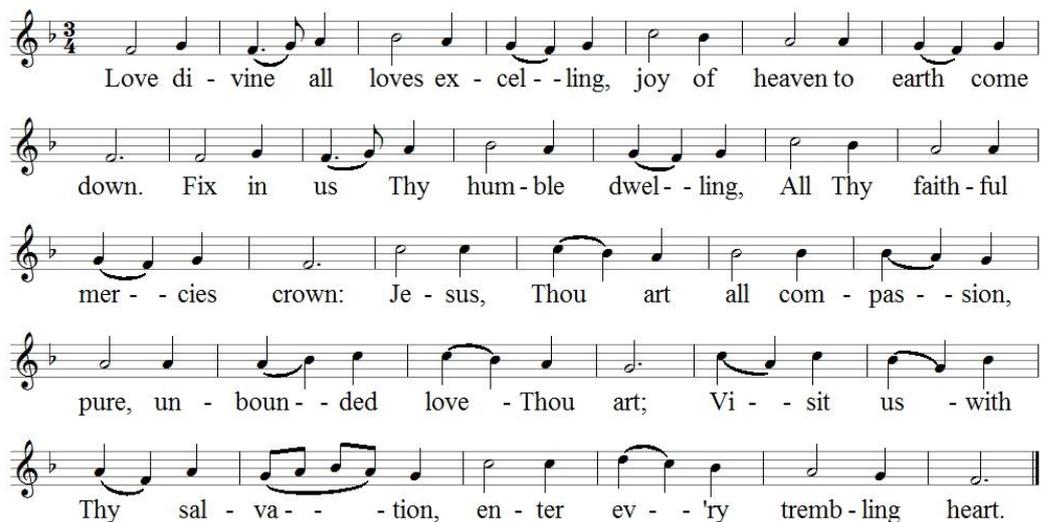
9.5.1.2. Tune: BLAENWERN

W.P. Rowlands (1860-1937)
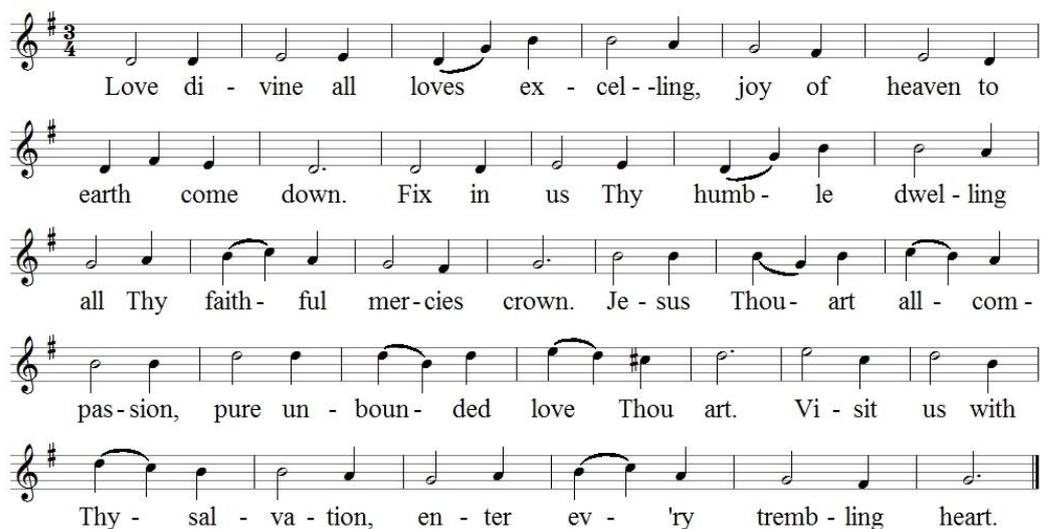
9.5.1.3. Tune: BEECHER

John Zundel, 1870
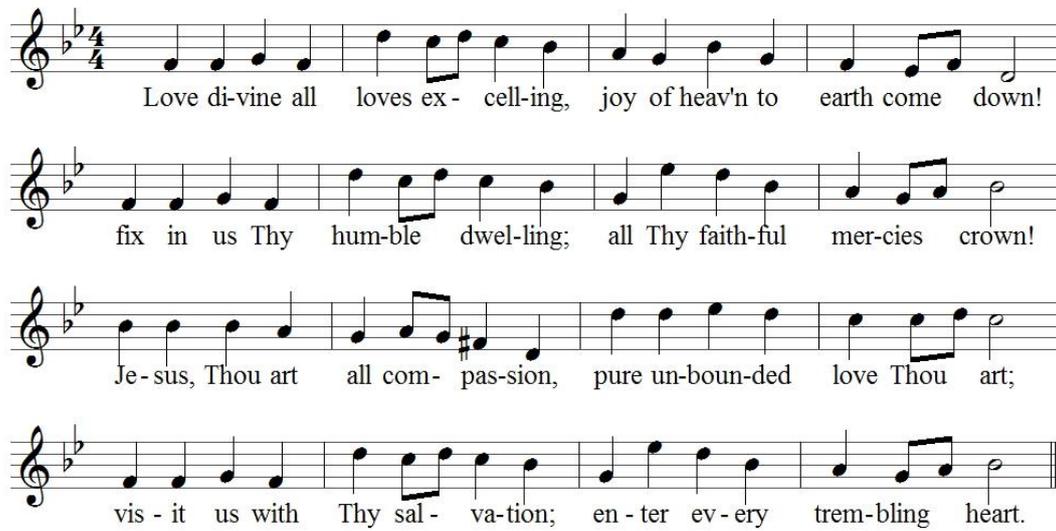

Love di-vine all loves ex - cell-ing, joy of heav'n to earth come down!

fix in us Thy hum-ble dwel-ling; all Thy faith-ful mer-cies crown!

Je-sus, Thou art all com-pas-sion, pure un-boun-ded love Thou art;

vis-it us with Thy sal - va-tion; en-ter ev-ery trem-bling heart.

9.5.1.4. Tune: LOVE DIVINE

John Stainer (1840-1901)
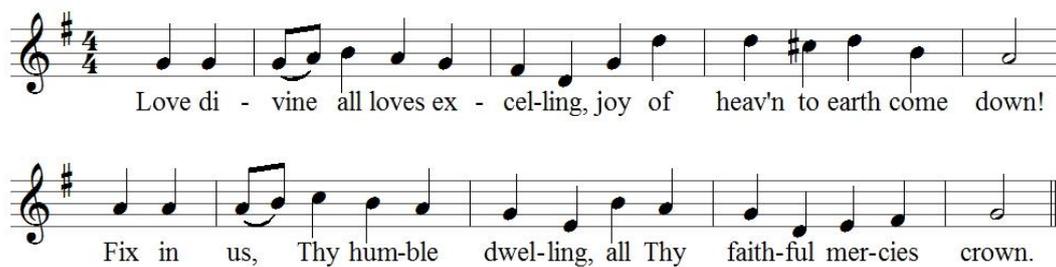
Love di - vine all loves ex - cel-ling, joy of heav'n to earth come down!

Fix in us, Thy hum-ble dwel-ling, all Thy faith-ful mer-cies crown.

203

<u>9.5.1.5. Text: published version currently sung (in 8-line Stanzas)</u>

1. Love divine, all loves excelling, / joy of heaven, to earth come down,
fix in us Thy humble dwelling, / all Thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, Thou art all compassion, / pure unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation, / enter every trembling heart.

2. Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit / into every troubled breast;
let us all in Thee inherit, / let us find Thy promised rest.
Take away the love of sinning, / Alpha and Omega be;
end of faith, as its beginning, / set our hearts at liberty.

3. Come, almighty to deliver, / let us all Thy grace receive;
suddenly return, and never, / never more Thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing, / serve Thee as Thy hosts above;
Pray, and praise Thee, without ceasing, / Glory in Thy perfect love.

4. Finish then Thy new creation, / pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see Thy great salvation, / perfectly restored in Thee;
Changed from glory into glory, / till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee, / lost in wonder, love and praise.

Charles Wesley 1747 (UMH 384)

9.5.2. Background of Song

This hymn was first published in Wesley's *Hymns for Those That Seek, and Those That Have Redemption in the Blood of Jesus Christ,* 1747 no 9 (American Lutheran Church 1979: 229). The original had the four stanzas printed above, which have since then been slightly altered. The second time it was published, 1780, in the *Wesleyan Hymn Book* , the second stanza was omitted. This is how it has been printed in many hymnals since then.   The original verse 2 read: " Let us all in thee inherit / let us find that second rest. Take away our power of sinning, Alpha and Omega be..."

The metre of the hymn is probably based on a song in the play *King Arthur* by John Dryden, *The Song of Venus:*

Fairest Isle, all Isles excelling,

Seat of Pleasures and of Loves;

Venus here will choose her dwelling

And forsake her Cyprian Groves   (American Lutheran Church 1979: 229).

204

Wesley has borrowed the last line of his hymn (consciously or unconsciously) from an earlier hymn by Joseph Addison:

When all your mercies, O my God, my waking soul surveys,
transported with the view, I'm lost in wonder, love and praise *(*LBW 264 v1).

Throughout its life the text of Wesley has been sung to many different tunes. It is written in the popular double 8787 metre.   The first was probably that of the *Song of Venus* above. There were six different tunes in the hymnals I searched, but only four will be looked at here: HYFRYDOL, BLAENWERN, BEECHER, and LOVE DIVINE. In South Africa the most popular tune is NKOSI YAM' which I have not seen printed for this text.   It is the tune often used for the text *Who will save our land and people.*[261] As it is in no official hymnal I will not discuss this tune. It is in itself a good tune and a fitting match but for reasons I shall discuss below I find HYFRYDOL the best match for the text. HYFRYDOL is a Welsh Tune by R.H. Prichard (1811-1887). It was written in 1855 and has been set to countless texts, among these: *Alleluia! Sing to Jesus* (LBW 158)*, I will sing the wondrous story* (SF 278)*, Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* (UMH 196) *, Hear us now, Our God and Father* (LBW 288)**.** All of these can also be sung to the alternative tunes for *Love Divine*. Of course not all are equally good matches. In a website search I found a new tune distributed by C. Collins (Collins 2004), which will also not be discussed here.

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[261] This hymn was included in the compilation of songs and readings from the South African struggle, *Cry Justice* . The origin of the tune is described as " probably a missionary adaptation of an African original" (De Gruchy 1986:174) .

9.5.3. Evaluation of Text

9.5.3.1. Based on the wealth of scripture in all its breadth

As is typical for Wesley's hymns there are many scriptural allusions in this hymn. However, they are less direct than in the previous hymn. *Songs of Fellowship* 377 lists the following: 2 Cor 3:18 - "Changed from glory into glory", 2 Cor 5:17 – "Finish then thy new creation", Heb 4:11 - "let us find Thy promised rest", Heb 12:2 – "Let us see thy great salvation perfectly restored in thee", 1 Jn 4:7 - "Love divine, all loves excelling….pure, unbounded love thou art", Rev 1:8,   "Alpha and Omega be" .

The last reference given in *Songs of Fellowship* is more obscure: Rev 1: 18 "I am the Living One, I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades". Why they quote this reference in particular is not quite clear to me. Perhaps in reference to "Come, almighty to deliver"? There are, however, some other clearer references not listed in *Songs of Fellowship:* Phil 2:6-7 - "Joy of heaven, to earth come down", John 1:14 – "fix in us Thy humble dwelling",   and one could probably mention still others.

This hymn, like most Wesley hymns is "based on the wealth of scripture".

9.5.3.2. Theologically sound

This hymn has gained a place in the hymnals of most denominations. However, the theological assumptions and assertions are much more subtle than in the case of *Hark, the herald angels sing* and more difficult to evaluate.

"Pure and spotless let us be": From a Lutheran perspective this can be a difficult sentence if it speaks of this side of eternity as the "till in heaven we take our place" seems to imply. A Lutheran perspective would be that we always remain sinners in need of God's grace. However, in this case it is clear that it is God's work and not our effort that restores us as part of his great work of salvation. This means that Lutherans can still sing this hymn. In general Wesley was more optimistic than Luther about the degree of holiness people can aspire to on this earth.[262]   However, this hymn is both a prayer for renewal and a promise that final

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[262] According to the Companion to the Lutheran hymnal, Charles Wesley originally wrote: " pure and sinless" , which was then changed to " spotless" by John. However, at stage this both brothers were convinced that a

206

renewal will come from God. The Lutheran can join in this proclamation.

A question may also be raised about the formulation   "Never more thy temples leave" (v3).
Does this imply an attitude of focussing on God alone and turning away from the world?
The hymn itself leaves it open. However, one knows from other Wesley hymns, that he was
concerned for service in the world and saw the attitude of "Pray and praise thee without
ceasing" as something that strengthens us in the world in service to others. However, the
hymn itself is vertically focussed (See section on "balance" below).

9.5.3.3. Takes the depth and breadth of human experience seriously

The hymn is more focussed on proclamation of salvation than on the human condition. But it
is clear that the incarnation is necessary because of the human condition. "Humble dwelling"
and "troubled breast" (in the usually excluded second verse) are references to human reality.

9.5.3.4. Needs to be readily understood, it can be simple or repetitive, but not shallow

This hymn does need some biblical knowledge to be understood and is thus not suitable for
evangelising people who are distant from faith. However, to teach committed Christians the
deeper essentials of the Christian message this hymn is useful. It can be used as a meditation
text. However, some phrases are not very accessible even to regular church goers, such as the
phrase: "end of faith as its beginning" in the usually omitted verse, or the sentence "Let us all
thy grace receive, suddenly return and never, never more thy temples leave". However, when
singing it often, more and more elements of the hymn become clear and new facets are
discovered. This is also a feature of a "good song": Its meaning is not exhausted quickly.

9.5.3.5. Memorable Poetic Value

There is no doubt that *Love divine* matches this criterion. From the line *"Joy of heaven, to
earth come down"*, there are very many memorable lines which phrase Christian truth in a
new and meaningful way. The last line may not be original to Wesley, (see background), but
it is this hymn that immortalised those lines about a vision of heaven: "Lost in wonder, love
and praise".

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state of Christian perfection was attainable (Colquhon 1985:232).

207

There are several examples of repetition, some of them in the usually omitted verse: "Love divine, all loves excelling", "Breathe, O breathe" and a repeated "let us" in verse 2, "and never, never more thy temples leave", "till in heaven…till we cast…". Examples of alliteration and assonance are less prominent than in "Hark, the herald angels", but they are present: "Pray and praise thee… glory in thy perfect love" , "cast our crowns" and within the words "Pure and spotless let us be".

Baker points out that *Love Divine* contains quite a few examples of imperfect feminine rhymes (ending with unaccented syllable): "compassion / salvation", "deliver / never", "blessing / ceasing", "glory / before thee" (Baker 1988: 86). He adds that "spirit / inherit" was in those days an acceptable rhyme. However, true feminine rhymes are rare in the English language, and Baker gives Wesley credit for being "at least moderately successful" with the feminine rhyme (86). In this particular case the imperfect rhymes are not a source of irritation nor diminish the enjoyment of the hymn.

9.5.4 Evaluation of Tune

In 10 hymnals searched there were six or seven different tunes, I will only look at HYFRYDOL in detail but compare it with three others.

HYFRYDOL is the tune given in two hymnals *(Lutheran Hymnal* and *Lutheran Book of Worship*) and it is given as an alternative tune in *Songs of Fellowship*.
BLAENWERN is the tune in three song-books or hymnals (*Songs of Fellowship, Mission Praise, Hymns of Praise)* and it is the alternative tune in *Hymns Ancient and Modern.*
BEECHER is used in the *United Methodist Hymnal* and LOVE DIVINE in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* and as the second printed tune in *Songs of Fellowship.*[263]

Most of the tunes have eight-line stanzas. Only one has four-line stanzas: LOVE DIVINE. This results in eight four-line stanzas instead of four eight-line stanzas. The former is more difficult to sing and sustain and probably results in people leaving out verses, whereas most people will sing four verses of eight lines without a problem. This is a distinct disadvantage

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[263] HYFRYDOL: LBW 315, BLAENWERN: SF 377, BEECHER: UMH 384 , LOVE DIVINE: HAM 131

208

of LOVE DIVINE in spite of the fact that the tune was written specifically for the text.

9.5.4.1. <u>Should be singable by unmusical people</u>
All four tunes meet this criterion, as is usual with tunes that have survived for a long time. HYFRYDOL does have some challenges for singers. Its range is manageable, from F to upper D which is under an octave. Upper D is high for many singers, but it is possible to pitch the hymn lower. There are many slurs in the tune, 12 of them, which require some energy and support to sing well, especially those that make a leap of a third. The second last slur goes over four notes. This is also a challenge. However, all of this is manageable for most average singers. There are several large intervals (four fourths and one fifth), but this too is not too difficult.

BLAENWERN is a lot slower, and therefore a bit more difficult to sustain. It also has 10 slurs, some of them making leaps of thirds or even fourths. There are no intervals larger than fourths. It is challenging, but does not give major problems to untrained singers.

BEECHER has 8 slurs, which only move in steps up or down. However, there are many large intervals (one 5th , five 6[th]s and one octave leap). It has a range of nine notes. It is a joyful tune, slightly demanding, but still quite singable.

LOVE DIVINE has no major difficulties. It contains two slurs, two fourths and two fifths. It is the simplest of the tunes but also the least emotive and interesting.

9.5.4.2. <u>Does not depend on accompaniment</u>
Again all four tunes meet this criterion. They have over generations been sung without accompaniment, or with only very simple accompaniment. HYFRYDOL also can be sung well without accompaniment, but the slurred leaps are not so easy to sustain on the correct pitch. Particularly if the hymn is pitched high, the slurs are likely to pull the hymn down into a lower pitch. However, in general this criterion is met.

9.5.4.3. <u>Does not overuse the currently popular stylistic elements</u>
HYFRYDOL is a tune of the 19th century where leaps and slurs were popular. In general

209

there are one or two slurs per phrase, which is still manageable. The exception is the line "Vi~sit us~ with thy~ salva~~~~tion" where there are three two note slurs and one four note slur. This could be seen as an overuse, but it is balanced with the next much calmer final phrase which has only one slur: " Enter e~very trembling heart". In such a case one may say that the many slurs are used for special effect. There are not too many large leaps.

BEECHER uses many large leaps, but for the time five large leaps in an eight stanza verse was not overuse. BLAENWERN and LOVE DIVINE do not overuse any elements.

<u>9.5.4.4. Creates a balance between the easy and familiar and the interesting</u>

HYFRYDOL*:*
Melody pattern: *abab, cdef*
Rhythm pattern *abab, c c', d, c''*

The tune is varied in its melody, but there is enough underlying consistency in the rhythm to be easily learnt without being boring. The very different second to last line adds variety and interest to an otherwise smoothly flowing tune. The small differences in the rhythm in the second part do not confuse the singer as they stay within the same consistent rhythm pattern – that is, substituting one two crotchet slur for a two beat minim.

BLAENWERN has a varied tune with a stable but varied underlying rhythm:

210

Melody pattern: *abac defc*

Rhythm pattern: *aa' ac dd ' ac*

This is a very good balance

BEECHER has a fairly repetitive tune with a very stable almost monotonous underlying rhythm:

Melody pattern *abac deac*

Rhythm pattern: *aa' aa' aa' aa'.*

This means that except for the fact that the first line has 8 syllables and the second 7, all eight lines have exactly the same rhythm. This makes the hymn quite monotonous after a while, especially when singing several verses, in spite of its initial joyful effect because of the leaps.

LOVE DIVINE has a simple tune with no direct repetition but the first line is repeated in the third one tone up. It has a stable alternating rhythm, which may, however, get monotonous after several verses:

Melody pattern: *ab a' d*

Rhythm pattern: *abab*

In general HYFRYDOL and BLAENWERN come out as the strongest tunes, HYFRYDOL being fairly challenging for untrained singers. BEECHER is a joyful tune, but too monotonous to be sung regularly. LOVE DIVINE is straightforward and uninspiring, but could be well-matched to several texts.

9.5.5 Evaluation of Text-Tune Match

9.5.5.1. The best songs have a "monogamous" match of only one text for only one tune.

This is definitely not the case for this hymn, which just in my limited search is published with or sung to at least seven different tunes. The lack of consensus about which tune this Wesley text should be sung to is one of the biggest weaknesses of this hymn and indeed of English hymn singing. It frustrates particularly those people who move between communities, which all sing this hymn to different tunes (three tunes only in my own personal experience of this hymn). People who would like Wesley's hymns to be cherished by the younger mobile generation need to start finding a process of consensus building around this issue.

211

9.5.5. 2. The mood of the music should fit with the mood of the text

The text is joyful, and full of praise: "Joy of heaven to earth come down" and "Pray and praise thee without ceasing.." and although it also strikes more serious and meditative notes too ("Enter every trembling heart"), the tone of joy and praise seems to be dominant, and should be dominant in the chosen tune.

BLAENWERN is a very beautiful but fairly slow and meditative tune and should be matched to a more serious and meditative text. A suggestion would be to match it to the passion hymn *I will sing the wondrous story* which is now usually sung to the more joyful HYFRYDOL.[264]
BEECHER is a joyous even if slightly monotonous tune. It is well suited to the mood of the text, but should perhaps be matched to a text which is sung less often, such as the Ascension hymn *Alleluia sing to Jesus*.
The tune LOVE DIVINE does not express much joy and could be sung to a more straight forward teaching text.
HYFRYDOL is an emotive tune, lilting in places and fairly exuberant in others, especially the second to last line. It is the tune best matched to the mood of the text.

9.5.5. 3. The Rhythm of the music should fit the natural rhythm of the words

With regard to the rhythm, all four tunes are fairly well matched. There are few incorrectly stressed words. The text can be spoken in the rhythm of all four tunes without it sounding wrong. However, it is in HYFRYDOL that the stress is most often on the key words. The only line that sounds a bit overdone when spoken is the second to last line of HYFRYDOL with the many slurs. However, in general the rhythm- text match is not a problem in any of the texts.

HYFRYDOL

Love di*vine*~, all LOVES- excel~-ling,
/ JOY of heaven, to *earth*~ come down,
Fix in *us*~ Thy HUM-ble dwel~ -ling,

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[264] I have done this in my own community and have grown to love *I will sing the wondrous story* a great deal more than I did when I sang it to HYFRYDOL. The text-tune match is nearly perfect and the stresses fall on much more appropriate words than in the current match for example " *Of-* the Christ who DIED~- for me" against " / OF – the Christ who *died*~ for me" .

212

/ ALL Thy faithful mer~- cies crown.

/ JESUS, Thou~ art all- compas~- sion,

Pure unboun~- ded LOVE~ Thou art;

Vi~-sit us~ with Thy~ SAL-VA~~~~- tion, (Climax)

En- ter EV~-ery trem- bling heart.

BLAENWERN
Love- di*vine-* , all loves/~ exCELL - ing,
Joy of heaven, to EARTH~ come down,
Fix- in us- Thy hum /~ble DWELL - ing,
All Thy FAITH~ful mercies crown.
Je- sus, *Thou~* art ALL~ compas- sion,
Pure- unboun~ded LOVE~ Thou art; (climax)
Vi- sit us with THY~ salva- tion,
En- ter EV~ery *tremb-* ling heart.

BEECHER
Love divine, all / LOVES ex~-celling,
Joy of HEAVEN, to earth come~ down,
Fix in us Thy / HUMB-ble~ dwelling,
All / THY faithful mercies~ crown.
Jesus, Thou art all comPASsion,
/ *Pure* un BOUNded love Thou~ art; (Climax)
Visit us with / THY sal~vation,
En / TER every trembling~ heart.

LOVE DIVINE
Love divine~, all LOVES excelling,
Joy / OF HEAVEN, to *earth* come down, (climax)
Fix in US~ Thy humble dwelling,
ALL Thy faithful mercies crown.

The only real mismatch is the last line of BEECHER: " En /TER" and the stress on the "OF" in the second line of LOVE DIVINE. Otherwise there are no seriously wrongly stressed syllables, though it makes less sense to stress " Earth" as in BLAENWERN than to stress "Joy" or " Heaven" as in HYFRYDOL.

9.5.5. 4. The climax of the tune should fit with the climax in the poetry

HYFRYDOL is a sweeping, flowing tune which has several high points. Matched with this text, the first high point comes on the word " Joy" - which has the highest note of the first two phrases. The phrase " Joy of heaven to earth come down"   falls on a descending sequence which is a perfect match with the content. In the repeat the same high note falls on "All - thy faithful mercies crown" which is also appropriate. The fifth line starts on a high note with " Jesus", flows down and upwards again to reach a high point on the word "love". Then there is a long, drawn out

213

emphasis on the word "Salva-----tion" which receives a four note slur, appropriate as it is the key word of the entire hymn. The highest note of the whole verse falls on the word " every - trembling heart".   This is a nearly perfect match of tune to the natural content-based stresses of the text.   Of course the same perfect match is not sustained throughout the verses. But in none of the other verses is the stress completely inappropriate. And the last verse again is very fitting with the highest note falling on the word "wonder", as a climax to the entire hymn.

None of the other tunes provides as fitting a match.
BLAENWERN has its first climax on "ExCELLing"   but then the word "Joy" drops below this, and the next stress is on "earth". The other high points are on "dwelling" , "faithful", "Love" and "VI-sit us with THY- salvation'. These are reasonably well matched.

When matched with BEECHER there is an upward leap of a sixth to the word "humble", which seems to contradict the meaning. The highest notes are often after large leaps, heightening the effect, in the fourth and seventh lines these are both on " THY" and in the final phrase on "En-TER". The climax is in the sixth line, consisting of only high notes. This falls on " Pure unBOUN-ded love thou art", not inappropriate, but perhaps less effective than the stress on " Salvation". The match is not completely ineffective, but not the most fitting of the four possibilities.

LOVE DIVINE has its musical climax already in the second line and after this the tension decreases. This makes for a tune which does not really flow. The main stress in that phrase would be the "OF" which comes after a leap of a fifth. The "Joy" has no stress at all, which makes the phrase sound disjointed.

9.5.5.5 Overall Evaluation of Tune - Text Match
Evaluating all aspects, the Tune HYFRYDOL gives the best match, both in mood, in rhythm and climax. This offsets the disadvantage of the greater level of difficulty.   Most congregations should manage it well, even though it may require some initial practice.   The other tunes are all good tunes which deserve to be used and could be easily matched with other texts, many of which are now sung to HYFRYDOL.

9.5.6. Evaluation of "Balance of Polarities"

9.5.6.1. Past vs Present
For us living now it is a hymn from the past that has survived for many years. For Wesley it was a hymn very much based in the present, but drawing on biblical traditions and images. There is a

214

sense of past promise and future fulfillment ("Finish then Thy new creation") but fairly muted.

9.5.6.2. Objectivity vs Subjectivity

There is some objective proclamation of the meaning of salvation, but also much response. It is formulated in the second person and is a hymn of direct praise, adoration and commitment. There is a good balance here.

9.5.6.3. Cognitive vs Emotive

There is a high content load in terms of the number of verses: 4 verses with 8 lines each. The hymn has theological content appealing to the understanding of the singer, describing the incarnation, the attributes of Christ and the hope for deliverance and holiness. There is a fair amount of emotion in the hymn. The tune HYFRYDOL is joyous and emotive, even exuberant in places. BLAENWERN is the most emotive of the four tunes, in a meditative, intimate way, but in general not so well fitting, as has been discussed above. Except for LOVE DIVINE all the tunes would add emotional value to the text. The text itself has some words that carry emotion: The direct address to Jesus, the words "pure, unbounded love", "trembling heart", "troubled breast", "lost in wonder, love and praise".

In general one could say that there is a good cognitive / emotive balance.

9.5.6.4. Community vs Individual

This is a strong "We" hymn. Although it has intimate language, it is the Christian community singing it. It is emphasized that Christ is dwelling among US. However, there are formulations that have the individual believer in view: "every trembling heart". If Christ makes his dwelling among us, that affects each individual. Within the hymn there is a balance, and within Christian singing as a whole, it is important to have strong "we" songs which counterbalance the great amount of songs of personal devotion and piety. This hymn thus creates balance in Christian singing by focussing on the "us".

9.5.6.5. Familiarity vs Diversity

Familiarity suffers greatly if there is no consensus about tune. Here the diversity is not a positive attribute of the hymn. However, within each community where there is a fair consensus on tune, *Love divine* would rank as one of the very familiar hymns. The tune HYFRYDOL itself is a good balance of "interesting" and "easily learned". It is distinctive enough not to sound like all other hymns.

9.5.6.6. Affirmation vs Challenge

This is a hymn which has as its centre the assurance of salvation. There is challenge but more

215

indirect: The phrase "Take away the love of sinning" encompasses the challenge to work actively against sin in one's life, but in the knowledge that it is the power of God which makes it possible. There is the challenge to "pray and praise...without ceasing". The hymn draws into an attitude of active praise. However, the hymn is more affirming than challenging.

9.5.6.7. Cross vs Glory

This is a hymn about the incarnation and the underlying text is that of Philippians 2, which ends at the cross. The cross is implied but not directly mentioned. The suffering of the human condition is hinted at in the phrase "trembling heart" even though the trembling is probably more a "trembling in awe". On the whole this is a "glory" hymn.

9.5.6.8. Transcendence vs Immanence

There is a good balance between these two polarities as this is exactly the theme of the incarnation: The transcendent God comes right into our presence, living with us. Christ makes his dwelling within the community and in each believer's heart. The awe is expressed and the awareness of nearness.

9.5.6.9.Vertical vs Horizontal

The hymn is fairly vertical: God comes to earth, enters our heart. A horizontal dimension is given by the use of "us", but it remains with the believing community. There is no awareness of the world or the community beyond.

9.5.6.10. Universal vs Particular

This is a universal hymn. It can be sung anytime, by any Christian, probably anywhere. There is little that is particularly in its themes. It is sung any time of day, throughout the year.

9.5.7. Overall Evaluation of the Song

This is a well-loved and theologically valuable hymn which will be part of the general congregational repertoire for many generations to come. The lack of consensus on tune is a major weakness and will not be easily resolved, as congregations find it hard to change tunes they know. However, if their well-loved tune is not lost but sung with another text, there may be more openness to find consensus.

216

9.6. Evaluation of *And can it be that I should gain*

9.6.1. Text and Tune

9.6.1.1. Tune: SAGINA

Thomas Campbell 1825-1876

And can it be that I should gain an in - terest

in the Sa-viour's blood! Died He for me? who caused His

pain! For me? who Him to death pur - sued? A - ma - zing

love! How can it be that Thou, my

God, shouldst die for me? A - ma zing love! How

can it be that Thou, my God shouldst die for me?

9.6.1.2. Text: published version UMH 363

1. And can it be that I should gain / an interest in the Saviour's blood!
Died He for me? who caused His pain! / For me? who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! How can it be / that Thou my God, shouldst die for me?

2. 'Tis mystery all: th'Immortal dies! / Who can explore His strange design?
In vain the firstborn seraph tries / to sound the depths of love divine.
'Tis mercy all! Let earth adore; / let angel minds inquire no more.

217

3. He left his Father's throne above / (so free, so infinite his grace!),
emptied himself of all but love, / and bled for Adam's helpless race.
'Tis mercy all, immense and free, / for O my God, it found out me!

4. Long my imprisoned spirit lay,/ fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray; / I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
my chains fell off, my heart was free, / I rose, went forth, and followed Thee!

5. No condemnation now I dread; / Jesus, and all in Him, is mine;
alive in Him my living Head, / and clothed in righteousness divine,
bold I approach th'eternal throne, / and claim the crown, through Christ my own.

Charles Wesley 1739

9.6.2. Background

The hymn *And Can It Be*? was written just days after Wesley's conversion and was originally entitled *Free Grace* (Tyson 2007:49).[265] Its content is to some extent autobiographical, reflecting Charles' personal conversion experience,[266] but it has universalised and placed it on the backdrop of biblical examples. The last two lines of each verse are repeated, though sometimes in popular use the last two lines of the first verse "Amazing love…" are used as a refrain. Most hymnals use the tune SAGINA, which was written in 1825 by Thomas Campbell, about eighty-six years after the words were penned and thirty-two years after the poet's death.[267]

In my search only the Australian *Lutheran Hymnal* uses a different tune: ICH ARMER MENSCH (LH 67). It is probable that the editors found SAGINA too emotive. However, this alternative is very uninspiring: straight crotches all the way through, no interesting rhythm or melody, and not suited at all to the powerful words. It is also very unknown and will not be discussed. So here there is a fairly fixed association between text and the SAGINA tune. But unlike *Hark the herald angels sing* and *Love divine all loves excelling* the hymn is not found in all hymnals I searched. Some leave it out, for reasons which may become clear in discussion.

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[265] Baker notes that some scholars have attributed this hymn to John Wesley, but most scholars would agree that it is much too fervent and emotive for the style of John (Baker 1988:115).

[266] "This hymn… has the feel of Charles Wesley's spiritual autobiography. The repeated emphasis upon the phrase " for me," reminds us of the impact that reading Luther's *Galatians* had upon Wesley " (Tyson 2007:49).

[267] Online hymnal website, hymnary.org.

218

9. 6.3. Evaluation of Text

9.6.3.1. Based on the wealth of scripture in all its breadth

As is normal for Wesley, the hymn is steeped in biblical imagery and language. *Songs of Fellowship* gives two references:

Rom 8:1 "No condemnation now I dread; Jesus, and all in him, is mine", and Phil 2: 6-8 "He left his Father's throne above, (so free, so infinite his grace!), emptied himself of all but love, and bled for Adam's helpless race". However, the obvious main reference is to the story of Peter in Prison which becomes a parable for Wesley's own conversion experience:

> The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists.   Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." And Peter did so. "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me," the angel told him. Peter followed him out of the prison.
>
> (Acts 12:6-10)

This story becomes a backdrop to tell the personal conversion story of Charles, which also becomes paradigmatic for the conversion experience of the Wesleyan revival:

Long my imprisoned spirit lay, / fast bound in sin and nature's night;
thine eye diffused a quickening ray; / I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
my chains fell off, my heart was free, / I rose, went forth, and followed thee!

There is also a reference to the experience of Paul, who was actually the one to have the dramatic conversion experience and for whom the words "Died he for me? who caused his pain! / For me? who him to death pursued?" would be most fitting.

9.6.3.2. Theologically sound

The hymn has as its theme the awe at the realisation of one's own sin and the greatness of the gift of grace through Christ's sacrifice. It is a description of a personal experience of conversion, which though it has a biblical image as its base is very personal and draws people into identification with it. This makes the hymn attractive for those who have either had a dramatic conversion, or are attracted to people who have had.   It is less easy to sing for people for whom

219

this is not a familiar experience. The intimate language draws one in. It is less easy to distance oneself from the fervent emotions than for example in the case of Luther's *Dear Christians one and all rejoice* which also has autobiographical overtones, but is written in more objective language (LBW 299). In itself there is nothing theologically problematic about this text. It recounts a dramatic experience of conversion, but does not make it normative for everyone else. It recounts the central story of salvation in verse 2.

There is some theological debate about the theological correctness of saying: "Thou my God didst die for me".[268] Did God himself die on Calvary? Should one distinguish between God and Jesus? How? According to a website discussion forum, this had led some hymnal editors to change the wording to "Thou my Lord, shouldst die for me".[269] However, I have not found this in the hymnals I searched. It is a difficult question as to how far one should change a hymn of someone from a different persuasion to fit in with one's own. However, the orthodox position would be that Jesus was fully God, even when on the earth, and so in one sense, God himself was dying on the cross.

9.6.3.3. Takes the depth and breadth of human experience seriously
This hymn speaks about a powerful conversion which is part of human experience, even if not everyone shares it. For those who have had such an experience, this hymn will powerfully express their thankfulness and amazement at this experienced grace. For others this hymn can still be appreciated for its paradigmatic and biblical content. The experience recounted in verse 4 may not be personal but it is biblically and historically attested as a foundational Christian experience and others can appreciate it for this. The sentences about human guilt with relation to Christ are fairly strong: "For me? Who him to death pursued?" Not everyone will be able to speak like this personally, but perhaps see it as a parable of faith. The extreme examples are always encouraging: Jesus even died for Paul - how much more for me!

9.6.3.4. Needs to be readily understood, it can be simple or repetitive, but not shallow
This is again a hymn that needs some biblical knowledge in order to really appreciate it. It is not a song for first evangelism, as most people today will probably not identify with such a strong

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[268] See online article by S. Weaver (Weaver 2010 online).
[269] McMaken, T., 2007 online

220

notion of personal sinfulness. However, once people have a basic understanding of what Christian faith is all about this hymn can deepen this understanding effectively. The basic message is not hard to understand. However, there are some allusions which would be difficult for uninitiated people to grasp immediately:

For example the lines: "In vain the first-born seraph tries / to sound the depths of love divine!"

9.6.3.5. Memorable Poetic Value

There are many memorable phrases some of which have become iconic lines in the Methodist movement:

"My chains fell off, my heart was free, / I rose, went forth, and followed Thee."

This is a real inspirational line, which describes the power of conversion and must have given impetus to others to want to experience something like it. Another inspired line is that which gives the essence of the Christ hymn in Philippians 2: "emptied himself of all but love".

The line which later became something akin to a cliché (see discussion on Kendrick's *My God, what love is this)* is here still fresh and powerful: "Amazing love! How can it be / that Thou, my God, shouldst die for me". The line has as its background the famous line from Isaac Watts' *When I survey the wondrous cross:* "Love so amazing, so divine / demands my soul, my life, my all" (MP 596). But Wesley recasts it in a way that is original.

There is some effective repetition: "for me…For me…for me " in verse 1. " 'Tis mystery all!...'Tis mercy all!" in verse 2, repeated again in verse 3. Also in verse 3 is "so free, so intimate his grace" .

There are also some effective examples of assonance and alliteration: "And bled for Adam's helpless race", " nature's night", and the repeated "f" sounds in verse 4 (7 in 4 lines) "thine eye diffused a quickening ray; / I woke, the dungeon flamed with light; / my chains fell off, my heart was free, / I rose, went forth, and followed thee!".

A weakness of the hymn is the first line, which is a very weak statement (or a deliberate understatement) of the significance of Christ's passion: "And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Saviour's blood". It is not a line that commands interest, and starting a song with

221

"And" is strange and in this case not really effective as it does not seem to evoke anything that has gone before. But Wesley must have had his reasons which made sense to the contemporaries that loved and sang the hymn.

9.6.4. Evaluation of Tune

9.6.4.1. Should be singable by unmusical people
SAGINA is quite a difficult and very emotive tune. It is not easily learned. It requires fervour to sing it but for this reason it also generates fervour. For those who love it and know it, it expresses the passion of revival spirituality.

The tune has a large range: From lower B to high E. This is a range of 11 notes which many untrained singers have trouble with. Often they battle with either the bottom or the top notes. It is not only the fact that the tune reaches high E which is the problem, but the fact that the high notes are held for so long: there are two minims on the high E and one on the high D. Many people will struggle with this.

There are many slurs: In the eight-line stanza (including the repeat) there are 16 slurs, an average of two per line. These are unevenly distributed, which makes for an interesting tune, but also an almost tedious concentration of slurred notes in the fifth and sixth line (7 slurs in two lines). Of these 4 are slurs over three notes. This is offset by the flowing last two lines.

There are quite a few larger leaps: seven 4th s, two 5th s, four 5th s .
Many of the leaps are within a slur, which is difficult to sing well: In the sixth line, the slurs on the words *Thou*", "*God*" and "*die"* all have a major or minor sixth arpeggio within the slur. Again this is difficult to sing. The most difficult leap is the minor sixth leap from "should gain" down to " an interest".

The difficulty of the tune seems to have made no dent in its popularity and success. As in many other tunes of the era of missionary fervour, the energy required to sing these tunes generates even more passion and enthusiasm. It is people who are not part of the fervour who experience the tunes as "tedious," or "overly sentimental".

222

9.6.4.2. Does not depend on accompaniment

It is possible but difficult to sustain this tune unaccompanied, especially for 5 verses.   The slurs which include larger leaps are easily taken too short, which means the tune begins to fall lower and lower all the time, which makes the bottom notes hard to reach.[270] There are also some long notes in the last two lines which would be difficult to sustain. This is a hymn which is probably generally limited to Sunday morning use with strong organ or other instrumental back up. It is also very suitable for four-part choir, as these are trained voices, and the long notes by the high voices are offset by an echo in the low voices, as indeed is printed in many hymnals including *Songs of Fellowship* (SF 21).

9.6.4.3. Does not overuse the currently popular stylistic elements

Although the total "slur count" is not much higher than in HYFRYDOL the cumulative effect is more concentrated, especially because of the three-note slurs. In lines five and six this does come across as overuse, though the more flowing lines seven and eight balance this to some extent. There are many large leaps but not excessively more than in the other two Wesley tunes discussed. It was probably judged as too emotive for the Lutheran hymn editors, who tend to be cautious with too much emotion. The editors of the Australian *Lutheran Hymnal* changed the tune (LH 67), and the editors of the *Lutheran Book of Worship* and also the new hymnal *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* left the hymn out completely.

9.6.4.4. Creates a balance between the easy and familiar and the interesting

The tune is interesting and changes throughout. There is no regularity or repetition either in the melody or the rhythm. This again makes it much more difficult, but also generates excitement and fervour.

Melody pattern: *abcd efgh*
Rhythm pattern: *abcd efgh*

While the tune has survived and remained popular in certain circles, for new introduction to

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[270]   When I experimented and sang all five verses unaccompanied, trying not to let the tone slump, I actually rose a semitone in five verses. This is unlikely to happen in a congregation, but would also make the top note more difficult to reach.

223

congregations, the complete lack of repetition in the melody is a real drawback. However, my rule of thumb indicates that up to about 10 different patterns in the tune is still singable, even if a challenge, for untrained singers.

9.6.5. Good Match of Text and Tune

<u>9.6.5.1. The best songs have a "monogamous" match of only one text for only one tune.</u>
This Wesley hymn is generally "monogamous", with the only exception I have seen the one in the Australian *Lutheran Hymnal*.

<u>9.6.5.2. The mood of the music should fit with the mood of the text</u>
It is a triumphant, fervent tune, which fits with fervent, passionate words. There is no doubt that it is a better fit than the unemotive tune chosen by the Australian *Lutheran Hymnal*. The best fit is with verse 4, the only verse where the overuse of slurs in lines five and six seems entirely appropriate:
" My chains fell off my~ heart~~ ~was free,~~   I rose ~ ~ went forth ~ ~ and fol ~ ~ lowed thee. " The rising arpeggios in this verse are an effective illustration of the rising of a freed prisoner. The perfect fit almost leads one to suspect that the tune was written with verse 4 of this hymn in mind. However, Baker records that the text was first matched to the tune SAGINA by the *Methodist Hymn Book* (no date given) and that another tune *Didsbury* was used in the 1983 edition of *Hymns and Psalms* (Baker 1988:79-80).

While the match is less perfect in the other verses, there are none where the mood of the text does not fit the tune. SAGINA can also be sung in a quieter more reflective way, for example in verses 2 and 3.

<u>9.6.5.3. The Rhythm of the music should fit the natural rhythm of the words</u>

And can it BE-- that I ~ *should*~ gain
an IN~TEREST~   in *the*~ Sa-viour's- blood!
Died He for ME~? who caused *His*-   pain!
For me~? who Him~- to DEATH- pur-sued?

224

A-MAZING love! How *can*~~ it be~~

that *Thou*~~ my *God*~ ~, shouldst DIE~~ for me?

A-MAZING love! How CAN- it - be

that THOU-- *my- God* - , shouldst~ *die* - for me? (climax)

In general most of the stresses are on the most important words. However, in some places the many slurs cause a break in the flow of the language and stresses to be placed in unnatural places for example the stress on "the" in the second line, or the double stress on In-terest. But none of these are really a serious irritation.   The longest, three note slurs in lines five and six place emphasis on important words in most verses, most effectively besides verse 4 in the last verse:

|BOLD I ap-PROACH the e TER~NAL~ THRONE~~

And CLAIM ~ ~ the CROWN ~ ~ through CHRIST ~ ~ my own.

9.6.5.4. The climax of the tune should fit with the climax in the poetry
There are several high points, but an undeniable climax is in the last line with the two long high E's followed by a high D. This falls on important words in most verses: "Thou, my God" in verse 1 and "O, my God" in verse 3,   "angel minds" in verse 2, "rose went forth" in verse 4 and "claim the crown" in verse 5. All of these are appropriate words for the climax in the tune. The rising slurred arpeggios also highlight important words.

9.6.5.5. Overall evaluation of Text-Tune match
Undeniably there is a very close fit of the text and the SAGINA tune, which is also the reason why most of the song-books that print this hymn match it to this tune.

9.6.6. Evaluation of "Balance of Polarities"

9.6.6.1 Past vs Present
This is a more "past" focussed hymn. It looks back at personal experience, the knowledge of guilt and the overwhelming experience of conversion, and it looks back at salvation history, Christ's coming to earth and the eternal mystery of Christ's death for sinners. It is only the last verse that has a present and future focus. For us, singing it now, it obviously represents a piece of tradition, and its tune reflects some of the fervour of historical revivals.

225

9.6.6.2 Objectivity vs Subjectivity

There is a fair amount of objective proclamation in this hymn, particularly in verses 2 and 3. But most of the hymn focuses on the overwhelming awe and disbelief at the experience of undeserved grace. There is the element of confession that this was all done "for me" and a testimony to what it means to have been set free. Both polarities are thus considered, although the emphasis is on one side.

9.6.6.3 Cognitive vs Emotive

There is both a high content load which builds theological understanding and a high level of emotion, not only in the tune, but also in the text. This is expressed in the exclamations: "How can it be…?" "Amazing Love"!" "'Tis mystery all!", "'Tis mercy all!" or "so free, so intimate his grace". There is a fairly good balance although as discussed, some hymnal editors and communities reject it as too emotive.

9.6.6.4. Community vs Individual

This is a very personal hymn, with a focus on Christ's saving death "for me", but the cosmic and global dimensions are clearly in view in verses 2 and 3 where salvation is for "Adam's helpless race".

9.6.6.5.Familiarity vs Diversity

For people who know and love this hymn it is a familiar representative of a beloved tradition. However, it is difficult to make familiar to people who have not grown up with it. The tune is difficult to learn so it takes some time before people make it their own and the text is not written in the language of today. To help a congregation to get to know and love this hymn would probably require the involvement of the choir and perhaps personal testimonies about the meaning of the hymn. The theme is fairly mainstream, in this way it does not add much diversity. The tune adds diversity to the repertoire today. Within itself the tune has no repetition, which again works against people getting to know it.

9.6.6.6. Affirmation vs Challenge

This hymn is an affirming hymn about the transforming reality of salvation in Christ which is open to everyone. There is perhaps an element of challenge for the singer to identify with the sentiments in verse 1 of confession of sin, and complicity in Christ's death.

226

9.6.6.7. Cross vs Glory

There is a good balance of cross and glory. It focuses on the death of Christ. In the *Lutheran Hymnal* it falls under the subject heading "Lent" (LH 67). But there is also a strong element of the glory of Christ, not only in the final verse, but also in the encounter with the flaming light in the dungeon (verse 4) and the adoration of earth and angels in verse 2. There is a great contrast between the suffering human "imprisoned spirit" and God's mercy "immense and free" (v3). Human suffering here is the agony of not knowing Christ.

9.6.6.8. Transcendence vs Immanence

Here again there is a good balance. It is the transcendent God who "leaves His Father's throne" and "found out me". There is both the expression of awe and that of closeness: "Jesus, and all in Him is mine! Alive in Him, my living Head…through Christ my own."
However, the awe at the undeserved mercy is more prominent, than expressions of closeness.

9.6.6.9 Vertical vs Horizontal

This is generally a "vertical" hymn, but there is an awareness of the global dimension of salvation for all humanity, expressed in the phrase: " Adam's helpless race". There is no social side of faith or the dimension of neighbourly love in view.

9.6.6.10 Universal vs Particular

The hymn has as its base a very particular experience of conversion, which is brought into dialogue with biblical examples of conversion and liberation. This then becomes a parable for the universal experience of Christians.

For Lutherans who have less emphasis on the personal conversion experience, this would be more a "particular" hymn which many people would not personally identify with. For Methodists it is likely to be seen more as a universal, normative experience, although they too would agree that not everyone's faith journey needs to include such a dramatic personal conversion. However, everyone will recognise that the experience of Peter and Paul have significance for all Christians. So while the hymn may be less fervently sung by those who have not had such an experience, the hymn is inclusive and makes general statements about the human reality as sinners.

227

9. 6.7. Overall Evaluation of Song

It is difficult to give a concise overall evaluation of a hymn that has so many strengths and weaknesses. As in any song, pastors and worship leaders, knowing their congregations, their musical ability and theological understanding need to make decisions as to its use.

The hymn's greatest strength lies in its poetic language, particularly of verse 4 and its passionate witness to the power of conversion. However, this very strength may make the hymn hard to identify with for people who have not had such powerful spiritual experiences. It is a well-balanced hymn with a deep level of theological and biblical content. The chosen tune is difficult for untrained singers and is either highly emotive or tedious, depending on whether the singer can enter into the emotions and give the investment required to sing this tune well. While one can only speculate on the reasons why some hymnal editors omit it, it is probably the tune more than the text which is the problem. In the text the rather weak beginning may have been seen as a weakness too. It is probably a hymn that those communities that do not already have it in their tradition will not introduce. However, where a sizeable part of the congregation already knows and loves it, it is worth investing the effort to transmit it to the next generation, with the help of personal testimony and choir assisted practice. It would also work well in a service where the sermon focuses on the stories of Peter or Paul referred to in the hymn.

9.7. Evaluation of Wesley's Work within his context

Initially, Wesley was not sung beyond Methodist revival meetings. The acceptance of his hymns into hymnals of established churches was relatively slow as people experienced him as too fervent and those not involved in the revival were embarrassed by the intimacy in the hymns. It was only in the 19th century, that Wesley's hymns began to receive the recognition they deserved (Rogal 1991:94). Many of his texts have 19th century tunes, and his hymns spread internationally also during this time.

228

9. 8. Evaluation of Wesley's Work for us

Today there is no hymnal of any English denomination without a selection of Wesley hymns. While they gained a firm place in English Lutheran circles, their translations never gained a serious foothold in Germany. There is a translation of *O for a thousand tongues to sing* in the song-book of the 1950's, *Jesu Name nie verklinget* (JN 10), but it was never taken up in official hymnals. However, there are several in the Afrikaans *Liedboek* of the Reformed churches.[271] Even in the day and age of Praise and Worship music, the best hymns of Wesley still inspire people and should not be lost to the next generation. However, there is a desperate need for some consensus on tunes. The young generation is very mobile in terms of location and also denomination. It is a disappointment and frustration if one cannot sing a well-known text because one does not know the tune. There should be some gradual convergence on this issue. Perhaps a beginning would be to mark one tune as the ecumenical tune, which one notes, even if a hymnal editor decides to print an alternative. Hymnal editors need to come together for the sake of the future of hymn singing in the church.

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[271] Hark the herald angels sing (LB 365), *Jesus, lover of my soul* (LB 578) and others.

229

230

CHAPTER TEN - GRAHAM KENDRICK (1950 -)

10.1. Background and Life History

Graham Kendrick is one of the most successful and well-known contemporary song-writers. He has been called the "father of modern worship music" (Kendrick website n.d.). His Song *Shine, Jesus, Shine* has been included among the ten most popular hymns in the UK and 45 of his songs have appeared in the top 1000 of the *Christian Copyright Licence International* lists (St. Michael's Singers 1996:2). His songs are listed on charts throughout the world and have also been translated into many languages.[272]

Kendrick was born in 1950 as the son of a Baptist pastor, Maurica, and his wife, Olive. He grew up in the Baptist manses moving from Blisworth to Laindon and then Putney (St. Michael's Singers 1996:2). He remembers a step in faith at the age of five, when he prayed to become a Christian. "I actually did feel a change deep inside of me. I knew something significant had happened." While he was at teacher training college, he experienced a crisis in his faith, a "disillusionment" which " set him off on his quest for a deeper spiritual experience". He made contact with a charismatic housegroup. They prayed for him and he had the experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit. He writes: "It was significant because I entered into a new understanding of worship. It was a wellspring for my entire involvement in worship and hymnwriting" (St. Michael's Singers 1996:3). In the late sixties he began his career as a singer and song-writer (Wikipedia Kendrick n.d.). He joined an evangelistic team which worked in schools and congregations. Here he met his wife to be, Jill. They married in the summer of 1976. By this time he was well established as a solo artist, but became drawn more to congregational worship (St. Michael's Singers 1996:3). He decided to get more involved in a local congregation as itinerant ministry easily becomes detached from real life. He admits to not being enthusiastic initially about the idea of street evangelism, but realised too that the church was too inward looking and needed to touch the outside world. The first "Marches for Jesus" made him realise

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[272] For example in the German song-book *Ich will dir danken* 1996, there are two Kendrick songs in translation: *Shine Jesus, Shine* (IwD 428) and *Servant King* (IwD 292).

231

that a new type of music was needed and he began to write songs specifically for the streets. The idea of praise marching and especially the music began to draw more and more people. Hundreds of churches took up the concept. In 1989, 40 different marches in the UK attracted about 200 000 people on one day. A global march in 1994 brought over 12 million onto the streets. The "March for Jesus" concept and Kendrick's public procession liturgies spread through 170 countries. Most well-known became the song *Shine, Jesus, Shine* (MP 445). His style and the depth of theological content of his songs was able to overcome the traditional divisions in the church between radical and conservative, ecumenical and evangelical and make him the most "widely sung living song-writer in the world today*"* (St. Michael's Singers 1996:4).

While his influence in the global Praise and Worship movement has waned, he has become part of mainstream church worship, his songs being sung by established choirs, such as the Coventry Cathedral Choir which produced the CD series *The Hymn-makers* and *The New Hymnmakers* (St. Michael's Singers 1996 CD), and becoming part of hymnal supplements of denominations (WOV 651). New editions of denominational hymnals have also included Kendrick songs.[273] In one case the song has been simplified, leaving out the musical introduction and bridge and keeping just the verses and chorus [274].

10.2. Overview of Work

In terms of theological "balance", spread of themes and styles, Kendrick's record is impressive. He studied revival movements and realised that much of the biblical knowledge of new converts comes from songs, more particularly " from the singing of 'Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs' " (St. Michael's Singers 1996:4), and he compiled an overview of current worship music.

> I began to realise that the subject matter being covered by contemporary Praise and Worship songs was quite narrow. Any established hymn-book had a much greater range of subject matter. In some you find the whole church year laid out, taking the congregation through the doctrines of the faith week by week.
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> I'd grown up in an environment where the songs tended to embody current emphases... But you can't be sustained on just the popular doctrines of the time; certain emphases may well

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[273] The American *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* published initially in 2006 includes three Kendrick songs: *Here is bread* (ELW 483), *The trumpets sound* (ELW 531) and *Shine, Jesus, shine* (ELW 671).

[274] Compare *The trumpets sound* in SF 550 and ELW 671.

232

arise from the work of the Holy Spirit, and are vital, but a balanced worship"diet" needs the"meat and potatoes" of foundational truth. Also, we needed new songs for such things as weddings, baptisms, for communion and for Christmas.

<div align="right">(St. Michael's Singers 1996:4)</div>

Graham Kendrick thus quite deliberately set about trying to cover a broad range of themes in his writings. He published a whole double album for advent and Christmas, *Rumours of Angels,* and *The Gift, (*Kendrick 2001 CD), many songs for Lent which embody his central focus on the cross and redemption, (*Come and see* MP 85 and *My Lord, what love is this* MP 476*)* and Easter (*Led like a lamb* MP 402*)*. In spite of the charismatic experience of being filled with the Spirit having such centrality in his spiritual journey, songs about the Spirit itself are less prominent and nowhere is the spiritual experience made normative for faith.

Kendrick has written settings to quite a few psalms and written paraphrases of biblical texts.[275] It is of interest to him to make accessible the valuable elements of the Christian liturgical and hymnological tradition and so connect this generation with the witness of countless previous generations. His work includes a version of the Apostle's creed, *We believe in God the Father* (MP 720), and a song based on the traditional liturgical phrase "Lord have mercy": *Lord have mercy on us* (MP 430). He has written new tunes or new settings for several hymns, hoping to make the words accessible to a new generation.[276] There are several songs for communion and confession,[277] not often covered by contemporary song-writers.

Prominent in his songs is the consciousness of Christian responsibility and concern for social justice, an element almost entirely lacking in most other contemporary worship music. In his book *Shine, Jesus, Shine* which traces the history and rationale behind the praise marches he argues thoroughly why praise and social action need to go together:

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[275] For example *Arise, Lord* on Psalm 10 (Kendrick 2003 CD), or *To you, o Lord I lift up my soul* based on Psalm 25 (Kendrick 2001a CD). He has also paraphrased or set to music other important biblical texts for example Phil 3: *Knowing you* (1995 CD) Col 1:27 - *There is a hope so sure* (2003 CD) The Beatitudes in Mth 5 - *Blessed are the humble* (2001a CD)   and the first reading of Jesus in the synagogue Luke 4 *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me* (2001a CD).

[276] Quite moving is his tune for *Rock of Ages* (Kendrick 2001a CD).   There is also a new tune for *O for a thousand tongues to sing* (2003 CD), and an orchestration for the streets of *Joy to the World* (1996 CD).

[277] For example *The trumpets sound*   (MP 667)*,* and *Here is bread, here is wine,* (ELW 483).

233

> Tremendous results have been seen in movements that have combined righteousness and praise. This could explain why our arch enemy Satan, seems to work very hard to separate the two.

<div align="right">(Kendrick 2002: 213)</div>

Expression of love and concern for the neighbour was also a prominent element in the marches, which expressed a care for the world, not only a concern to win souls for Christ.[278]   Although he uses the language of spiritual warfare so common to evangelical Christians, he shirks from triumphalism and realises that evil is not only out there but also within us, and there is a need for repentance.[279]

Graham Kendrick uses a wide variety of musical styles in his songs. These songs were trendsetters in the 80's. Now that the "Praise and Worship style" has become fashionable,they sound more conventional.[280] His style is his own and determined by the content, rather than the music fashion. He has very intimate worship songs such as *Amazing love* (SF 398), and *I kneel down* (Kendrick 2001a CD). There are fast, dance-like rhythms for example *Make a joyful noise unto the Lord* (Kendrick 2003 CD)*,* and *From where the sun rises* (Kendrick 1996 CD), songs which have almost traditional hymnic styles for example *The servant King* (SF 120) and *Praise to Christ, the Lord incarnate* (Kendrick 2003 CD). Some songs have a two-part antiphonal style which have reminisces of psalm singing, for example *Make way* (SF 384)*,* or in the style of Jewish traditional dances which speed up at the end such as *At this time of giving* (SF 33)*.* Breimeier lists various musical styles in a reviewed album:

> Kendrick has a decidedly British worship sound, similar to Matt Redman and Tim Hughes, but with less modern rock verve. He in fact duets with Hughes for *Your Love,Your Mercy*, a modern pop ballad reminiscent of Redman's early work that worshipfully explores the meaning of the phrase "God is love." For *There Is Hope So Sure*, he duets with Darlene Zschech in an Irish influenced ballad similar to Twila Paris' *Lamb of God*. In contrast,

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[278]   see *Songs from No Walls* Album (Kendrick 1996 CD)*, O Lord, the clouds are gathering* (SF 429)*, Beauty for brokenness* (SF II 664).

[279] When asked to write a song to express concern about abortion for a pro-life group, he wrote a song that calls for repentance generally for the lack of protection for life and includes everyone in the call for a healed society which protects the most vulnerable: *Who can sound the depth of sorrow* MP 766
"Who will stand against the violence? / Who will comfort those who mourn?
In an age of cruel rejection, / who will build for love a home?"

[280]   Some criticise his style as sounding "dated" (Breimeier, 2003, Online)

234

Make a Joyful Noise has a joyous Latin flavor while *In You We Live* has a more Caribbean feel. There's also *The Twenty Ninth,* an impressive "spontaneous Scripture meditation" sung straight from the pages of the Psalms, creating a beautiful worship atmosphere with a rhythm like that of Redman's *Better Is One Day*.

The veteran worship leader also clearly loves the old hymns. There's a new rendition of *O for a Thousand Tongues* that joins Charles Wesley's original text to a new rhythmic / Latin melody that makes it a little tricky to pick up right away. Better are the hymn-styled originals, such as *Praise to Christ, the Lord Incarnate*, which, like an old hymn, speaks volumes about the fall of humanity and its redemption through Christ. *Jesus the Source of All Our Joy* is another flowing hymn, colored by Irish whistle and inspired by John chapters 1 and 17 to explain how Christ brings us closer to God.

(Breimeier 2003, Online)

Kendrick continues to write and also co-operates extensively with other younger song-writers, as in a new album that has come out, *Worship Duets*. Here each song is written together with a different contemporary song-writer (Kendrick n.d. Website). The Website in July 2013 listed 39 different albums and well over 400 songs.

10.3. Motivation of Choice of Songs

The first choice of songs of Kendrick to study was an obvious one: his most successful and internationally well-known song, *Shine, Jesus, Shine* (SF 362). The other choices were not as obvious, but in the end also clear-cut: The second chosen song was the one which introduced me to the depth of theological poetry Kendrick is capable of. It is also the song used for the title of the Kendrick CD in the series *The New Hymnmakers*: *Meekness and Majesty* (St. Michael's Singers 1996). The third song chosen is not on the selection for the *Hymnmakers* CD, but is the only Kendrick song on the South African CD: *50 Greatest Praise and Worship Songs* (Maranatha 2006) and is probably after *Shine, Jesus, Shine* the best-known in congregations which worship in the contemporary Praise and Worship style: *My Lord, what Love is this (Amazing Love).*

235

10.4. Evaluation of *Lord, the light of your love (Shine, Jesus, Shine)*

10.4.1. Text and Tune

10.4.1.1. Tune: SHINE JESUS, SHINE

Graham Kendrick

1. Lord, the light of your love is shining, / in the midst of the darkness, shining;
Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us, / set us free by the truth You now bring us,
shine on me, / shine on me.

Shine Jesus, shine, / fill this land with the Father's glory;
blaze Spirit, blaze, / set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow, / flood the nations with grace and mercy;
send forth Your word, / Lord, and let there be light.

2. Lord, I come to Your awesome presence, / from the shadows into Your radiance;
By the blood I may enter Your brightness, / search me, try me, consume all my darkness.
Shine on me, / shine on me.

3. As we gaze on Your kingly brightness / so our faces display Your likeness,
Ever changing from glory to glory, / mirrored here may our lives tell Your story.
Shine on me, / shine on me.

Graham Kendrick 1987

10.4.2. Background of Song

This song began its life without a chorus, as a slow worship hymn, but did not really take off.
Kendrick "filed it away for future reference" (St. Michael's Singers 1996:5). Later when looking
for songs to submit for a song-book, he found it again and decided it needed a chorus. After
adding the chorus "Shine, Jesus, Shine" the song became a runaway success, capturing the spirit
of the longing for revival that was wakening all over the world. It became the iconic song of the
March for Jesus movement and is dated to 1987. It is Kendrick's most well-known song, sung all
over the world, translated into many languages. It is consistently near the top of the CCLI charts
and became one of the BBC's *Songs of Praise* top Ten Hymns (St. Michael's Singers 1996:5).

10.4.3. Evaluation of Text

10.4.3.1. Based on the wealth of Scripture in all its breadth

The song-book *Songs of Fellowship* (SF 362) gives the following text references for the song: Ps 139:23 - ("Search me, try me, consume all my darkness"), Jn 1:5 - ("…the light of your love is shining, in the midst of the darkness shining"), Jn 8:12 - ("Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us"), Jn 8: 32 - ("Set us free by the truth you now bring us), 2 Cor 3:18 - ("ever changing from glory to glory, mirrored here may our lives tell your story"), Rev 22:1- ("flow river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy").

One could add Genesis 1:3 - ("Let there be light") and there are probably still others. The song is undoubtedly filled with scriptural allusions, and with some breadth of content.

10.4.3.2 Theologically sound

There are no theologically problematic statements. While revival is at the centre, there is a reference to the fact that renewal ultimately comes through Christ's death on the cross. There is both the knowledge that revival comes from Christ as well as that this has consequences in our lives. It is interesting to note that the American Lutheran tradition leaves out verse 2 completely (WOV 651 and ELW 671). This may have been for theological reasons but the reasons are not apparent.

10.4.3.3. Takes the depth and breadth of human experience seriously

The light and darkness imagery shows awareness of human suffering and difficulty and the need for deliverance, ("consume all my darkness"). But it also shows the dignity of the human being as image of God: "So our faces display your likeness / mirrored here may our lives tell your story". One could question whether it goes very deep into human experience. The interest is more to proclaim revival and the source of new life in Christ.

10. 4.3.4. Needs to be readily understood, it can be simple or repetitive, but not shallow

This is undoubtedly an evangelistic song, and is not difficult to understand. However, some knowledge of basic Christian truth is needed to understand a phrase like "by the blood I may enter Your brightness" (changed in some song-books to "by Your blood" for example MP 445).

238

In some places the biblical references and phrases can sound a bit clichéd, for example "Set us free by the truth You now bring us" is very general and not filled with real meaning. The song does not have great theological depth, but its message is clear and it is suitable for people outside, while not being frustratingly simplistic for people steeped in Christian tradition.

10.4.3.5. Memorable Poetic Value

The Chorus line is a poetic strike that is memorable and captured the imagination of millions. Its repetition works well: "Shine Jesus, shine, Blaze Spirit blaze, Flow river, flow". There are many other memorable lines, for example, "mirrored here may our lives tell Your story", which raises the question of ethics without being demanding, or "flood the nations with grace and mercy" which opens up consciousness to the global work of God.

The language is rhythmic and the verse regular, even though most rhymes are not pure rhymes but approximations. The only pure rhyme is "glory / story". However, the rhythmic nature of the verse makes this hardly noticeable.

10.4.4. Evaluation of Tune

10.4.4.1. Should be singable by unmusical people

This tune is easily learnt and most people can sing along after hearing it only once or twice. This is an important factor for the success of a song. There is much repetition and except in one place, no leaps bigger than a fourth. The range is more of a problem: from lower B to high D, a range of 10 notes. The most difficult problem in the printed version is the very large leap between verse and chorus from lower B to high C, an interval of nine notes. In the "oral", normally sung version, this has been changed. Instead of the last "shine on me" dipping to B it rises one note to E, giving a rousing, emotive major sixth leap to the C in "Shine, Jesus, Shine". Even in the recorded versions where Kendrick himself sings, the change from a ninth to a sixth has been made (Kendrick 1988:19 CD), so it will probably be changed in future printed versions as well, making the transition from verse to chorus easier and more effective.

10.4.4.2. Does not depend on accompaniment

This song carries well in a group with just simple guitar accompaniment, or even *a capella*. It

239

does not need a band to be effective. There are no long or repeated notes. It was often used on the street marches and showed its effectivity and simplicity there.

10.4.4.3. Does not overuse the currently popular stylistic elements

This song stands at the transition between upbeat rhythmic praise music (style of the chorus) and more slow, intimate worship music (style of the verse). It has no excessively long notes, or many repeated notes except in the phrase "hearts on fire" where it gives an appropriately effective pause in the chorus, which fits well with the meaning. There are several syncopated notes, but the words that are stressed by this are all appropriate and important: "shine", "blaze", "flow", "word". This is not an over-use.

10.4.4.4. Creates a balance between the easy and familiar and the interesting

When one analyses the pattern of repetition and variation in the rhythm and melody it becomes clear why this song was easily learned, but also has not yet become too boring to continue to sing. There is plenty of repetition, but also a fair amount of variation. In addition "a" and "b" are very similar, differing only slightly in rhythm and one note in pitch. The melody is closely matched to the rhythm so there is no confusion. The doublets in the verse are contrasted with a different arrangement of repetition in the chorus which makes for interest. This is probably the greatest strength of this song.

Melody pattern: *aa bb cc   de df de dg*
Rhythm pattern: *aa bb cc   de df de dg*

240

10.4.5. Good Match of Text and Tune

10.4.5.1. The best songs have a "monogamous" match of only one text for only one tune.
This song was written with text and tune together. It is thus "monogamous".

10.4.5.2. The mood of the music should fit with the mood of the text
The verses are low and slower, building up, starting with the theme of light shining in darkness.
The chorus is exuberant and joyful with higher and longer notes, fitting with the theme of light or
water flow. They are the more public words focussing on the world and revival and automatically
louder than the more inward focussed, intimate verses, which are lower and softer. There is a
good fit of mood.

10.4.5.3. The Rhythm of the music should fit the natural rhythm of the words
The verses are rhythmical, the chorus more flowing. There are no wrong stresses and the
emphasized notes usually fall on important words. One can speak the words in the rhythm of the
melody without it sounding false.

Lord - , the *light* of your LOVE- is shi~ning
In - the *midst* of the DARK- ness, shi~-ning;
Jesus, light of the WORLD - , shine upon~ us,
set us *free* by the TRUTH - You now bring~ us,
SHINE- on me - - -, / shine on ME- - -.

/ SHINE -   Jesus, *shine*,   (first climax)
/ fill this LAND- \ with - the *Father*'s glory;
BLAZE Spirit, *blaze*,
/ set our *hearts*- on - FIRE- .
FLOW, river, *flow*,
/flood the NAT-\IONS with *grace* and mercy;
SEND forth Your *word*,
/ Lord, and *let*- there be LIGHT - - -.   (final climax)

10.4.5.4. The climax of the tune should fit with the climax in the poetry
The first high point is on the first "Shine, Jesus, Shine" after the large leap (ninth or sixth
depending on the version), and the second on the last phrase of the chorus, "Let there be light"
with a sequence of fairly long notes. Both of these fit with the poetry.

241

10.4.6. Good "Balance of Polarities"

10.4.6.1. Past vs Present

This is very much a song that focussed on the present, capturing the mood and longing of a people. Its style is the style that was popular in the late 1980s. But it also draws heavily on Christian tradition, on Bible verses and also on past revival traditions, where God's word has swept through the nations.

10.4.6.2. Objectivity vs Subjectivity

The biblical references give the song some objectivity, but in general it is a subjective, fervent prayer for revival and a response to God in faith and commitment.

10.4.6.3 Cognitive vs Emotive

The song has three verses and there is some theological content, although the phrases are fairly standard Christian dogmatic phrases and don't go very deep. There are words with some emotive content, such as "gaze" and "awesome" but they are not overstretched. The tune is fairly emotive, especially the major sixth leap in the oral version of the song, as well as the repeated high Cs in the chorus. This is quite well balanced.

10.4.6.4. Community vs Individual

The balance between individual and community is impressive in this song. Constantly the focus shifts from the "We" to the "I" and back to the "We". The song begins with a focus on the world, "Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us" and then turns back to the intimate prayer "Shine on me". Then again at the chorus the focus is out in the world, on "this land", "our hearts", "the nations" and one could almost say, the cosmos through the reference to Genesis 1: "Let there be light". The next verse is again very intimate and personal, with the same dramatic shift to the world when the chorus starts. The last verse is again a "We" verse, which becomes personal in the last line's prayer, "Shine on me", making personal what was the challenge to "us", namely to be the mirror. Then the chorus again brings the wide vision.

Here is another great strength of this song which is able to make a connection between the very personal worship and adoration of the believer and a concern for salvation and wholeness of the

242

world, a quality sadly lacking in many Christian songs.

10.4.6.5.Familiarity vs Diversity

There is a good balance between repetition and variation in the tune which has been discussed. At the moment in most congregations it would be very familiar and sung with enjoyment. For those who do not know it, it is quickly and easily learned. At the height of its popularity the tendency was sometimes to sing it too often and it became too familiar, letting people tire of it. Used in moderation when it suits the service theme, it has the potential of becoming a regular "familiar" song in services.

10.4.6.6. Affirmation vs Challenge

There are elements both of affirmation and challenge in this song. Implicit in the prayer for revival and for Jesus to "set our hearts on fire" is a challenge to go out, proclaim the gospel and spread God's love. The phrase "May our lives tell Your story" is a challenge to lead lives which will attract others to Christ. Affirming are the phrases of objective proclamation, "in the midst of the darkness shining" or the assurance that someone can take the darkness away: "consume all my darkness". There is a good balance here.

10.4.6.7. Cross vs Glory

In general the song focuses more on the glory and power of God, but darkness and suffering, as well as the negative side of an individual's life are acknowledged. The darkness is portrayed as something that God overcomes or fights against, which may seem like a tendency to dualism. However, darkness is also the place of the revelation of Christ who shines "in the midst of the darkness". There is no mention of cross or redemption except implicitly.

10.4.6.8. Transcendence vs Immanence

Both of these components are present, with the emphasis being on the transcendent, the acknowledgement of power and glory. A moment of immanence comes in the prayer "Shine on me". The second verse describes entering into God's presence "from the shadows", but it is the presence of an awesome and glorious ruler, rather than a loving father. The phrase "by the blood I may enter Your brightness" emphasizes the distance between the divine and the human rather than the closeness.

243

10.4.6.9 Vertical vs Horizontal

This polarity has been kept in balance impressively. As has been discussed in the "community vs individual" section, the focus keeps shifting from the individual to the world in ever widening horizontal rings. God is generally the one "above" the individual believer, the community and the world, but in the phrase "mirrored here may our lives tell Your story" also gives a sense of God's revelation within the horizontal sphere of human relationships.

10.4.6.10 Universal vs Particular

There is very little "particular" in this song. Its universal message helped it travel around the world.

10.4.7. Overall Evaluation

The appeal of this song lies both in its easily learnt yet varied tune and in its creative words which being a call and prayer for revival touched a nerve of the time. It is a fairly well balanced song, particularly in its juxtaposition of personal faith and its national, international and even cosmic repercussions. It became a victim of its own success in that it was sung everywhere and all the time, and after a while people did begin to tire of it. It should be used in moderation when it fits the service theme. Then it has the potential to remain popular and familiar for many more years. It has already gained a place in hymnal supplements for example *With One Voice* in the section "Epiphany" (WOV 651) and in new denominational hymnals (ELW 671).

244

10.5. Evaluation of *Meekness and Majesty*

10.5.1. Text and Tune

<u>10.5.1.1. Tune: MEEKNESS AND MAJESTY</u>

<u>10.5.1.2. Text: published version SF 390</u>

1. Meekness and majesty, / manhood and deity,
in perfect harmony, / the Man who is God.
Lord of eternity / dwells in humanity
kneels in humility / and washes our feet.

O what a mystery, / meekness and majesty,
bow down and worship / for this is your God, / this is your God.

245

2. Fathers pure radiance, / perfect in innocence,
Yet learns obedience / to death on the cross.
Suffering to give us life, / conquering through sacrifice,
and as they crucify / prays: "Father forgive" .

3. Wisdom unsearchable, / God the invisible,
Love indestructible / in frailty appears.
Lord of infinity, / stooping so tenderly,
lifts our humanity / to the heights of His throne.

Graham Kendrick 1986

10.5.2. Background of Song

This song is dated to 1986. This means it is earlier than *Shine, Jesus, Shine*, and before the wave of street marches. This song clearly belongs in the era after 1984 where Kendrick "decided to focus all his energies on congregational worship music" (St. Michael's Singers 1996: 9). This is clearly a song for a committed congregation, not for evangelistic outreach. It is a song inspired by mystery of the incarnation, trying to capture something of Christ's power and gentleness. This song also shows Kendrick was accountable to the community for the words of his songs and humble enough to be corrected. The first version of this song contained the words "clothed with humanity". However, his colleague Clive Calver pointed out that this phrase was associated with the early Christian heresies which denied the full humanity of Christ. The verse now reads "dwells in humanity" (St. Michael's Singers 9).

10.5.3. Evaluation of Text

10.5.3.1. Based on the wealth of Scripture in all its breadth

Songs of Fellowship (SF 390) lists the following biblical references: Mt 11:29 - "Meekness", "kneels in humility", Lk 23:34 - "And as they crucify prays: 'Father, forgive'", Jn 13:5 - "kneels in humility and washes our feet",   Phil 2:6-9 - "perfect in innocence / yet learns obedience to death on a cross….. bow down and worship for this is your God".   One could add others, for example Rom 11:33 - "Wisdom unsearchable";   or John 1:14 - "dwells in humanity".

The song focuses on the mystery of the incarnation and suffering service, central themes in

246

biblical witness. Its language is thoroughly biblical, but there are fewer direct quotes and more own poetic constructions which transport the biblical message in new language: for example, "Love indestructible in frailty appears" a memorable paraphrase of the phrase in Phil. 2, "he emptied himself". The song thus meets this criterion of quality.

10.5.3.2 Theologically sound

As it was stated in the background, Kendrick modified a theologically problematic statement in his original version, when it was pointed out to him that "the word 'clothed' carried with it a sense of the temporary, as of something you put on and take off rather than Christ being permanently made man" (St. Michael's Singers 1996:9). As it now stands the song touches on central theological themes in ways which are consistent with Christian tradition throughout the centuries, and emphasizes parts of the tradition which are often neglected, such as the self-emptying of Christ, and God's revelation in frailty.

10.5.3.3. Takes the depth and breadth of human experience seriously

There is not so much on our reality in this song which focuses more on the mystery of the incarnation. But human frailty and weakness is an underlying theme. This makes it necessary for God to stoop down to our level and serve us.

10.5.3.4. Needs to be readily understood, it can be simple or repetitive, but not shallow

As has been stated this is not a song which aims at evangelistic outreach. It aims at people who are already Christians, and want to deepen their reflection about fundamental Christian truths. The word choices are not simple, but there is nothing that should not be understood by a congregant who has been in church awhile and knows the most important elements of the Christian story. Many biblical allusions would not be understandable for someone on the outside. However, the basic message should come across even to less biblically grounded people, and it is possible to "grow into" this song, grasping its truth ever more deeply.

10.5.3.5. Memorable Poetic Value

The poetic language and original phrases are the song's biggest strength. Almost the whole poem is memorable. The verses have strong rhythm and rhyming triplets. The fact that these are not

247

pure rhymes does not damage the impact in any way. There are many memorable phrases, such as the title phrase *Meekness and Majesty* which captures the essence of the nature of the servant Kingship of Christ. These paradoxes of the incarnation are captured in contrasting triplets or couplets all the way through the song: "Eternity – humanity – humility", "radiance – innocence – obedience", "conquering through sacrifice", "Love indestructible in frailty appears", "Lord of infinity, stooping so tenderly".

10.5.4. Good Tune

10.5.4.1. Should be singable by unmusical people

This song is not as easy to learn as *Shine, Jesus, Shine*. Although there is a fair amount of repetition in the rhythm, there are several features which are difficult for a congregation. There are several long notes in the refrain, which make the refrain worshipful, but are difficult to sustain for untrained singers:

The last notes of the following words have very long notes:

majesty: 5 beats, worship: 7 beats, God: 9 beats.

There is a tendency to shorten this in the "oral tradition" to 2, 4 and 6 beats (always leaving out one whole bar).

The most difficult part of the tune is the sequence of notes in the word "humility" in verse 1: - three quaver pairs which go down the octave, not in a usual arpeggio but in unusual intervals: (top C-A,G-E,D-C). This is not easy to learn and unlikely to be remembered after a first or second hearing.

The difficulty of the tune is a drawback of the song, but with some investment it should be teachable to a congregation. It is probably worthwhile to teach it to the choir first, if the congregation has one.

10.5.4.2. Does not depend on accompaniment

The long notes in the published version cannot be sustained without accompaniment. The shortened version should be possible. However, with accompaniment the hymn can work quite well, as the long notes do not need to be held for the full length.

248

10.5.4.3. Does not overuse the currently popular stylistic elements

This song was written when the "Praise and Worship" style and tradition was just beginning. Kendrick was one of its pioneers. So his songs do not really "overuse a currently popular style", they were the trend-setters that helped initially to establish a new style. The long notes here are used for worshipful effect and not because they happened to be the current style. And where there is good accompaniment they serve their purpose well and do not come across as being overused.

10.5.4.4. Creates a balance between the easy and familiar and the interesting

There is a fair amount of repetition in the melody, but also interesting variation:

Melody pattern: *abac adef gh ij*

Rhythm pattern: *aaab aacb aa' de*

The melody is fairly complex and varied, but there is consistency in the rhythm, which does make it more easily teachable. However, even the tune does not go beyond 10 different patterns.

249

10.5.5. Good Match of Text and Tune

10.5.5.1. The best songs have a "monogamous" match of only one text for only one tune.

Both text and tune were written together by the same song-writer. This is a "monogamous" song.

10.5.5.2. The mood of the music should fit with the mood of the text

The contrast between low and rhythmic and high with long notes is a good musical illustration of the contrasts in the text. The rising notes of "O what a mystery, meekness and majesty" musically underline the sense of awe and wonder expressed in the words.

10.5.5.3. The Rhythm of the music should fit the natural rhythm of the words

The main stresses in this song fall on important words as shown by the notation:

Meekness and MAJESTY, -
manhood and DEITY, -
in perfect HARMONY,-
the MAN who is *God*.- -
Lord of ETERNITY -
dwells in HUMANITY -
kneels in HUMILITY~
and~ WASHES our feet.- -

O what a MYSTERY,-
meekness and MAJESTY.- - - -
bow down and worSHIP - - - - - -
for *this* is your GOD - - - - - - - -
this is your GOD. - - - - - - - -

In most of the phrases the longest note falls on the last syllable of words where they are not normally stressed, that is *MajestY, deitY, harmonY, mysterY*. This is a bit distracting, but still tolerable.

10.5.5.4. The climax of the tune should fit with the climax in the poetry

The match is very good in verse one: It climbs slowly and steadily and then descends rapidly at the word *"humility"* and stays low for "washes our feet." The long notes in the refrain demonstrate a sense of awe and wonder, and the climax is suitably on "This is your God".

250

The match is less good for the last verse, where the descent coincides with the words "Lifts our humanity to the heights of His throne". This mismatch has been overcome in the choir version by letting the sopranos shoot up instead of down to end an octave higher (St. Michael's Singers 1996 CD recording).

10.5.6. Good "Balance of Polarities"

10.5.6.1 Past vs Present

This is a song which tries to link a present congregation with its faith tradition and the heart of the biblical witness. It was written in a style which was then just establishing itself, which means a very contemporary style. It is an attempt to rediscover the past dogmatic tradition about the meaning of the incarnation and make it connect to the present generation through contemporary music and words.

10.5.6.2 Objectivity vs Subjectivity

This song clearly has its emphasis on objective proclamation of Christian truths. But the refrain brings the challenge for a subjective faith response in the words: "Bow down and worship, for this is your God".

10.5.6.3 Cognitive vs Emotive

In line with the point above, the emphasis of this song is on theological content rather than emotion. The wonder comes from contemplating and coming to an understanding of biblical and theological truths and the feeling of awe it engenders. There are few emotive words in the verses – except perhaps the word "tenderly". The refrain is more emotive, both in content and in music, with its exclamation: "O what a mystery…" and its long high notes. Although there is quite dense theological content, it is not distant or dry, but becomes personal in the words "This is your God".

10.5.6.4. Community vs Individual

In general this is a song using "We language". The call to worship is in the second person, which may be directed at the individual or the community. But in these words every individual within that community is challenged to acknowledge the Lordship of Christ personally.

251

10.5.6.5. Familiarity vs Diversity

This is not a song which is likely to be sung very often and overused. It will initially not be easily taught. It would probably be sung at particular occasions where it suits the theme of the Sunday. In this way it creates diversity. But the repetitions in verse and chorus give an element of familiarity.

10.5.6.6. Affirmation vs Challenge

This song has as its centre the affirming message of the incarnation of God for our salvation. It affirms our salvation and our worth before God. It challenges the believer to answer with the act of worship. It does not speak about the consequences in the person's life.

10.5.6.7. Cross vs Glory

There is a good balance between proclaiming the kenotic self-emptying to death of Jesus, but also the glory and power of the transcendent Christ.

10.5.6.8. Transcendence vs Immanence

The theme of incarnation which is the theme of this song is in essence about the relationship between the transcendent and the immanent God. The contrasting attributes reflect the juxtaposition of immanent and transcendent. The great almighty God, "Lord of infinity", comes to "dwell in humanity". Here there is a good balance, and this is one of the strengths of this song.

10.5.6.9 Vertical vs Horizontal

In general this is a song focussed on the relationship between God and humanity. "Humanity" creates a horizontal element, but generally the focus is on the vertical in God coming down to earth.

10.5.6.10. Universal vs Particular

The message is universal, but compared to *Shine, Jesus, Shine* this is a much more particular and seasonal song and would be sung either during Advent or Lent.

10.5.7. Overall Evaluation

252

Meekness and Majesty is a song for committed congregants and not for evangelistic events. Its tune is not simple and does require good accompaniment, however, its text is so theologically deep and memorable, that it should be attempted to teach this song, best to a choir or worship team first. It will probably remain a song for special occasions during Advent or Lent, not one which is often sung during the year. Its text draws the singer into a deep contemplation of the mystery of the incarnation and can engender a new sense of awe and wonder in what God has done for humanity, as the formulations go beyond the familiar clichéd ones on the meaning of Christ's coming.

253

10.6. Evaluation of *My Lord, what love is this (Amazing Love)*

10.6.1. Text and Tune
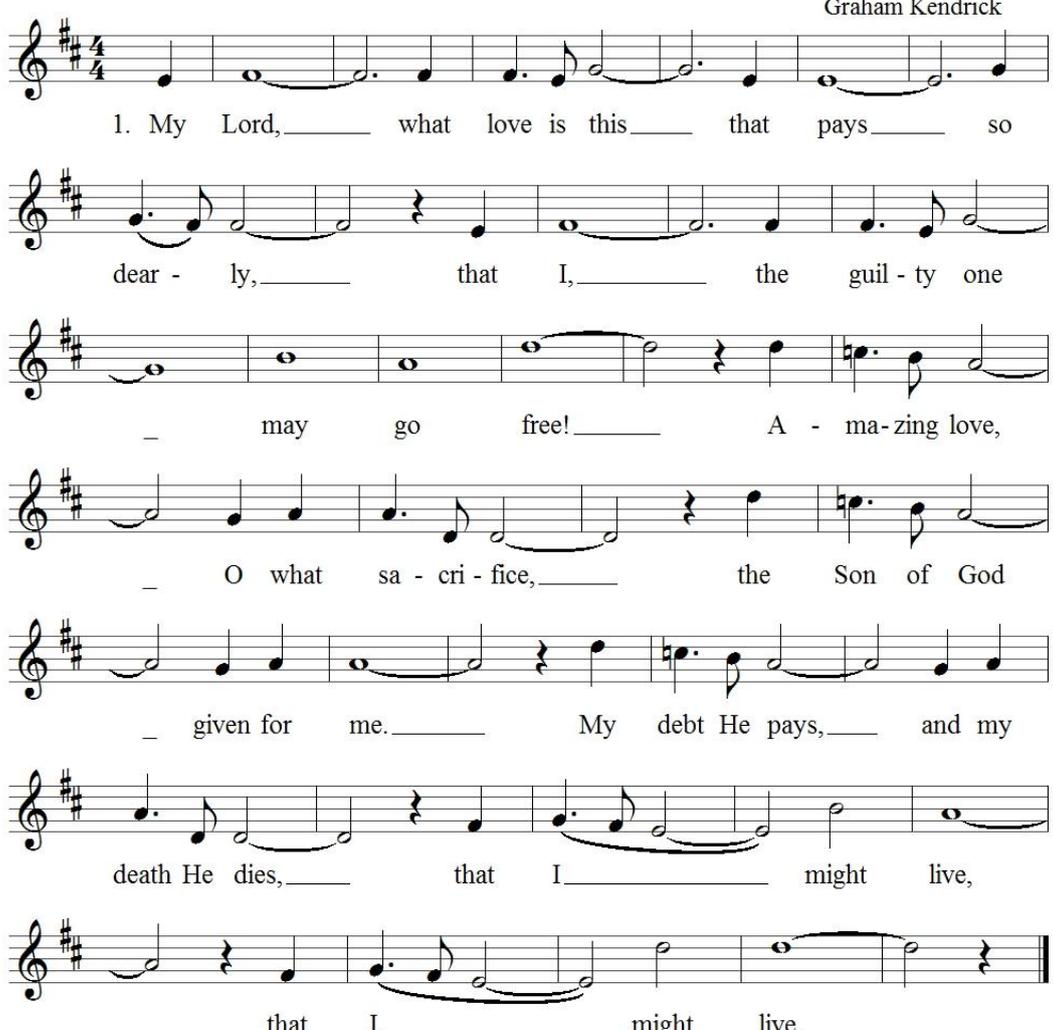
Graham Kendrick

1. My Lord,_____ what love is this_____ that pays_____ so dear - ly,_____ that I,_____ the guil - ty one

_ may go free!_____ A - ma- zing love, _ O what sa - cri - fice,_____ the Son of God

_ given for me._____ My debt He pays,____ and my death He dies,_____ that I_____ might live,

_ that I_____ might live.

10.6.1.2. Text: published version SF 398

1. My Lord, what love is this, / that pays so dearly,
that I, the guilty one, / may go free!

Amazing Love, / O what sacrifice
the Son of God / giv'n for me.
My debt He pays, / and my death He dies,
that I might live, / that I might live.

254

2. And so they watched Him die, / despised, rejected;
But oh, the blood He shed / flowed for me!

3. And now this love of Christ / shall flow like rivers;
come wash your guilt away, / live again!

Graham Kendrick 1989

10.6.2. Background of Song

This song is the only Kendrick song included in the South African CD *50 Greatest Praise and Worship Songs* (Maranatha 2006), and probably the most well-known in South Africa after *Shine, Jesus, Shine*. As it is not included in the CD *The New Hymn-makers* I do not have a write-up of the background of this song. But the date listed in publications is 1989, which makes it later than *Shine, Jesus, Shine* and written at the time of the growth of the "March for Jesus" movement in the United Kingdom. It is a typical "Worship" song, focussed on intimate adoration.

10.6.3. Evaluation of Text

10.6.3.1. Based on the wealth of Scripture in all its breadth
Songs of Fellowship (SF 398) lists the following Scripture references: Is 53:3 - "despised, rejected", Rm 5:8 - " I, the guilty one, may go free", Eph 5:2 - "Amazing Love, o what sacrifice, the Son of God giv'n for me". Compared with other intimate worship songs this one has a high load of scriptural allusions, but there are fewer references than in many other Kendrick songs.

10.6.3.2 Theologically sound
The message of the song is the sentence basic to Christian theology: "Jesus died to set me free from my sin". The one statement which may be misconstrued, though it is not problematic as it stands, is the phrase "they watched Him die, despised, rejected" in contrast to "the blood He shed flowed for me". This seems to create a distinction between those who caused Jesus' death and those for whom He died and who accept his sacrifice. Such a distinction between "them" and "us" has led to Anti-Semitism in the past. This is obviously not Kendrick's intention and the verse needs to be read in the context of "my debt He pays and my death He dies".

255

10.6.3.3. Takes the depth and breadth of human experience seriously

The song assumes a deep sense of guilt similar to that present in Paul Gerhardt's songs. While this experience is almost necessary to the Christian message it can no longer be assumed to be present in most of contemporary people. The fact that we have sinned and need deliverance usually needs to be preached as theological truth and is not part of "natural" experience. However, the brokenness and sin of human life usually does become apparent to people who think deeply about existence. Many contemporary songs no longer speak seriously about guilt and sin. This is a song which thus speaks more readily to committed Christians than to outsiders. The song speaks only about guilt, not about suffering in other ways.

10.6.3.4. Needs to be readily understood, it can be simple or repetitive, but not shallow

This song does assume some very basic understanding of Christian teaching, but there is nothing difficult to understand in the text. There are some phrases that sound clichéd and overused. "Amazing love" has been a popular phrase ever since Isaac Watts' "Love so amazing, so divine / demands my soul, my life, my all".[281] And there are several other phrases which are fairly well worn for example "My debt He pays" or "the blood flowed for me". However, the overall impression of the song is still original and genuine.

10.6.3.5. Memorable Poetic Value

The poetry is less memorable than in other Kendrick songs and there are several clichéd phrases. However, there are still lines which stand out: The alliterated "d" in the phrase "My debt He pays and my death He dies", works well. Equally the repeated "o"s and "v"s of the phrase, "And now this love of Christ / shall flow like rivers". Quite strong is also the line "They watched Him die, despised , rejected". The sudden switch to third person here creates distance in an otherwise emotionally intimate song. But this could be quite deliberate on the part of Kendrick, a reminder that we are speaking of an emotional experience now (our worship of a loving, redeeming Christ) but also of a brutal, historical happening (the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth).

10.6.4. Evaluation of Tune

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[281] See notes on Charles Wesley's *And can it be* in 9.6.3.5.

256

10.6.4.1. Should be singable by unmusical people

The tune is very slow and emotional and contains many long notes. The tune itself poses few difficulties for unpractised singers, except the difficulty of sustaining all the long notes.

The range is one octave (eight notes) which is easily manageable for most people – although some people do struggle already with the upper D. There are several larger leaps, most of them thirds or fourths, the words "sacrifice" and "death He dies" leap down by a fifth, but that is still a manageable leap. The first "I might" takes the singer up a fifth, and the second leaps up a seventh. This is probably the most difficult part of the melody itself.

10.6.4.2. Does not depend on accompaniment

The biggest difficulty with this tune is that it is very slow with many long notes and difficult to sustain by unpractised singers. It depends quite heavily on accompaniment to lead through with the notes which sustain or even heighten the emotion of the song.

There are many long notes in this song:

Notes of four beats: 11, notes of five or six beats: 7, notes of seven or eight beats: 4.

However, they are easier to sustain than the long notes in *Meekness and Majesty* which come as a contrast in a song which generally moves faster. Here the whole song is slow and one can adjust the basic beat to the ability of the congregation or worship team. Nevertheless this is probably a song whose use will be restricted to worship services with strong accompaniment.

10.6.4.3. Does not overuse the currently popular stylistic elements

This is written very much in the slow, worshipful style which was becoming popular. And possibly this song itself helped popularise the style. If the slow tune is well sustained, well lead and accompanied this song can lead people into a deep experience of intimate worship. However, it is quite possible that it will not survive a shift in style, with future generations perhaps calling it "tedious". I have experienced this song in several services of bigger churches with good bands, and here it works very well, but have not seen it included in any of the collections of our congregations which have more amateur instrumentalists and singers. The one time I have used it myself, we used it as an interlude for the congregation to listen to.

257

10.6.4.4. Creates a balance between the easy and familiar and the interesting

In spite of its level of difficulty this became a very popular song. There is enough repetition to help a congregation learn it if it is well led.

Melody pattern: *abac dedf degh*

Rhythm pattern: *aaab cdce cdfg*

There is in both the melody and the rhythm pattern a fair amount of repetition but also variation. The variations in rhythm usually go along with a variation in the melody, which makes it easier to remember. It is not a difficult tune to learn, even if it is a difficult tune to sing well.

10.6.5. Good Match of Text and Tune

10.6.5.1. The best songs have a "monogamous" match of only one text for only one tune.
This is again a song where text and tune were written together by the same person.

10.6.5.2. The mood of the music should fit with the mood of the text
The tune is undoubtedly a good match for the words. It is worshipful, emotive, prayerful. The words "Amazing Love" are sung to a sequence of notes which express awe and wonder well. While there are generally too many very long notes, the long notes on "may go free", work well for expressing the freedom Christ gives.

258

10.6.5.3. The Rhythm of the music should fit the natural rhythm of the words

The long notes put a stress on many words. The notation below keeps to a basic beat of 4/4 and uses a dash for every extra beat per word.

My LORD- - - - - -, what love is *this,* - - - -
that PAYS - - - - - - so dearly, - - - -
that I, - - - - - - the guilty ONE, - - - - -
may - - - go - - - / FREE! - - - - - - '   (first climax)

Amazing LOVE, - - -   O what *sac* \ rifice - - - '
/ the SON- of God - - - giv'n for ME. - - - - - '
/ My   DEBT He pays, - - - and my *death* \ He dies, - - - '
that I ~~ - - - might - live, - - - - - - '
that I~~ - - - / might - live. - - -   (second climax)

There are no incorrectly stressed words, though the long notes do stretch some words which are not normally emphasized. But most long notes fall on words which are important, for example "Lord", "pays", "I", "guilty ONE". I do not like the long stress on the "I" in the refrain, but it does not go against the meaning, as the song stresses the message, "He died FOR ME".

10.6.5.4. The climax of the tune should fit with the climax in the poetry

The first climax in the tune comes in the last line of the verse which matches well to "may go free", in verse 1, and also to the words of the other two verses: "flowed for me" and "live again!" And this line leads over into the next descending line, "Amazing love". The highest notes are in the last line of the refrain, a fitting highlight: "that I might live!"

10.6.6. Good "Balance of Polarities"

10.6.6.1 Past vs Present

This song is focussed generally in the present, in terms of its style and emphasis on individual worship. However, it has an interest to link this present with the historical Christ event and

259

Christian tradition. This is most evident in the narrative style "they watched Him die", which presents a break in the personal style of the song, probably deliberately.

10.6.6.2 Objectivity vs Subjectivity

This song is very subjective in its themes in the first verse and chorus, but the second verse with its narrative introduction and the third verse with a call to forgiveness in the second person introduce an element of proclamation and objectivity. Interestingly throughout the song Kendrick uses the more impersonal and objective third person pronoun, "He" rather than "You", in his adoration of the Love of God. This also gives the song a more "objective" feel.

10.6.6.3 Cognitive vs Emotive

This is the most highly emotional song I have encountered of Graham Kendrick. But it seems quite clear that he is aware of the dangers of highly emotional songs which can not only express but also manipulate people's feelings. It is thus interesting, that while usually worship songs are written directly to God in the second person, Kendrick uses the more impersonal third person and phrases which create objectivity and distance (see above). This prevents the song from becoming so purely emotive that the "head" is no longer involved and allows some measure of rational control over religious feelings.   I have sympathy for this caution in Kendrick, be it conscious or unconscious, because a faith based purely on strong emotional experiences, cut off from rationality, is often unsustainable in daily life.

10.6.6.4. Community vs Individual

This is mainly a personal song using the "I" form. The second and third verse open this up a bit to remember history and to give an invitation to repentance in verse 3. Who the "you" is, in verse 3, is not made clear. It may be an invitation to the self, or to others out there.

10.6.6.5.Familiarity vs Diversity

For congregations familiar with worship music, this song is in a familiar style, diversity perhaps being created by its more objective content than most songs of intimate devotion. For congregations less familiar with the style, the biblical content of this worship song may open the way for this style to become more acceptable. It is relatively easily learnt because

260

of the repetition patterns, with enough variation to create interest. Because of its level of difficulty it is unlikely to become overused.

10.6.6.6. Affirmation vs Challenge

There is a good balance between the assurance of forgiveness and freedom and the challenge to confess and grasp the offered new life: "Come wash your guilt away, / Live again!" There is no mention of consequences of faith.

10.6.6.7. Cross vs Glory

This is a "cross-centred" song, about the centrality to faith of Christ's death for our sins. The words "despised, rejected" are a reminder how Christ gave up the glory of God. However, the words "Amazing love" and the various adjectives of new life are a reminder of the resurrection and the glory of the crucified and risen Christ.

10.6.6.8. Transcendence vs Immanence

The whole worshipful atmosphere of the song is a reminder of the transcendence of God and our dependence on him. But the phrase "for me" draws it into the personal sphere of God in relationship with the individual.

10.6.6.9 Vertical vs Horizontal

There is little consciousness of a horizontal dimension to faith. The personal relationship of God and the individual is central.

10.6.6.10 Universal vs Particular

This is a song about the universal truth about salvation in Christ. It can be sung in worship anytime during the year, but is most suitable for Lent.

10.6.7. Overall evaluation

This is a song that has the power to lead people into intimate worship and contemplation of Christ on the cross.   It has a strong theological message and connects deep emotion with theological content. However, it will probably not "make it" as a congregational song in the

261

long term. It is too dependent on strong lead singers and accompaniment.   It is also interesting that in spite of its popularity in the Worship movement it was not included in the short-list for the *New Hymnmakers* CD (St. Michael's Singers 1996).

10.7. Evaluation of Kendrick's Work within his context

Kendrick was a "pioneer of contemporary Christian music in the UK" (St. Michael's Singers 1996). He helped popularise a new style, and inspired a whole generation, not only in the UK but across the world with the dream of revival and touching the world with the Love of God. Bringing people together across denominational and cultural divides was an achievement in itself. Even after the March for Jesus movement has died down, Kendrick's influence especially in the UK remains significant, but shifting more from the charismatic churches to the mainline, established churches. He has been much less sung in the USA, though many songs have become well established there too. He continues to produce new albums and his songs continue to be included in the later editions of *Songs of Fellowship.*[282]

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[282] For example: *There is a hope so sure*   SF III 1542 and *Beauty for brokenness* SF II 664

262

10.8. Evaluation of Kendrick's Work for us

Kendrick's songs are no longer trend-setters and unlikely to be the songs that fire evangelistic campaigns and draw millions today. However, today they serve a very valuable function as songs which provide solid theology and biblical content in accessible language. The "emotion" today will mostly be provided by the latest worship songs, which are in the style people want today. However, Kendrick's songs, included together with other songs in a service can help maintain the crucial balance between the cognitive and the emotive elements in a service. And many of his songs still themselves have great emotional appeal. The songs have a spread of themes and the crucial social content needed to motivate Christians to become active in the world. They will find their way into more and more denominational hymnals – perhaps sometimes with some modifications in the tunes, or simplifications. Graham Kendrick has written over 400 songs which of course cannot all survive. But there is a good chance that a fair proportion will, particularly those with themes that other writers have neglected.

CHAPTER ELEVEN - NOEL RICHARDS (1955 -)

11.1. Background and Life History

Noel Richards who co-wrote many songs with his wife Tricia, is one of the contemporary song-writers who have been included in the *New Hymnmakers* series (St. Michael's Singers 1997 CD). One of the high points of his career was filling the Wembley Stadium with fifty thousand people who were praising Christ as "Champion of the world" (St. Michael's Singers 1997:2).

Noel Richards was born in Llantrisant, South Wales in February 1955. He came from a Christian family and made a conscious decision to become a Christian at the age of eight or nine, a decision he confirmed when he was 15. At this time the new minister John Glass taught him to play, sing and lead worship. At a concert in Bristol, at which young Graham Kendrick was playing, his wish grew to become a singer (Richards 1997 Online). He started leading worship in his own church and became involved in Bristol Youth for Christ, taking part in school evangelism. Later he was invited to work for Youth for Christ full time. Here he met Tricia, at that stage still in school. They married three years later. Two children were born to the couple. Unfortunately there is little biographical material available on her.

They settled in Plymouth, as part of the leadership of a new church there. But there were many pressures and the new church leadership was inexperienced. Eventually the church closed down and moved to Cobham, to the parish led by Gerald Coates, who later co-wrote several songs with Noel Richards. Richards believed in collaborative writing and several songs are co-authored either with his wife, or other artists. (In the section below I will not always differentiate these songs from the ones written only by Noel.) On his albums he also sings many songs by other writers. The first song to be published was *Lord and Father, King forever*. Then came *You laid aside your majesty* and his real breakthrough came with *All heaven declares*. He has toured many countries and led many major worship events, including the event in Wembley Stadium, London (St. Michael's Singers 1997:2-3).

265

11.2. Overview of Work

Noel and Tricia Richards have been influential in the Praise and Worship movement from its early beginnings. They are fairly typical of the core of the movement in their style and choice of themes. This made them very popular. However in general, Noel Richards has a much narrower range of styles and themes than Graham Kendrick. The bulk of his work fits into the general mould of typical Praise and Worship songs but there are also several songs with less typical themes and more theological content than the average. Many of his songs have their focus on the act of worship. There is also biblical content, though sometimes in very standard formulations for example in the phrases from *All heaven declares:* "Forever You will be the lamb upon the throne" or "Who once was slain to reconcile man to God" (MP 14).

There are many songs that focus on the adoration of God. A typical example of this will be studied in this chapter, *By your side*.   Another aspect of Richards' writing is the strong focus on spiritual warfare as for example in the song, *There is power in the name of Jesus:* "At His name God's enemies shall be crushed beneath our feet " (Richards 2005: CD 1). Whether these enemies are literal or figurative, spiritual forces or hostile nations does not become clear in Richards' writing.

While many of Richards' songs focus on glory rather than the cross, he has more than a handful of songs that centre on the central Christian event, Christ's death and resurrection. Among these are *You laid aside your majesty*, *He has risen* and *Behold the Lord*, all three included on the *New Hymnmakers* CD (St. Michael's Singers 1997). There are many songs that proclaim Christ as the solution to human suffering, but also some that speak of Christ's presence in difficulty for example in the song *Love songs from heaven* : " Evil has prospered, but truth is alive. / In this dark world the light still shines" (Richards 2005 CD 4).

266

11.3. Motivation of choice of Songs

The first choice of a song to study was the first Richards song which appealed to me and made me interested in him as song-writer, *You laid aside your majesty*. The other songs I became acquainted with through the *New Hymnmakers* CD and I would agree that they have included the best of Richards on that selection. There was no song on the more extensive collection I looked at (Richards 2005) which I felt was of a higher quality.

The other two were chosen as representative of categories of Richards' writing:
By your side was chosen, because it represents the typical worship song style and because it was co-written with his wife Tricia. The third song represents the more theologically deep and serious content also present in Richards. *Filled with compassion* was also co-written with Tricia. It is a song which shows awareness of the world, and human responsibility in it.

267

11.4. Evaluation of *You laid aside your majesty*

11.4.1.1. Tune: YOU LAID ASIDE YOUR MAJESTY

Noel Richards

268

<u>11.4.1.2. Text: published version SF 633</u>

You laid aside your majesty, / gave up everything for me,
suffer'd at the hands of those / You had created.
You took all my guilt and shame, / when You died and rose again;
now today You reign / in heaven and earth exalted.

I really want to worship You, my Lord,
You have won my heart and I am Yours
for ever and ever; I will love You.
You are the only one who died for me,
gave Your life to set me free,
so I lift my voice to You / in adoration.

 Noel Richards 1985

11.4.2. Background of Song

This song was written in 1985 when Richards was doing a great deal of schools evangelism
and writing what he calls "performance" songs to share the gospel. However one day the
tune for this worship song came to him and the "words followed immediately".   He refined
it, showed it to others and introduced it at a leadership conference. They felt there was no
more change necessary and the song has become one of Richards' best known and loved
songs (St. Michael's Singers 1997: 3-4).

11.4.3. Evaluation of Text

<u>11.4.3.1. Based on the wealth of Scripture in all its breadth</u>
This song though simple and short puts the essence of Scripture in a nutshell. It is really a
paraphrase of the Christ hymn, Philippians 2, with the kenotic descent of Christ traced to the
cross: " gave up everything for me, suffered at the hands of those You had created". Then it
traces the ascent into God's glory: "Now today you reign in heaven and earth exalted".   The
phrase "every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord" is personalised into an individual,
worshipful response: "I really want to worship You, my Lord". The other reference given in
Songs of Fellowship (SF 633) is Isaiah 53,5: here the "for us" again individually
appropriated as "for me". The song has a focus on the mystery of the incarnation: God the
creator gives himself into the hands of his creatures, and through this, overcomes the division

269

between God and humanity.   This is a biblical song.

11.4.3.2 Theologically sound

The centre of the song is the centre of Christian faith: Through Jesus Christ's death and resurrection we have freedom from sin and guilt. The worshipful response is appropriate, focussing on what Christ has done, as well as my response to this. The worship focusses on You not on I. It is clearly a response to God's action. There are no theologically problematic statements.

11.4.3.3. Takes the depth and breadth of human experience seriously

The proclamation of faith is the centre here, rather than human reality. But it is the human reality of "guilt and shame" which made the incarnation and the passion of Christ necessary. The chorus has some formulations which are typical of worship songs and have the tendency towards cliché, for example "I am Yours for ever and ever; I will love you".   In this phrase there is a tendency for the punctuation to shift because of the phrasing of the tune (see discussion below) and for people to sing, "for ever and ever I will love you" , a statement which is common in worship songs but which ignores the ups and downs and doubts in faith. However, in the context as a whole, and as they are punctuated in the published version, they are not problematic.

11.4.3.4. Needs to be readily understood, it can be simple or repetitive, but not shallow

The words are easily understood. There are no difficult formulations and they are not shallow in that they can be read and repeated aloud without sounding trite. There are some fairly standard formulations such as "gave your life to set me free", or " I really want to worship You, my Lord", which could be seen as clichéd, but which in the context as a whole still come across as genuine.

270

11.4.3.5. Memorable Poetic Value

There is a pleasing rhythm about the language and rhyme is present without it becoming a straightjacket. The most memorable poetic line is the third in the verse: "suffered at the hands of those you had created". However on the whole the poetic value is not that far above the average for worship songs.

11.4.4. Evaluation of Tune

11.4.4.1. Should be singable by unmusical people

The tune is flowing and simple, but not always easy. There are many syncopations (off beat accents) which need some concentration to get right, and are even more difficult to get right if one does not have or cannot read the music. Sometimes the melody goes down when one would expect it to go up and vice versa. It is not a tune which sticks in one's mind on the first hearing, but it is relatively easily learnt. It does not get boring or rote. The most difficult perhaps is the start of the song in the middle of a bar (with three quavers), which is difficult to get right together when singing in a group. It is likely that most congregants will only join in in the middle of the phrase at the beginning of the next bar.

11.4.4.2. Does not depend on accompaniment

This tune can stand on its own without a band or good orchestration. But because of the sometimes complex rhythms it works better with strong lead singers.

11.4.4.3. Does not overuse the currently popular stylistic elements

There are no excessively long notes in this song; usually only two or three beat notes. There are a few places with repeated notes: "You laid aside" - four repeated B's, "I really want to worship You " - 6 B's, " You are the only one " also six repeated B's. Within the chorus this gives a slight "stammering" feeling which is not inappropriate to the expression of adoration. They are short notes, and pass quickly, so not difficult to sustain. There are no large or difficult intervals. Most of them are fourths. The largest leap is between "and I am Yours" and "for ever and ever". This is a minor sixth. While this is quite manageable for most people, the large leap does break the two phrases apart and one forgets that from the punctuation the "for ever and ever" belongs to the former and not the later phrase. Here the

271

tune actually results in a slight shift in the meaning of the words when one listens to them (see discussion above).

11.4.4.4. Creates a balance between the easy and familiar and the interesting

There is much repetition in this song, but the variations are usually slight rather than marked which is more difficult to learn and sing. Often the order of notes stays the same but there is a slight variation in the rhythm. This is difficult to get right especially for people who cannot read music or do not have it in front of them. There are several differences between the published version in *Songs of Fellowship* and the way even Richards himself sings it on his CD or the Coventry Choir on the *Hymnmakers'* CD: For example the printed version has two repeated notes on " love you", whereas the oral version tends to go down (to make it a repeat of the line " in heaven and earth exalted").

Melody pattern

(order of notes, disregarding rhythm)   *a b c,   a b d,   e f g   e f ' h*

Rhythm pattern: *a a' c,   a' b c',   e e' g   e e'' f*

Just looking at this pattern it is clear that the rhythm is complex. It is easier to have regularity in the rhythm and variation in the notes than the same sequence of notes with variation in the rhythm. And if there is variety it is easier to sing something completely different than something with only slight differences. It is also very tricky when a repetition comes in a different part of the melody sequence, as with "*a'* " above. This is something congregations will invariably stumble over. What makes it a bit easier is that the rhythm does follow the natural emphasis of the words, so concentrating on the natural stresses does help to get the rhythm right, even though it remains tricky.

272

11.4.5. Good Match of Text and Tune

11.4.5.1. The best songs have a "monogamous" match of only one text for only one tune.

This being a new song by a singer / song-writer it is "monogamous".

11.4.5.2. The mood of the music should fit with the mood of the text

This is a lilting, worshipful tune. The syncopated rhythms bring in a slightly jarring feeling which is not inappropriate to the text which speaks about suffering and self-emptying.

11.4.5.3. The Rhythm of the music should fit the natural rhythm of the words

Although the syncopations make the tune difficult, the stresses usually fall on the right words:

You laid a-SIDE your maje*sty*,
gave up *every*thing for ME,
suffer'd at the HANDS of those
You had creA-ted.
You took ALL my guilt and *shame*,
when You DIED and rose aGAIN;
now toDAY \ You *reign*
in heaven and earth exAL-ted. (first climax)

I really want to worship /YOU, my Lord,
You have won my heart and / *I*- am Yours
/ FOR ever and ever--; I will LOVE You.
You are are the only one who / DIED for me,
gave Your life to / SET me free,
/SO I lift my voice to *You*
in adorA~~tion.   (climax)

Besides the "For" in the third line of the second half, and the "So" in the second last line, all the stressed words are key words. The stress on the first person in "*I* – am Yours" is not untypical of worship songs. But in this song in general the stress is more often on the You than on the I.

11.4.5.4. The climax of the tune should fit with the climax in the poetry

The high notes, especially those after steep upward intervals, usually land on important words. In the second half: "worship /YOU", "and / *I* am Yours", and "to /SET me free".

273

The first climax is on the upward moving "in heaven and earth exAL-ted", which is fitting.
The climax of the whole song falls on the last and longest word: "Adoration". This is very
appropriate.

11.4.6. Good "Balance of Polarities"

11.4.6.1. Past vs Present
This is a song in a contemporary worship style, which uses as its source the biblical tradition
of the incarnation and especially the Christ Hymn in Phlp 2.

11.4.6.2. Objectivity vs Subjectivity
Here there is a good balance: The first half is more objective, with the proclamation and
confession of faith and the second half the subjective response of worship and adoration. It
also keeps these two in the correct order.

11.4.6.3. Cognitive vs Emotive
There is a good balance between theological content and emotion. While there is not a high
content load, the first part gives the essential "facts" of the Christian story in ways which are
stimulating and new, not excessively clichéd. Emotion is expressed especially in the chorus.
Emotive words are used such as "You have won my heart". The song expresses love,
adoration and amazement. It also has a fairly emotive tune.

11.4.6.4. Community vs Individual
This is a song with a completely individual focus, as is typical of worship songs. There is no
consciousness of the world or the community of believers. Jesus came "for me" took "my
guilt and shame" and the response is an individual response. "I really want to worship… I
am Yours… I will love You, I lift my voice.." .

11.4.6.5.Familiarity vs Diversity
The theme is familiar and there are many familiar phrases. As has been discussed above
there is repetition in the tune, but the slight variations in rhythm make for diversity, but also
greater difficulty. This is probably a song that will become fairly familiar but will always

274

retain a sense of the jarring and unexpected for the average congregant. It will probably not become "comfortably familiar". Nevertheless it is a song worth its while to learn. It is not easy to get right rhythmically without reading the music, which means it will probably only be sung in formal worship with a band.

11.4.6.6. Affirmation vs Challenge

This is an affirming song, proclaiming Christ's salvation and acceptance. There is no direct challenge, except that the singer is invited in to the praise and adoration.

11.4.6.7. Cross vs Glory

This is a song where the cross is important, but it is a song to the exalted, not to the crucified Lord. It acknowledges brokenness, and proclaims the brokenness as having been overcome. It is more suited to Ascension day than to Lent. But it can be very well sung in Lent, and has been in many congregations. Both elements are strong in this song.

11.4.6.8. Transcendence vs Immanenc

There is a good balance between praise for the exalted Lord, who is ruler over heaven and earth, and the God who is near and has a close relationship with the believer: "I am Yours". However the focus is on the transcendent ruler of heaven and earth.

11.4.6.9 Vertical vs Horizontal

This is mainly a vertical song. There are not many elements which bring in a horizontal dimension of faith.

11.4.6.10 Universal vs Particular

This is a song that can be sung at any time, but it is well suited to Lent and also Ascension Day. Its message is universal.

275

10.4.7. Overall Evaluation

This song shows that simple worship songs do not have to be shallow. The song expresses deep emotion and yet also profound theological truth. A serious weakness of the song is the difficulty in the rhythm, particularly for people who do not have the music in front of them. It shares the characteristic of many worship songs, that it is focussed only on the individual, but as an expression of faith and devotion it works well. It will take some effort to teach a congregation, but it is worth it. However it will probably not become part of the firm favourites of a congregation but stay a song for special occasions.

276

11.5. Evaluation of *By your side*

11.5.1. Text and Tune

<u>11.5.1.1. Tune: BY YOUR SIDE</u>

Noel Richards

<u>11.5.1.2. Text: published version SF 55</u>

By Your side I would stay; / in Your arms I would lay.
Jesus, lover of my soul, / nothing from You I withhold.

Lord, I love You, and adore You; / what more can I say?
You cause my love to grow stronger / with every passing day.

Noel and Tricia Richards 1989

11.5.2. Background of song

This song arose in collaboration between husband and wife, with Noel supplying the tune and the first line and Tricia the second and them working together to write and modify the rest of the song. It is dated 1989, several years after the move to Cobham and a few years after Noel began writing worship songs. This is a song for intimate worship (St. Michael's Singers

277

1997:5).

11.5.3. Evaluation of Text

11.5.3.1. Based on the wealth of Scripture in all its breadth
This song has no direct scriptural basis. It is a typical religious love song , which takes its inspiration from secular love poetry, and perhaps also from the bridal imagery in the Pauline letters and the Song of Songs. But no scriptural references are given in published versions or are apparent.

11.5.3.2 Theologically sound
This is a typical example of a "religious love song". It engenders a feeling of closeness or intimacy and is often able to make people "feel" the presence of God. There is nothing theologically problematic with any one of the lines of the song themselves, though many sound like typical lovers' exaggeration which ignores the ups and downs of faith and reality of human sin. "Nothing from You I withhold": This is probably felt to be true, but seldom objectively so. "You cause my love to grow stronger": This shows on the one hand an understanding for the fact that it is God's love for me which kindles my love for God. But there is no awareness of possible crises or mention of the fact that faith has it highs and lows. Portraying Jesus as "lover of the soul", has a long tradition, but can have either of two problematic effects: Either it makes Jesus too much like us (that is, it erases the transcendent dimension), or it cements hierarchical relationships between lovers, that is, patriarchal power relationships. A few songs with this imagery are not a problem if there are other songs which introduce other images to balance it out.

11.5.3.3. Takes the depth and breadth of human experience seriously.
This song has as its basis the experience of the erotic between man and woman. It transfers this erotic energy to the religious sphere and channels it into the worship of Christ. This channelling makes these songs very effective. But just as is the case in many secular love songs the reality of human frailty and brokenness is not acknowledged.

11.5.3.4. Needs to be readily understood, it can be simple or repetitive, but not shallow

278

In this song the lyrics are very accessible. Its similarity to other love songs ensures easy identification and comprehension. Whether people experience them as shallow or as "deeply felt" is a matter of opinion, but many people will recognise them as coming out of a genuine sense of adoration.

11.5.3.5. Memorable Poetic Value

There are no really memorable lines if one reads it aloud. Most of them are fairly standard lovers' language and some sound clichéd, for example "What more can I say", " Love you and adore you", "In your arms I would lay". The simple rhythm and rhyme do make this an effective love poem taken as a whole, however, it does not really stand out from other examples of its genre. Used at the right place and right time in a service it has the potential to be an effective song that expresses adoration.

11.5.4. Evaluation of Tune

For the tune analysis I will be using as division between phrases the following:

By Your side / I would stay / In Your arms / I would lay
Jesus lover of my soul / nothing from You I withhold
Lord, I love You / and adore You / what more can I say?
You cause my love / to grow stronger / with every passing day.

The last two lines are repeated in the printed version (SF 55) as well as on the *Hymnmakers'* CD. In the CD of Richards himself he repeats the entire song several times, and the repeats the last two lines only on the later rounds (Richards 2005:CD 1).

11.5.4.1. Should be singable by unmusical people

This tune offers no major difficulties to singers, except that it is quite slow and has many long notes which are difficult to sustain as well as many longer pauses. There is much repetition in the tune, no large leaps or complicated rhythms.

11.5.4.2. Does not depend on accompaniment

279

This tune sounds very effective with good vocals and good accompaniment (on the CDs), but with simple guitar strumming it can quickly sound tedious. In each of the first five phrases (as marked off above) there is a four-beat semibreve, followed by a two beat pause. Between the phrase nothing from You I withhold" and "Lord, I love you" there is a rest of five beats. It is unlikely to work well in a small group setting, but can be effective with good musical accompaniment.

11.5.4.3. Does not overuse the currently popular stylistic elements

There are eight four-beat notes in this short song which gives it a slow, emotive feeling. Whether this can be termed "overuse" is probably a matter of taste. The verse for me moves too slowly, but it is contrasted by the slightly faster moving chorus.

11.5.4.4. Creates a balance between the easy and familiar and the interesting

There is much repetition which makes this tune easy to learn. But there is also a clear contrast between the first and second part of the song, which makes for variety. Nevertheless there is no clear progression or climax in the tune, because of the many repetitions.

Melody pattern: *ab ab cc eef eeg (eef eeg)*
Rhythm pattern: *aa aa bb ccd cce (ccd cce)*

It can be expected that the repeat of the last two lines will at some stage be left out in the oral tradition. If there is no creative accompaniment that makes for variety, this will seem very tedious.

280

11.5.5. Evaluation of Match of Text and Tune

<u>11.5.5.1. The best songs have a "monogamous" match of only one text for only one tune.</u>
This song had text and tune written together and so is "monogamous".

<u>11.5.5.2. The mood of the music should fit with the mood of the text</u>
The intimate words fit well to the emotional, slow tune. There is a good match.

<u>11.5.5.3. The Rhythm of the music should fit the natural rhythm of the words</u>
In the notation, the rests are indicated by ' '

By Your SIDE- - - ' ' I would *stay; - - - ' '*
In Your ARMS - - - ' ' I would *lay. - - - ' '*
/ Jesus, lo- ver- of- my- SOUL, - - - ' '
/ Nothing from- You - I - with - HOLD. - - - ' '

/ Lord, I LOVE You, ' and a*dore* You; '   (climax 1)
\ What more can I - say? - - - '
You cause MY love '   to grow *strong*-er
' with every PASS ing day.- - - ' '

/ Lord, I LOVE You, ' and a*dore* You; '   (repetition)
\ What more can I - say? - - - '
You cause MY love '   to grow *strong*-er
' with every PASS ing day.- - - ' '   (second climax)

The second part moves at twice the pace of the first part in the basic beat. Most of the stresses are appropriate, but the stress on "My" in the second last line is not quite fitting.

<u>11.5.5.4. The climax of the tune should fit with the climax in the poetry</u>
There is no clear climax because of the repetition in the final phrases, and perhaps in the first section the tune would have gained if the last line had had a variation to give it a stronger

281

ending. This variation is supplied in the choir version where the sopranos sing a descant line (St. Michael's Singers 1997 CD). The last section has four higher notes which could be the climax but which are repeated eight times: " Lord I love you / and adore you... You cause my love / to grow stronger" and these are all repeated again.   These words fit a climax, but the repetition weakens the impact of the second phrase, and the final line, which gives variety and emphasis is not matched with words of particular impact: "with every passing day". Repeating this whole already repetitive section seems very overdone. The lack of a clear progression and climax is a weakness in this song.

11.5.6. Evaluation of "Balance of Polarities"

11.5.6.1 Past vs Present

This song is completely centred in the present and in the worshipful adoration and love of the Christ, whose presence the singer is in at that moment. There is no awareness of a historic Christ event, of Christian tradition or other witnesses.

11.5.6.2 Objectivity vs Subjectivity

This song is completely a subjective expression of love and adoration. There is no proclamation, no theological or biblical content, no statement of any reason for love and adoration.

11.5.6.3 Cognitive vs Emotive

282

This song is purely an expression of emotion and contains many highly emotive, even erotic words: "lover", " in Your arms I would lay", "adore you". The tune is also emotive. There is little cognitive content in this song.

11.5.6.4. Community vs Individual

This song is a purely individual "I" song. The "Lover's" imagery also makes it impossible to include others in the "I" as it is possible to do in Paul Gerhardt songs. The Lover is clearly not the church but the individual. The situation is similar to a pop concert where people may sing together, but each one about their individual love experience. It does not draw people together into a community.

11.5.6.5.Familiarity vs Diversity

It is a very familiar style for our age and easily becomes familiar. It reminds people of the secular love songs they are familiar with in their daily life. This is part of its appeal. There are no real surprising elements in text or tune. Sung often it could quickly lose its emotive appeal and become tedious.

11.5.6.6. Affirmation vs Challenge

There is no challenge, but also no real affirmation from the outside. It is only an expression of response. Perhaps the challenge lies in worshipers entering into the emotion which may not come naturally at first.

11.5.6.7. Cross vs Glory

Neither the cross or the holiness of God really feature in this song. Nothing is said about Christ, except that He is near, in the lover's embrace.

11.5.6.8. Transcendence vs Immanence

This is a song with total emphasis on immanence. I am near to Jesus, like a lover in a passionate embrace. It is an expression of total devotion and love, probably genuine at that moment, but disregarding the fact that the "lover" is also the "totally other", who is sometimes strange and incomprehensible.

11.5.6.9 Vertical vs Horizontal

There is no horizontal dimension to this song, except that cancelling out the transcendent dimension

283

puts Jesus almost on the same plane as the singer. But there is no awareness of the world and other people.

11.5.6.10 Universal vs Particular

This is a universal song, which can be sung by any passionately adoring Christian anytime. It is intensely personal too.

5.7. Overall Evaluation

The song has some strengths, and used with discernment, at the right time and with strong vocal leads and good accompaniment has the potential to enhance intimate worship. However, it is very one-sided, as are many other worship songs of this genre, and should be used together with other songs, which have more theological and biblical content. It is unlikely to survive as a regularly used congregational song, and it can be expected that in oral tradition the second repeat will usually be left out.

11.6.1. Text and tune

11.6.1.1. Tune: FILLED WITH COMPASSION

Noel and Tricia Richards

Filled with com - pas-sion for all cre - a-tion,

Je - sus came in - to a world that was lost.

There was but one way that He could save us,

on - ly through suf - fer - ring death on a cross.

Chorus

God, You are wait-ing, Your heart is break-ing

for all the peo - ple who live on the earth.

Stir us to ac - tion, filled with Your pas-sion

for all the peo - ple who live on the earth.

285

<u>11.6.1.2. Text: published version SF II 716</u>

1. Filled with compassion for all creation, / Jesus came into a world that was lost.
There was but one way that He could save us, / only through suffering death on a cross.

God, You are waiting, Your heart is breaking / for all the people who live on the earth.
Stir us to action, filled with Your passion / for all the people who live on the earth.

2. Great is Your passion for all the people / living and dying without knowing You.
Having no saviour, they're lost forever, / if we don't speak out and lead them to You.

3. From every nation we shall be gathered, / millions redeemed shall be Jesus' reward.
Then He will turn and say to His father: / 'Truly my suffering was worth it all."

Noel and Tricia Richards 1994

11.6.2. Background of Song

This song was published on the *"Warrior"* Album in 1994, quite a few years after Richards rose to prominence, but before the big worship event in Wembly stadium in 1997. It was inspired by a song on Rev 5:9-10 and contemplating a map of the world. It was co-written by Noel and Tricia and expresses their passion for global evangelism. In Noel's own words, "the first verse speaks of God's compassion for the world and what its redemption has cost him. The second verse speaks of the need for us to have a passion to preach a gospel which flows from God's passion for us" (St. Michael's Singers 1997:7-8). The third verse proved difficult to finish. It was completed during the recording of the album on the prompting of Martin Smith, another worship song writer. The song was included in the second volume of *Songs of Fellowship* (SF II: 716).

11.6.3. Evaluation of Text

<u>11.6.3.1. Based on the wealth of Scripture in all its breadth</u>
This song was inspired by another scriptural song on the text in Rev 5:9-10: "… with your blood you purchased people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God and they will reign on the earth" (St. Michael's Singers 1997:7). *Songs of Fellowship* (SF II:716) gives several other Scripture references as well: Rev 7:9 - "From every nation we shall be gathered", Lk 19:10 and 1 Tim 1:15 - "Jesus came into a world that was lost / there was but one way that He could save us, / only through suffering death on a cross", Heb 12:2 - "only through suffering death on a cross…. truly my suffering was worth it all".

286

One could add in general the synoptic tradition of Jesus caring for people, the image in parables and sayings about Jesus about the "compassionate" God, as well as John 3:16 - "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life".

11.6.3.2 Theologically sound

The song portrays God's compassion for people very well. Unfortunately it seems to restrict it to the spiritual component of faith in Christ and salvation. This does not do justice to the fact that Jesus' compassion when He came into the "world that was lost" was expressed in material, physical and spiritual ways. Even in a song about global evangelism, this could have been made clear in just a phrase.

The other line which may lead to misunderstanding is the one in the second verse: "Having no saviour, they're lost forever, / if we don't speak out and lead them to You". While the challenge to proclaim is laudable, this sentence seems to imply that the salvation of millions of people is dependent on us alone. While God undoubtedly uses people as His instruments, God is not dependent on His human agents and can touch and transform lives without us. There are countless such stories, not the least the story of Paul who was not preached to by Christians. Very often revivals come not through superhuman efforts, but moments of grace and movements of the Spirit that no-one could produce or even anticipate. But in general the theological thrust of the song is biblical in its direction: a concern for lost humanity and a burning desire and a challenge to spread the good news of Christ's salvation.

11.6.3.3. Takes the depth and breadth of human experience seriously

In line with what was said above, the song restricts human pain to the reality of not knowing salvation in Christ. While we may agree that this is the most serious pain, it does restrict human experience to the spiritual dimension. There is some fear and pressure generated which is supposed to motivate people to evangelise, but may also lead to a sense of paralysis and impotence in the face of the enormity of "all the people who live on this earth" who might through our failure be "lost forever". It is debatable whether such pressure really motivates people to evangelise, or instead, the experience of the love and mercy of God, which they want to share. This song fortunately contains both elements and begins with God's compassion and not His wrath for the unbeliever.

11.6.3.4. Needs to be readily understood, it can be simple or repetitive, but not shallow

There is in this song nothing difficult to understand. The words are definitely not shallow.

287

11.6.3.5. Memorable Poetic Value

The greatest strength of this song are quite a few memorable lines which have poetic power: "Filled with compassion for all creation", "God, You are waiting, Your heart is breaking for all the people who live on the earth" , these are very moving and memorable lines. Then there are also rousing lines which issue a challenge: "Stir us to action, filled with Your passion for all the people who live on the earth".

11.6.4. Evaluation of Tune

For the tune analysis I will use the following division of phrases:

Filled with compassion / for all creation / Jesus came into / a world that was lost.
There was but one way / that He could save us / only through suffering / death on a cross.
God You are waiting / Your heart is breaking / for all the people / who live on the earth.
Stir us to action / filled with Your passion / for all the people/ who live on the earth.

The last two lines are repeated in the printed music in SF II 716, but left out in the recorded version (St. Michael's singers 1997 CD).   In the CD where Richards himself sings this song, he only repeats the last "for all the people who live on the earth" at the end of verse 3 (Richards 2005:CD 3).

11.6.4.1. Should be singable by unmusical people

The range of the tune is nine notes, which is manageable for most singers.   Most of the tune goes up or down in steps. There are no leaps bigger than a fourth. The rhythm is more complex with many off-beat notes. This slight jarring rhythm generates energy, but is also difficult to sing . A danger is that it is simply smoothed out into a flowing, regular line, which would make the tune lose some of its dramatic impact.

11.6.4.2. Does not depend on accompaniment

This song does not need accompaniment. It is not hard to sustain and carries itself. There are no long notes or rests. The only problem is the many repeats in the second half which require some creative accompaniment to keep the interest.

11.6.4.3. Does not overuse the currently popular stylistic elements

One could argue that the syncopated rhythm is over-used. In the verse plus chorus it happens 28

288

times that a dotted crotchet is followed by an off-beat syllable, (42 times if one counts the printed repeat). Its consistent use makes it easier to sing, but the tune would probably have gained if the off-beat rhythm had been used in either the chorus or verse only and the other part would have made a flowing contrast. Singing in syncopated rhythms all the time lets the dramatic effect lose impact. People no longer invest the required effort and the tune gets smoothed over.

11.6.4.4. Creates a balance between the easy and familiar and the interesting

Melody pattern: abac abad efeg efeh   (efeg efeh)
Rhythm pattern: aaab aaac   a'a 'a'b' a'a' a'c' (a'a 'a'b'   a'a' a'c')

There is a fair amount of variation in the melody, but the rhythm is perhaps too monotonous, particularly as it is a more unusual rhythm. Varying the rhythm between verse and chorus (see above) would have improved the song. The pattern of repetition also works against a clear progression and climax, especially if one repeats the entire chorus, as printed.   However, on the whole, the tune does "work" and is balanced. It is likely that it will usually be used without the printed repeat.

11.6.5. Evaluation of Match of Text and Tune

11.6.5.1. The best songs have a "monogamous" match of only one text for only one tune.

This is a "monogamous" song.

11.6.5.2. The mood of the music should fit with the mood of the text
The slightly jarring feel of the syncopated rhythm fits in well with the text,which deals with suffering and waiting. However, the effect gets lost because of its too consistent use.

11.6.5.3. The Rhythm of the music should fit the natural rhythm of the words
The many syncopated notes creates an abundance of stressed words:

Filled with comPAS-sion *for all* creA-tion,
Jesus came IN-to /*a* WORLD that \ was *lost----*

289

There was but ONE way *that He* could SAVE us,
Only through SUF-fering DEATH on a *cross*.   (climax of first part)

God, You are WAIT-ing, *Your* heart is / BREAK-ing (buildup to a climax)
For all the PEOP-le who *live* on the EARTH.
Stir us to ACT-ion, *filled* with Your /PAS-sion   (repeat)
For all the PEOP-le who *live* on the EARTH.   (final climax)

The effect of the rhythm as it is, is that the first beat of the bar as well as the off-beat syllable both receive a stress. The second off-beat stress is often on not naturally stressed syllables:
Filled with comPAS-sion *for all* creA-tion   but the main stress of the phrase is usually fitting.   The overabundance of stresses has the tendency to make the tune a bit tedious.

11.6.5.4. The climax of the tune should fit with the climax in the poetry

The tune shares the weakness with the previous tune that the phrase with the highest notes which should be the climax is repeated, which weakens the impact the second time. However the final phrase which then becomes the main climax is sung on the words which are the theme of the song: "For all the people who live on the earth". This is a fitting rousing ending. Of course, if the whole chorus is repeated, this climax also loses impact. It gains impact if only this phrase is repeated more slowly right at the end, as is done on the Richards CD (Richards 2005 CD3). In the choir version, the second repeated climaxes are heightened by harmony and descant notes (St. Michael's Singers 1997 CD). Most of the highest and longest notes fall on important key words:

DEATH on a *cross*. *Your* heart is / BREAK-ing,   *filled* with Your /PAS-sion
In this sense the tune generally fits the text well.

11.6.6. Evaluation of "Balance of Polarities"

11.6.6.1 Past   vs Present

While this is a song focussing on the present need for evangelism, it picks up on many traditions: the biblical traditions of Jesus' care and compassion, the biblical call to mission, the church historical traditions of evangelism and global mission.

11.6.6.2 Objectivity vs Subjectivity

There is a very objective element in the declaration of God's love and concern for people and Jesus'

290

plan for salvation. The subjective element comes in the challenge to an active response.

11.6.6.3 Cognitive vs Emotive

There is some theological content and an appeal to understanding of the reasons for mission, but much of the text is emotive, trying to generate passion for evangelism. There are many emotive words such as "Your heart is breaking" or "stir us to action filled with Your passion…". There is the question what will happen to the lost with highly emotive phrases such as "dying without knowing you" or "lost forever" being used. The vision of the end times is also emotive: the redeemed are "Jesus' reward" and Jesus is satisfied with His life and sacrifice. However there are elements of both, so there is some balance.

11.6.6.4. Community vs Individual

Other than most of Richards' songs, in this one there is a definite sense of community and of Christian responsibility for one another and the whole world. This is a great strength of the song. There is a wide global vision that opens to the singer. But there is a definite division between "us" (the saved) who must do something for "them" (the unsaved).

11.6.6.5.Familiarity vs Diversity

This is not a typical worship song. It is a call to evangelism. It brings diversity into the range of themes of contemporary songs, and a change from the normal inward-looking focus. It is unlikely to become a very familiar song, as it would probably be used on special occasions only where the theme of the service is evangelism and mission. However , it is easily learned because of the constantly repeating rhythm patterns. It can be used effectively on special occasions. Used sparingly, the song should not become tedious.

11.6.6.6. Affirmation vs Challenge

This song is affirming in that it reiterates the saving action of Christ and affirms the hope that millions will be saved. However its focus is on challenge, on the call to proclaim the gospel to those still searching for salvation.

11.6.6.7. Cross vs Glory

Here there is a fairly good balance. The song places some emphasis on the necessity for the cross for salvation, but it also looks forward to the coming glory at the end of time. The suffering of Christ is the foundation and source of the salvation of "all the people".

291

11.6.6.8. Transcendence vs Immanence

God is the transcendent one, who wants faith and who will gather in the redeemed. But He is also the immanent one, who suffers with the lost creation, and who comes into the world through His son, to redeem it. Here there is a good balance.

11.6.6.9 Vertical vs Horizontal

There is a strong "horizontal" focus to this song which sends us into the world. There is a vertical dimension to redemption and being gathered on the last day.

11.6.6.10 Universal vs Particular

This song has a universal focus and interest in salvation of all humankind. But it is a song which will probably be sung at more particular occasions, not just any Sunday. Its particular focus is evangelism and mission.

11.6.7. Overall Evaluation

This song has many strengths. In the context of the fairly individualistic worship movement it is a song that has the world in view. It sends people out, motivates them to get involved in the mission to save God's people.   It has strong poetic language and a vibrant tune which can generate energy.

The weaknesses are a tune that is not very easy and a bit too monotonous in its rhythm, and a theologically problematic tendency to make the salvation of the world depend on us. It is also a pity that other aspects of human suffering have not been mentioned or taken seriously.

11.7. Overall evaluation of Richards' work within his context

In general, Noel and Tricia Richards are fairly typical representatives of the Praise and Worship movement in terms of their theology and main emphases and were without a doubt important actors in this movement. Phil Thompson in his review of the album *Noel Richards - All Heaven Declares: The Very Best Of Noel Richards* writes: " Richards' contribution to the world of Praise and Worship in the UK and beyond is immense, with totally captivating material for all ages … who can argue with the sensitivity, the authenticity of the sentiment with which each song is imbued" (Thompson 2010).

Richards' music helped to let the movement gather momentum and to give it some high profile mass

292

events, such as the worship event in Wembly in 1997. His ability to generate excitement about worship, particularly big events in football stadiums is evidenced by the tributes on a website (now discontinued) which focussed on the planning for a big event in the Berlin soccer stadium after the World Cup in 2006. This event eventually brought together 25,000 people from over 42 different nations (Richards 2012). However mass events did not eclipse Richards' interest in congregational worship.

Some of his songs have endured and become favourite staples in the Praise and Worship movement, such as the songs *All heaven declares* and *You laid aside your majesty.*

11.8. Evaluation of Richards' work for us.

The inclusion of Richards in *The New Hymnmakers* series is an indication that some of Richards' songs have made it into the mainstream. However unlike the songs of Kendrick, they have not been included in any of the newer denominational hymnals I have looked at. His songs slightly broaden the range of themes usually covered in Praise and Worship songs, and although their theology is still one-sided and sometimes triumphalist, the best of his work does deserve credit and some will probably survive into the next generation, though probably in slightly simplified oral versions, perhaps also with amplified climaxes. The two songs mentioned in 11.7 are the only ones that I have personally used or experienced in congregational worship.

CHAPTER TWELVE – CONCLUSIONS

12.1. Review of Aim and Criteria

The main aim of this thesis was to develop a set of criteria to evaluate songs. The first chapters gave motivation to those criteria, and then the chapters 6 and 7 described them and developed ways to test these criteria. Some of these are simple and objective, others depend on the perspective and theological viewpoint of the evaluator. The criteria were then used to discuss a set of both traditional and contemporary Christian songs. In the sections below an overview will be given as to how useful the criteria and rules have proved to be in the evaluation of the twelve songs.

Four Criteria of Quality
A " good song" has the following characteristics:
1. Good Text
2. Good Tune
3. Good Match of Text and Tune
4. Good Balance of "Polarities"

1. Good Text
1.1. Based on the wealth of Scripture in all its breadth
1.2 Theologically sound
1.3. Takes the depth and breadth of human experience seriously
1.4. Needs to be readily understood, it can be simple or repetitive, but not shallow
1.5. Memorable Poetic Value

2. Good Tune
2.1. Should be singable by unmusical people
2.2. Does not depend on accompaniment
2.3. Does not overuse the currently popular stylistic elements
2.4. Creates a balance between the easy and familiar and the interesting

3. Good Match of Text and Tune
3.1. The best songs have a "monogamous" match of only one text for only one tune
3.2. The mood of the music should fit with the mood of the text
3.3. The Rhythm of the music should fit the natural rhythm of the words
3.4. The climax of the tune should fit with the climax in the poetry

4. Good "Balance of Polarities"
4.1 Past vs Present
4.2 Objectivity vs Subjectivity
4.3 Content vs Emotion
4.4. Community vs Individual
4.5.Familiarity vs Diversity
4.6. Affirmation vs Challenge
4.7. Cross vs Glory
4.8. Transcendence vs Immanence
4.9 Vertical vs Horizontal
4.10 Universal vs Particular

12.2. Evaluation of Criteria for "Good Text"

When testing the criteria it showed that evaluating the theological value of a text is relatively simple, but the theological value is not always correlated to the success of the song, which is much more closely tied in with the tune. However, evaluating a text can determine which songs can be valuable to add to the congregation's repertoire, even though they may not become popular on their own. When evaluating the twelve songs by the four songwriters, it became clear that an evaluation of the text can determine whether or how a song would be used in a service. With the exception of "By your side" by Richards, the songs all had texts with quite high theological value, sometimes even more than the average congregant can easily assimilate. Such songs would have their place in the word section of the Lutheran service, rather than at the beginning of worship, and would be part of sharing the Word. The songs with very low theological content would be used relatively sparingly, and generally in the introductory part of the service to express adoration.

The criterion 1.1. (Scriptural base) is fairly straight forward and objective and was easy to determine for all songs, at least the main biblical references. More difficult is criterion 1.2. How theologically sound a text is, has to be judged case by case by a person who comes from a particular theological perspective. A Lutheran will judge Wesley's lines differently from a Methodist or a Catholic. This criterion will also be harder to use for theologically untrained people in a worship team, though one hopes that a reasonably committed worship team of active congregants will have enough of a basis in their church tradition to weed out the most problematic songs. Conflict obviously arises if such problematic songs have highly popular tunes. Dealing with this involves education and sensitivity.

Criterion 1.3 is also relatively easy and objective, as references to the human condition are easily identified and judged. It posed no problem in the study concerned. This may be an easier way to

297

educate worship teams about evaluating songs, than abstract theological criteria. The simple question about whether songs take seriously the reality of human suffering and human doubt can be an entry point to educating worship teams about the importance of evaluating texts, as this is an easy criterion to apply, and readily understood by most congregants.

Of all the criteria under point 1, the most difficult to define is 1.4. When is a song too simple? How does one define "shallow"? How much repetition people can tolerate is also a matter of personal taste. As there were no repetitive choruses or chants studied in this dissertation, this issue was not really put to the test. This could be the subject of a different study in future, particularly as it seems from the comparative study done on content loading in *Songs of Fellowship* editions (see Chp 3 Footnote 46) it seems that repetition is going out of favour**.**

Criterion 1.5. proved fairly easy to use, as it simply means finding memorable phrases or seeing the beauty of the poetic structure, but it is still dependent on the observer, as some people find phrases poetic which others reject as clichéd or shallow.

In general, judging the lyrics of a song is not difficult and many pastors use this as their primary criterion for choosing songs. They need to be sensitive to the other criteria as well, if the congregation is to be taken seriously.

12.3. Evaluation of Criteria for "Good Tune"

To evaluate a tune is a very complex and much more subjective process. It is easier to recognise a tune that works than to define what makes it work. There will probably never be a simple system of criteria that everyone agrees on. However, some characteristics of the tune can be objectively determined and strengths and weaknesses described. Some of the above criteria have proved their value in the study of the twelve songs.

Criterion 2.1. is crucial for a song that is to find a home in a congregation. People who are not trained in choirs or worship teams and who seldom sing at home need to be able to sing along. In mega churches with professional worship bands this seems less important as many people seem content to listen and hum along with the chorus. This, however, means the service has the characteristics of a concert. It is impossible to sustain in an average congregation. Here singability is crucial. Defining this is not easy as every congregation is different. Also it was argued that more

298

difficult songs are often more emotionally appealing. Looking at markers of difficulty such as range and rhythm, emotive elements and patterns of repetition can give an objective sense of the level of difficulty of a tune, and the challenge it would take to teach it to the congregation.

In the study, most of the tunes were singable. The most challenging were "And can it be" (Tune SAGINA) (Chp 9.6) and Graham Kendrick's "Meekness and Majesty" (Chp 10.5). What made them difficult was fairly easily explained by applying the criteria. Both have shown that they can become well-known and loved in congregations, as people appreciate the content and the emotional appeal of the tune. Worship leaders need to be aware of the challenge of teaching these to congregants who do not yet know them, and make decisions according to their experiences of the congregation.

Criterion 2.2. has become a very valuable rule of thumb for me in testing new songs. In the chosen list of songs there were a few, particularly of the new worship songs which had many long notes and were difficult to sustain without accompaniment. These songs have nevertheless become popular owing to strong worship bands and creative accompaniment. When they are sung unaccompanied the long notes are usually shortened. Whether they are able to sustain their popularity is something I would doubt on the strength of this criterion, however, that will only become clear in years to come. Most of the traditional tunes that were studied were easily sung unaccompanied and have been sustained with or without strong musicians over centuries.

Criterion 2.3. is fairly easy to measure. One can count long notes, or slurs or syncopations, and the dominant style becomes apparent very quickly (See Chap 5.4.3. Figure 2). What exactly constitutes overuse is of course a matter for debate. However, a very high count of one stylistic element could normally be classified as a weakness as it can easily lead people to find a song tedious once the initial emotional fervour has died down. The study showed up very clearly and easily which elements were heavily used in the songs. How this is then judged is ultimately a question of taste and the style popular at that time.

The balance of "easy, familiar" and "interesting", criterion 2.4. has been correlated to the balance of repetition, variation and contrast. The study proposed a system to measure repetition mainly and to a lesser extent variation. It became very clear that some repetition is found in almost all successful tunes, if not in the tune itself then in the basic rhythm. A lack of repetition is one of the key factors in songs which prove difficult to sing and learn. The lack of repetition is one of the reasons that SAGINA is so difficult to sing. Of course, this tune has demonstrated that in spite of such difficulties, tunes can become successful and long-lasting. Every rule that one can make

299

about successful tunes has been broken at some point to great effect.

12.4. Evaluation of Criteria for "Good Text-Tune Match"

The criteria 3.1. above is by no means universally acknowledged. It is acknowledged by the editors of the *Evangelisches Gesangbuch* who have tried to cut down on an overuse of tunes. However, within the English music establishment, there is little recognition of the importance of the need for some convergence here, and I have found nothing printed in the hymnological literature that argues this in any sense. In informal interactions with interested people I have rather observed the tendency to, wherever possible, suggest other tunes to which a " good text" could also be sung. This dissertation has argued strongly for the need for some convergence on hymn tunes. However, it is unlikely that this will happen very quickly. This will need further studies and argument. In the study it was only the song *Love Divine* (Chap 9.5) where this criterion was important. However, in that case, the problems were illustrated clearly.

Though the other three criteria seem to be obvious, it is astounding how often they are ignored. Joyful texts are set to slow tunes, words routinely fall on inappropriate stresses and sometimes the climax of tunes falls on unimportant phrases and normally unstressed words. The notation developed to test this criterion shows up very clearly where the weaknesses of the text-tune match are. Of course it cannot show up the mood match. This is left to the judgement and taste of the evaluator, and there will probably be no objective criterion that can decide this. However, in general the categories of joyful, or sombre should be simple to determine for both text and tune. In general in the tested songs the fit was good for newer songs, where the same person wrote text and tune. In the case of Wesley's hymns, the match varies widely depending on which tune one chooses, but it is possible through this method to determine fairly objectively which tune provides the best fit in terms of stresses of the words and climax. Whether this is then the most popular or singable tune is again a separate issue.

300

12.5. Evaluation of Criteria for "Balance of Polarities"

When evaluating a text, it is often less the case that a song is theologically problematic, but rather that it is one-sided. There are many non-problematic texts that speak about the glory and majesty of God, but to have only such texts, and none on a suffering Jesus leads to theological problems. The criterion of " Balance" tries to alert evaluators to the fact that there needs to be a balance of themes and emphases in the overall repertoire of a congregation. The dissertation argues the fact that the best songs are in themselves balanced and make connections between the different poles that should be kept in tension within Christian worship. Of the many possible polarities that could have been discussed the above ten were isolated and discussed for each song. It was clear that the four song-writers chosen all had some awareness of balance and though some were more one-sided than others, all of them had a breadth of themes and emphases in their overall work in general and in the three songs in particular. The fact that the two contemporary song-writers have both been chosen by *The New Hymnmakers* CD series (St. Michael's Singers 1996 and 1997) is probably a result of this greater breadth of themes than in the average song-writer of today.   Looking at each of these categories in turn can lead to the discovery of theological weaknesses that one may not have otherwise noticed, and alert those who choose songs to the need for overall balance in the repertoire. What became clear in the course of the study is that this catalogue is a fairly complex and unwieldy category for evaluation, and that one cannot do such an evaluation thoroughly for every song one chooses. However, doing a thorough evaluation for a few songs can lead to a new awareness of these polarities, which then feeds into other choices and critical evaluations one can make. Further studies are probably necessary on single categories and on shifts in the balance as styles and content of contemporary songs are changing.

12.6. Conclusions and Pointers for Worship Leaders

For me, developing and testing these criteria has been a journey of discovery and has been immensely beneficial. I have gained a deeper understanding into how songs work, and why certain songs I appreciate did not gain a foothold in the congregation, or where my discomfort with other songs, which I could never quite explain, came from. However, passing on these criteria to other people who are involved with music is a lot more difficult, and perhaps the criteria are still too complex and not user-friendly enough. I have, however, had positive experiences if I just passed on one or two of these criteria at a time to interested people. Whether they are ultimately useful in finding those songs which will sustain congregations for a long time to come remains to be seen.

301

The following are pointers for worship leaders which are easy enough to explain and pass on:

Try out a new song unaccompanied before teaching it to a congregation. If it does not work well, consider why you would still find it important to teach this particular song to the congregation.

Speak the words in the rhythm of the tune. Does it sound reasonably natural?

Check the balance in the themes of all the songs you choose. Do you have some songs that emphasize community (We), that have more biblical content, that take the ups and downs of human life seriously?

If these basic issues are understood, and find openness and interest, one can work more thoroughly on questions of theology and singability. There will always be different levels of awareness and engagement within members of worship teams, and different levels of readiness to examine one's favourite songs.

This dissertation was an exploratory phase of an extremely complex issue, but it has charted a terrain, where further studies can be done and specific studies undertaken, for example on the present shifts in song styles and theological content and how they are being perceived in congregations.

This has been a purely theoretical study, so studies involving people actually in the music ministry through interviews and surveys would also be necessary to gain a clearer understanding of what is happening and how worship teams are choosing songs and evaluating content. Singing remains a behaviour that goes to the heart of Christian identity and ministry. It is worth finding ways to help, that it will be most effective, comforting and enriching.

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305

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