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Hymns and Church Music

Over the many years I've been attending Church in various places and Denominations, I've noticed at times debate over hymns and church music.

Back in the sixties I remember at a Young Peoples' event singing a hymn to the tune of an 'English Country Garden' – we thought it was wonderful. There were others who were not so sure if it was the right thing to do. As for singing 'There is a Greenhill far away' to the tune of 'House of the Rising Sun', some were quite shocked. It was a pop song after all! In the seventies I was informed by one of our deacons that guitars were evil – we had been using our guitars and drums during the service! I pointed out that guitars are not evil in themselves but perhaps their use in some circumstances might be. I reminded him that General Booth of the Salvation Army was criticised for having a bass drum used during the singing of hymns!

In Swansea I remember Rev A Glyn Morris telling us of a Rally held at his Church. Afterwards, people left still singing the 4 line chorus 'Rejoice in the Lord Always'. One of the bus drivers (yes back in the sixties we went everywhere by bus or coach) refusing to drive until the people stopped singing. Glyn said that he didn't know if the driver got saved but he drove them home anyway and they kept on singing!

Many of the old hymns were written by preachers who wanted to reinforce the major point in their sermons. It can be worthwhile reading hymns with that thought in mind – what was he preaching about? Hymns can themselves be inspirational whether sung or read. Many can be used as prayers even. Perhaps useful at this present time of trouble.

There are those whom I have heard criticising the use of modern songs in Church because 'they have no message' or 'choruses are no better than Nursery rhymes'. Again we need to remember the context in which these songs are written – many are intended solely for expressing praise and worship in a straightforward way whilst others really do have a clear message behind them. Often it can be worth using, say 'You Tube' to find the context in which the writer / performer was using it and to listen to why he / she wrote it to understand its context during the original concert or service.

I'm not going to criticise the writers because I know that I couldn't do it myself. I respect the skill of the writer and the work that has gone into producing the words and music to any devotional / worship song.

One of my favourite hymn verses is:

‘Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small,
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.’

Or maybe the song:

‘All Heaven declares the glory of the risen Lord;
Who can compare with the beauty of the Lord?
Forever He will be the Lamb upon the throne;
I gladly bow the knee and worship Him alone.’

I wonder what yours might be?

Bless you – Roger Barton

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God!
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e’er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

. His dying Crimson, like a Robe,
Spreads o’er his Body on the Tree;
Then am I dead to all the Globe,
And all the Globe is dead to me.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

All heaven declares the glory of the risen Lord
Who can compare with the beauty of the Lord?
Forever He will be the Lamb upon the throne
I gladly bow my knee and worship Him alone

I will proclaim the glory of the risen Lord
Who once was slain to reconcile man to God
Forever You will be the Lamb upon the throne
I gladly bow my knee and worship You alone
Forever You will be (Forever You will be)
The Lamb upon the throne
I gladly bow my knee
And worship You alone



**KEEP
CALM
AND
SPEND TIME
WITH GOD**



**KEEP
CALM
AND
DO AS
MUM
SAYS**

