

# **Theological authority in the hymns and spirituals of American Protestantism, 1830-1930**

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Leeds  
Department of Theology and Religious Studies

April 2009

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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## Acknowledgments

My work here represents a village. I am indebted to many people and groups that have, in direct and indirect ways, contributed to my effort to complete this PhD dissertation.

At the outset Professor Kim Knott, Dr Tom Robinson, and Dr Kevin Ward provided valuable advice toward my research trajectory. Once underway, various scholars took time for conversation. I am grateful for these discussions through which I gained a sharpened understanding of the field. In particular I would like to thank Dr Karen Westerfield Tucker, Dr Stephen Marini, Dr Mark A. Noll, Dr Edith Blumhofer, Dr Carl Daw Jr, Dr Julyanne Dodson, Kurt Widmer (PhD cand), Dr Tom Robinson, Dr Tom Bremer, Dr Mary DeJong, Dr Charles Long, and Dr James H. Cone.

While I am grateful for access to various archival collections, I am especially indebted to Martha Smalley at Yale Divinity School, Kara Jackman at Boston University School of Divinity, and Mary Louise VanDyke, projector coordinator for the American Dictionary of Hymnology. I would also like to thank Seminars in Christian Scholarship that provided me with a scholarship for the 'Christian Hymnody in Historical Perspective' seminar hosted at Calvin College (June 2008).

I would like to thank the department of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Leeds. I am grateful for placement in the PhD program and for the generosity of the department for providing financial subsidy to participate in the Yale-Edinburgh meeting at Yale University (June 2007). I would like to extend special thanks to Jill Killington for her administrative excellence and many kindnesses. I am deeply appreciative for my supervisors, Dr Kevin Ward and Dr Al McFadyen. Their guiding questions and research recommendations given at key points were indispensable, and their attention to detail saved me from numerous inaccuracies. Dr Kevin Ward also served as my postgraduate tutor. His work ethic and commitment to students is remarkable.

The department of Religious Studies at the University of Lethbridge has been a key part of my academic development. Dr Hillary Rodrigues and Dr Jim Linville have been voices of encouragement and advice along the way. I am grateful for sessional teaching contracts and especially the opportunity to teach an undergraduate class on theology and hymnody at the University of Lethbridge during the 2007 summer session. I would like to thank Dr Robert Sider who, while serving as the external examiner for my MA thesis, encouraged me to pursue a PhD. Above all, Dr Tom Robinson has been a steadfast mentor and friend.

Finally, the assistance, resources and support of family and friends have been inestimable. My heartfelt thanks to Clifford and Judy Ginn, Jerry and Sybil Biffart, Darcy and Bob Graham, Ryan and Sandy Sato, Tom and Sharon Robinson, and the entire Dempsey family. To my children Sarah (Bobby), Aron, Silas, and Rachael, and my wife Carla – thank you for your constant support, patience, and encouragement, and for graciously enduring the musty aroma of my hymnal collection. I have treasured the opportunity to have each of you accompany me on my residency trips to England. In the end, this was very much a family venture and carries many fond memories for me.

## Abstract

This dissertation examines theological authority in the hymns and spirituals of American Protestantism within the period 1830-1930. It investigates the deuterocanonical status of hymns in hymnic-theological commentary, and demonstrates the functional canonicity of hymns in three case studies (children's hymnody, African American spirituals, and hymns of marginalized groups), and two representative areas of praxis (conversion and missions).

This dissertation consults a variety of primary source materials, both elite and popular, including journals, biographies, conference minutes, academic addresses, theological works, hymn prefaces, domestic novels, newspapers, and poetry. These sources are used to situate the hymnal in the cultural context of American Protestantism and determine the status and role of hymnody.

As the Bible is acclaimed the exclusive canonical text of Protestantism, consideration of the hymnal's theological authority in canonical terms is at odds with Protestant biblicism. As such, this dissertation's claim that the hymnal shared, to a significant degree, the Bible's place as a textual source of theological authority, is intellectually innovative. In identifying didactic and doctrinal themes in hymnals, primarily through systematic theology, this dissertation shows the role of hymns and spirituals in regulative theology and audible faith. Thus defended in this dissertation, is the hymnal's capacity to adjudicate on matters of faith and praxis.

Of additional importance to this dissertation is its contribution toward hymnic theology, as well as demonstrating the hymnal's influence upon historical theology, liturgical theology, cultural theology, and evangelistic theology. This dissertation yields various insights for theology, especially the soteriological efficacy of hymnody, the role of hymns in regulative theology, and the discussion of anti-Semitism and black-liberation theology in African American spirituals. In applied theology and congregational studies the ramifications are critical, with the analysis of hymnic authority, the intersection of singing and doctrine (*lex cantandi lex credendi*), and the Bible and hymnal as mutually constitutive, all of paramount importance.

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# Chapter One: Introduction to Thesis

## 1.1 Introduction

As a medium of individual and corporate expression, music within the Protestant tradition has been highly influential. While some theologians and traditions limited the use of musical expression, such restrictions have had little effect in diminishing the dominant role of music. In American Protestantism, hymnody and spirituals were essential in faith and praxis. I am interested in the texts of these songs and propose to study hymns and spirituals as a source of theological authority as situated in American Protestantism, 1830-1930.

This work was prompted by an interest in the theological content of hymns. After preliminary research I realized that an evaluation of theological content in hymns and spirituals was valuable relative to the authoritative status of these songs. Thus, I focused my research to the inquiry of the authoritative status of hymns and spirituals, with a specific interest in theological authority. Theological content remains central to my research, as there is oftentimes a reciprocating relationship between *theological content* and *theological authority*, in which one may serve to substantiate the other.

## 1.2 Obstacles and Disconnects

There are obstacles inherent to the theological evaluation of the hymnal. While in American Protestantism hymns are valued highly through lived religion common to church and home life, as well as the disciplines of hymnology, doxology, and liturgical studies, they are fenced off from being valued *too* highly. This can create a research environment that resists or impedes comparison between hymnic authority and biblical authority, resulting in two separate spheres of investigation: canonical authority and noncanonical authority. This paradigm assumes noncanonical texts cannot attain comparative status with the Bible and necessarily prevents an intersection between the two, so it seems, in order to preserve the supremacy of the Bible over all other edificatory texts. Perhaps the theological inquiry that subordinates hymn texts to the Bible could be stated: 'Don't explore the theological authority of the hymnal, lest the hymnal be granted an illegitimate canonicity.'



There are further challenges to this dissertation created by various disconnects:

1. While theology and hymnology intersect, theological treatment of hymnic texts is not a developed area of study in theology.
2. While the theology of hymns is not denied, theological (and aesthetic) criticism of hymn texts has been obstructed by the evangelistic and/or edificatory valuation of hymns; thereby, the utility (and admiration) of hymns inhibits theological criticism.
3. While children's hymnody has a rich legacy in Protestantism, a critical examination of children's hymnody as a source of theology has been neglected.
4. While black theology has an interest in African American spirituals and improvised hymns, Protestantism as theological context for the spirituals has been neglected. Post-colonialism has created a sensitive environment in which to raise questions of Christianization and race-theology, as well as the presence of anti-Semitism in slave songs.
5. As American Protestant orthodoxy has routinely segregated the study of marginalized groups and typically regarded them as 'cults',<sup>1</sup> the exploration of hymn usage and hymnal publication among marginalized groups is problematic, as it might suggest agreement between Protestantism and marginalized groups. (Though Unitarianism has been an exception).
6. While the use of hymns in proselytizing and converting is discussed within evangelistic or missiological strategies, there is a failure to take seriously the soteriological efficacy of hymns.

To gauge the theological authority of hymnody, it is important to address the constraints of these obstacles and disconnects. I trust that my research is marked by re-evaluation of theological authority in contrast to the Protestant predisposition that limits the valuation of noncanonical texts (in this case hymns and spirituals) and I will proceed as if hymns and spirituals are not constrained by such devaluation. Also, I will venture beyond typical parameters and investigate children's hymnody, the Protestant context of spirituals, the use of hymns by marginalized groups, and the soteriological efficacy of hymns in conversion and missions. I will argue that the hymnal functioned with theological authority on par with the Bible.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Cult' understood in its polemical sense as a deviant religious movement.

### **1.3 Dissertation Structure**

This dissertation contains four sections. The first section (chapters one and two) introduces the subject, reviews the literature, and provides historical background for the context of American Protestantism.

The next section (chapters three through five) explores hymnic-theological commentary. Chapter three examines the intersection of hymnody and theology, and discusses academic interest in the theology of hymnic sources. Chapter four presents evidence of the hymnal's deuterocanonical status as situated in American Protestantism. Chapter five considers the ranking of hymns. There are several methods presented, such as 'canonical' ranking by hymnologists, popular ranking by individuals, congregations, and public opinion, cultural ranking by journalists and historians, and statistical ranking based on printing quantity. These rankings demonstrate the estimation of hymns generally and certain hymns in particular.

The next two sections, (chapters six through eight; and nine and ten) analyze hymn texts to explore the role of hymns. Chapters six through eight examine three representative case studies: children's hymnody, African American spirituals and improvised hymns, and the hymnals of marginalized groups. Chapters nine and ten explore the usage of hymns in two representative areas of praxis: conversion and missions.

Chapter eleven concludes the dissertation. First, I summarize my research findings. Second, I provide a research analysis in which I identify prominent hymns, discuss theological observations, specify the nature of theological authority, describe the role of hymns in American Protestantism, call attention to intellectual issues, and suggest further areas for study.

### **1.4 Delimitations**

Given the vast amount of hymns and denominations in American Protestantism, the material and the scope of study require narrowing. Delimitation will be achieved by concentrating on hymns and spirituals that were dominant by virtue of usage, authorship, and/or representative of theology. This is not a denominational or congregational approach to hymnody, rather a study of theological authority in hymns that encompasses denominational and congregational studies. Nor is this a musical

analysis. Though there are melodies with authority in their own right, music involves a whole range of technical and musicological issues that this thesis cannot adequately explore. As such, my interest is textual. I will also focus my research by time period and have set the dates of 1830-1930 as bookends (discussed further in section 2.4).

## 1.5 Defining Hymnal, Hymn, and Theological Authority

I will clarify most terms as they occur, but at the outset, ‘the hymnal’, ‘hymn’, and ‘theological authority’ deserve comment.

A hymnal is a collection of sacred songs, comprised of ‘hymns of human composure’, that is to say, hymn lyrics composed independent of biblical versification or metricization. In this way a hymnal is distinct from a metrical psalter, which aims more or less strictly to render the biblical text itself. I sometimes use ‘the hymnal’ as a type of collective noun similar to the way ‘the Bible’ can be used to refer to all Bible translations; though, unlike the Bible where there is a defined body of text,<sup>2</sup> hymnal collections can vary a great deal in their content. Another aspect of ‘the hymnal’ is its abstract quality for, universally speaking, there is no single authoritative hymnal that physically exists. In this sense, it is comparable to abstract nouns such as ‘music’ or ‘humor’ that are without tangible existence. Therefore, regardless of content differences, when I use the term ‘the hymnal’ – unless speaking of a specific and individual published hymnal – I am referring to an authoritative literary-musical genre that, though not physically tangible, exists in an abstract reality and representative sense for all hymnals.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, ‘the hymnal’ impacted virtually all Protestants, including black slaves and marginalized groups.

Derivatively, ‘hymn’ can speak for all types of sacred songs, though I will distinguish specific genres when required.<sup>4</sup> When speaking of hymns, I am referring to the textual aspect of the hymn. I do not assign a musical or metrical meaning. However, where

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<sup>2</sup> The Bible is a uniform collection of texts, the *Apocrypha* notwithstanding.

<sup>3</sup> Admittedly, some Protestants may have thought of their denominational hymnal as ‘the hymnal’ but this would have been the exception as most denominations and groups were keenly aware of collection variations and employed adjectives to identify their hymnal, e.g. *The Trinity Hymnal* (1868), *The Gospel Hymnal* (1880), *Hymnal of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1878), *The Temperance Hymnal* (1883), *The Christian Science Hymnal* (1892), *The Academic Hymnal* (1899), *The Methodist Hymnal* (1905), etc.

<sup>4</sup> In hymnology, there are various specified terms, such as chant, plainsong, canticle, anthem, and spiritual. In many cases, the term ‘hymn’ can carry the discussion.

the musical and metrical features of a hymn deserve mention, I will clarify my meaning in such a context.

By 'theological authority' I mean the capacity to express and affect doctrine in a manner that adjudicates on matters of faith and praxis. In Christianity, theological authority is vested in various apparatuses, such as ecclesial tradition, the episcopacy, the Bible, creeds, and catechisms. Assigning theological authority to one apparatus above another can spark intra-community debate, but here I do not assign theological authority to the hymnal (as an apparatus) in order to argue its supremacy. Rather, I assign theological authority to the hymnal as a way to express the functional role and status that the hymnal had in American Protestantism. Therefore, I am reporting on the theological authority of the hymnal. I will measure the theological authority of the hymnal by its theological function, assess its capacity to serve with the Bible as mutually constitutive in faith formation, explore the use of hymn texts in establishing and guarding doctrine, and evaluate the hymnal's capacity to substitute the Bible in conversion and missions.

## 1.6 Literature Review

Theological examination of church music has been neglected. Going back to the 1950s, Erik Routley was a voice in the wilderness protesting the bankruptcy of theological criticism of church music.<sup>5</sup> Routley published numerous critical works on hymnody including *Hymns and the Human Life* (1952) and *Hymns and the Faith* (1956). Of the works that addressed theological concerns directly, *Church Music and Theology* (1959) was arguably the foremost.

Geoffrey Wainwright's 1980 work *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine and Life*, though written from a liturgical perspective, was intended as a systematic theology. He described his work as 'the liturgical way of doing theology.'<sup>6</sup> Wainwright dedicated a chapter of his book to hymns.

In *Theology in Hymns?* (1995) Teresa Berger claimed that Wainwright was the first Protestant systematic theologian to treat worship as a fundamental point of reference

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<sup>5</sup> Erik Routley, *Church Music and Theology* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1960) p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine and Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980) p. 1.

for theology.<sup>7</sup> Despite Berger's concern that liturgy is easily neglected by Protestant systematics<sup>8</sup> in the study of doxology and theology, and though her interest in liturgy is not synonymous with her interest in hymnody, she has drawn awareness to the need to treat the theology of hymns. Berger's research is also representative of Methodist studies.<sup>9</sup> Her work followed *Charles Wesley: Poet and Theologian* (1992) edited by S. T. Kimbrough Jr., a collection of essays offering a variety of viewpoints on hymnody and theology; notable contributors included Teresa Berger and Thomas A. Langford. *Praising the God of Grace: The Theology of Charles Wesley's Hymns* by Charles Yrigoyen, Jr. (2005) added to the theological appreciation of Wesleyan hymnody.

Due in large part to the neglect of hymnological research in American Protestantism the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals (ISAE) launched a three-year study of American Protestant hymnody culminating with the book entitled *Wonderful Words of Life: Hymns in American Protestant History and Theology*.<sup>10</sup> Co-editor Richard J. Mouw was heartened that there was 'a small but growing body of literature that attempts to explain the wider dimensions of hymn experiences that reflect basic personal-social-religious realities of Western Christian history.'<sup>11</sup>

Following *Wonderful Words of Life* Mark A. Noll and Edith L. Blumhofer teamed up as co-editors on two essay collections. In 2004 they published *Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land: Hymnody in the History of North American Protestantism* and, in 2006, *Sing Them Over Again to Me: Hymns and Hymnbooks in America*.

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<sup>7</sup> Teresa Berger, *Theology in Hymns?: A Study of the Relationship of Doxology and Theology According to a Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists (1780)*, trans. Timothy E. Kimbrough (Nashville, Tennessee: Kingswood Books, 1995) p. 42.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* p. 44, 45. Berger reviewed *Jubilate* by Daniel W. Hardy and David F. Ford. She recognized their focus on the concept of praise, but raised the concern that they had 'turned a blind eye to the liturgy!' While systematic theologians may overlook liturgy, the presupposition requiring systematic theologians treat the intersection of liturgy, doxology and theology is not legitimate. Similarly, the liturgiologist is not required to treat theology.

<sup>9</sup> Teresa Berger is not Methodist, but conducted research on Methodist hymnody while on the theology faculty at Duke University. She holds doctorates in both dogmatic theology and liturgics.

<sup>10</sup> The Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals (ISAE) provides the following preamble to the project: 'In 1998, the Lilly Endowment, Inc. of Indianapolis awarded a major grant to the ISAE to initiate a three year-study of American Protestant Hymnody. Probably more than any other single source, hymns have played a central role in the devotional lives of American Protestants, opening a window on both the shared theology and the deepest emotions of the average person in the pews. Sadly, this central aspect of the American Protestant experience has been seriously under-studied by historians of American religion. The Hymnody in American Protestantism project hopes to begin remedying this situation.'

<sup>11</sup> Richard J. Mouw and Mark A. Noll (eds.), *Wonderful Words of Life. Hymns in American Protestant History & Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004) p. xvii.

These works expressed interest in the social history of theology, and used hymns as primary source material.

One of the most significant contributions to American hymnody is the work of Stephen A. Marini who, using a method established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>12</sup> ranked the most printed hymns in American Protestant hymnals published from 1737 to 1960. Since his data was first published in *Wonderful Words of Life*, he has developed his research further, creating two smaller category groupings: Classical Evangelical Hymnody (1737-1860) and Modern Evangelical Hymnody (1861-1970), published in *Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land: Hymnody in the History of North American Protestantism*. Though Marini's research does not include African American spirituals and improvised hymns, it remains the best gauge of dominant hymns in American Protestantism.<sup>13</sup>

African American music is also critical to understanding the role of hymns in American Protestantism. The theology of spirituals garnered interest at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, evidenced by C. J. Ryder's 'Theology of Plantation Songs' (1892) and 'Christian Truth in Slave Songs' (1895). In addition, there have been important 20<sup>th</sup> century works that discuss the theological significance of spirituals and improvised hymns: Henry Hugh Proctor's *Between Black and White: Autobiographical Sketches* (1925) that featured two chapters on the theology of slave songs; *Deep River: Reflections on the Religious Insight of Certain of the Negro Spirituals* (1945) by Howard Thurman; *Negro Slave Songs in the United States* (1969) by Miles Mark Fisher; 'Black Spirituals: A Theological Interpretation' (1972) and *The Spirituals and the Blues* (1991) by James H. Cone; *Black Song: The Forge and the Flame* by John Lovell Jr. (1986); and *Spirits that Dwell in Deep Woods: The Prayer and Praise Hymns of the Black Religious Experience* (1987) by Wyatt Tee Walker.

Most recently, Jon Michael Spencer's 1992 book *Black Hymnody: A Hymnological History of the African-American Church* encouraged the analysis of black hymnody. Surveying the interests of several disciplines, Spencer considered there to be a 'dearth

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<sup>12</sup> Hymn ranking based on hymnal printings goes back to at least 1885 when James King, Vicar of St. Mary's, Berwick-Upon-Tweed, authored a work on Anglican hymnody in which he provided a method by which hymns printed in hymnals could be measured for usage. See Harvey B. Marks, *The Rise and Growth of English Hymnody* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1937) p. 39.

<sup>13</sup> Spirituals, not being represented in Protestant hymnals prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, fall outside of Marini's scope. In order to treat 19<sup>th</sup>-century African American spirituals and improvised hymns I have consulted the lyric collections of various compilers. These collections will be discussed in chapter seven below.

of documentation',<sup>14</sup> especially in the fields of hymnology and theomusicology. In his earlier work *Protest and Praise: Sacred Music of Black Religion* (1990) Spencer had coined the term theomusicology 'which is musicology as a theologically informed discipline.'<sup>15</sup> Since Spencer, Melva Wilson Costen's book *In Spirit and in Truth: Music of African American Worship* (2004) provided a survey of the African American music tradition including a chronological list of African American hymnals. In part, Costen was interested in music as 'a theological thread in the fabric of African American existence'<sup>16</sup> and brought historical, biblical, liturgical and theological methods to her work. William T. Dargan's 2006 work *Lining Out the Word: Dr. Watts Hymn Singing in the Music of Black Americans* emphasized the influence of English hymnody in African American communities resulting in the creation of improvised hymns.

There are a number of dissertations and monographs that situate hymns in 19<sup>th</sup>-century American Protestantism. Both Virginia Ann Cross' 1985 dissertation 'The Development of Sunday School Hymnody in the United States of America, 1816-1869' and Richard Steadman Mauney's 'The Development of Missionary Hymnody in the United States of America in the Nineteenth Century' (1993), traced developments within hymnody and provided a sampling of theological analysis. Various books have examined the role and influence of hymnody: *Gospel Hymns and Social Religion: The Rhetoric of Nineteenth Century Revivalism* by Sandra S. Sizer (1978), *Abide with Me: The World of Victorian Hymns* (1997) by Ian Bradley, a work that included American hymnody, and "I Sing for I Cannot Be Silent": *The Feminization of American Hymnody, 1870-1920* (1997) by June Hadden Hobbs.

## 1.7 Contributions to Theology

While the above works have examined hymnody as expressive culture and treated peripherally various matters of theology, there are few that have engaged theology of hymnody as a central issue. I trust that my dissertation will contribute to theology with the following emphases:

1. The authority of the hymnal with a view of its functional canonicity.

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<sup>14</sup> Jon Michael Spencer, *Black Hymnody: A Hymnological History of the African-American Church* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1992) p. xi.

<sup>15</sup> Jon Michael Spencer, *Protest and Praise: Sacred Music of Black Religion* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990) p. viii.

<sup>16</sup> Melva Wilson Costen, *In Spirit and in Truth: The Music of African American Worship* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004) p. xii.

2. The theological content of hymns in their social and ecclesial contexts.
3. The catechetical role and didactic influence of hymnody.
4. The theological usage of hymnody by marginalized groups and their opponents.<sup>17</sup>
5. The contextual and exegetical treatment of spirituals and improvised hymns.
6. The soteriological efficacy of hymnody.
7. The role of hymns in regulative theology.

## 1.8 Theological Implications for Applied Theology

The authoritative role of hymns and spirituals carries with it considerable ramifications for applied theology. I anticipate this study will be useful to those engaged in church ministry, parachurch ministry, arts-based ministry, and congregational studies, contributing to applied theology with the following emphases:

1. The informed use of hymns and songs in religious education.
2. The analysis of hymnic authority in congregational and liturgical studies.
3. A contextual approach to guide theological analysis of hymnic sources.
4. The informed selection and editing of hymns.
5. The appreciation of hymn/poetic texts in personal and corporate expression, at the intersection of worship and doctrine in particular.
6. The Bible and hymnal as mutually constitutive.
7. The objective investigation of theology and hymnic authority as no respecter of musical genres.

## 1.9 Theological-Hermeneutical Approaches

In recent decades modern scholarship has witnessed a small boom of theologies characterized by 'reader-perspective'.<sup>18</sup> Such theologies explore meaning through lenses such as gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, subculture; typified in liberation theology, black theology, feminist theology and, most recently, queer

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<sup>17</sup> While Unitarianism and Utah-based Mormonism have received some consideration, marginalized groups have been largely ignored in hymnological studies. The practice of using and adapting Protestant hymns by groups outside of mainstream Protestantism has received little attention from scholars.

<sup>18</sup> In 'The Death of the Author' Barthes argued that writing is neutral 'where all identity is lost'. See Roland Barthes, *Image Music Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977) p. 142. One service of Barthes' argument is providing a corrective to the field of theology where dogmatic judgments by theologians were/are easily made on behalf of an author's intended meaning. Asserting the precise authorship and meaning of a text can be grossly overstated.



theology. In these theological paradigms the reader serves as the primary interpreter of textual sources and thus shapes theological method. As the purpose of theology is to define what faith is and/or was within a faith community, the reader-perspective will be investigated here, especially hymn adaptations by marginalized groups and African American spirituals (and improvised hymns).

In contrast to the reader-perspective is the author-perspective. In this model, the exegetical approach concentrates on understanding the situation and audience of the author seeking to determine the highest probability of the author's intended meaning. Writing style, word studies, context, and various other tools, are utilized in order to understand the author and thus contribute to the understanding of the author's text. This perspective will be useful here, especially considering the didactic and doctrinal use of hymns intended by hymn writers. While conceding the difficulty discerning the intentionality of an author, I sustain the view that authors of hymns wrote to convey meaning to an intended audience expecting their intended meaning would be understood through their use of language. As part of my hermeneutical approach is author-centric, I will discuss intended meanings of hymn writers, including hymn adapters and black slave communities that wrote spirituals and improvised hymns. The dominant hymns cited in this dissertation are of undisputed authorship and can be situated in their contexts with a reasonable measure of confidence. Though authorship was anonymous in some hymns of marginalized groups and almost all African American spirituals, the scope of the authoring community is limited; in the case of African American spirituals, it is limited to southern slave contexts that bear contextual and cultural signatures.

Hymn writers were also interpreters of biblical texts, and at times it is critical to consider their operant hermeneutics. For example, Revelation 3:20 (Jesus knocking) is ubiquitous in conversion hymns. In respect to theological authority, my work seeks to address the interpretation of this particular text demonstrating how it shaped and/or perpetuated experiential conversionism in American Protestantism.

To determine theological authority (through social and textual analyses) I will employ varied hermeneutical approaches including contextualization (of primary sources), biblical analysis (biblical sources traceable in hymns), exegesis (author meanings deciphered 'out' of the hymnic texts), eisegesis (reader meanings seen 'in' biblical and hymnic texts), and operant hermeneutics (biblical use and interpretation by hymn

writers). The main theological analysis that I will employ is systematic theology (how Christian theology is identified and organized according to doctrinal categories). I will also engage historical theology (how theology performs and develops over the course of time), liturgical theology (how worship defines what Christianity is),<sup>19</sup> cultural theology (how culture defines what Christianity is), ecclesial theology (how a church tradition shapes theology) and hymnic theology (how the authority of hymn text – *lex cantandi* – defines what Christianity is).

### 1.10 Interdisciplinarity of Study

The intersection of theology with other disciplines has enriched this work, especially history, religious studies, historical musicology, liturgy, American studies, African American studies, sociology, and literature.

### 1.11 Use of Primary Sources

I am interested in hymns and spirituals as lived religion common to church and home life, and as academic doxology common to the seminary. Thus I have consulted numerous primary source materials, both elite and popular, including journals, conference minutes, academic addresses, theological works, hymn prefaces, domestic novels, newspapers, and biographies.<sup>20</sup> This approach values the voices of Mark Twain (*Tom Sawyer*), Harriett Beecher Stowe (*Uncle Tom's Cabin*) and Joel Chandler Harris (*Uncle Remus' Stories*) alongside hymnologists, historians, theologians and politicians, such as Louis Benson, Philip Schaff, Charles Hodge, and Woodrow Wilson.

### 1.12 Research Methods

I have employed various methods in this work. Qualitative methods have been employed in case studies, such as examining select hymns, particular Bible texts, representative hymnals, and usage groups. Quantitative methods have been employed in hymn rankings and their analysis, as well as content analysis of hymnals and song

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<sup>19</sup> Liturgical studies are, in contrast, how Christianity defines what worship is.

<sup>20</sup> Some writing conventions vary between the primary sources, such as word spelling (hymn book vs. hymn-book), dating (day and month vs. month and day), and hymn titles (capitalization, italicization, use of quotations). I have preserved the conventions as they are used in the primary sources. For hymn titles throughout this dissertation, I have used italics. Where I list several hymns that employ punctuation with the titles, I separate between titles with a semi-colon.

collections. Two software programs were used to determine numerical representations. These included the database of hymns and hymnals provided in the *Dictionary of North American Hymnology* (DNAH),<sup>21</sup> and *Wmatrix2*,<sup>22</sup> a Natural Language Processing of Lyrics (NLPL) program used to analyze lyrics for language identification, thematic categorization, and structure extraction. Comparative methods have been employed when contrasting textual variations resulting from hymn editing.

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<sup>21</sup> Leonard Webster Ellinwood, *Dictionary of North American Hymnology [Electronic Source]* / *Compiled by Leonard Ellinwood & Elizabeth Lockwood*, eds. Paul R. Powell and Mary Louise Vandyke (Boston, MA: Hymn Society in the United States and Canada, 2003).

<sup>22</sup> P. Rayson, 'Wmatrix: A Web-Based Corpus Processing Environment', (Computing Department, Lancaster University, 2008).

## Chapter Two: Hymns in American Protestantism

While I will provide historical context in subsequent chapters, in this chapter I will present an introduction to the American Protestant context. I will also provide a brief synopsis of the main denominations and hymnal publications, and rationale for the periodization of 1830-1930.

### 2.1 Introduction

At the forefront of American Protestantism was the inspiring figure John Winthrop. Under Winthrop the English Puritans put a Protestant flag in American soil and claimed it as 'Zion', the 'Promised Land'. Thus Protestantism in the New World would be much more than a safe haven for the Puritans. As a type of covenantal theology, since attributed to Winthrop and the Puritan community he established in the early 1600s, the earliest concept of America's destiny was a 'city upon a hill',<sup>23</sup> establishing America as a light among the nations. For Winthrop the New World was, in the words of his now famous sermon, 'A Model of Christian Charity'. The 'model' blended a Puritan legacy and a New World vision with evangelicalism common to both.

While the 1640 *Bay Psalm Book* was the first book published in America by the Puritans,<sup>24</sup> in psalmody and hymnody, the works of English hymn writer Isaac Watts (1674-1748) became dominant. But following the American Revolution, American Protestantism distanced itself from Britain.<sup>25</sup> The dynamics between the two nations can be illustrated in the hymnody and theology of Presbyterian Timothy Dwight. His hymn *I Love Thy Kingdom Lord* (written in 1800) and his later work *Theology*

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<sup>23</sup> The earliest concept of America's destiny is often attributed to John Winthrop's now famous sermon, 'A Model of Christian Charity'. In Winthrop's sermon, Puritans were challenged to be a light to the nations or a 'city on a hill' (based on the teachings of Jesus recorded in Matthew 5:14). See John Winthrop, *A Modell of Christian Charity: Written on Board the Arbella, on the Atlantic Ocean, 1630* (3rd, 7; Boston: Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, 1838) 31-48 p. 47. 'For wee must consider that wee shall be as a citty upon a hill. The eies of all people are uppon us. Soe that if wee shall deale falsely with our God in this worke wee haue undertaken, and soe cause him to withdrawe his present help from us, wee shall be made a story and a by-word through the world.'

<sup>24</sup> Henry Wilder Foote, *Three Centuries of American Hymnody* (United States of America: Archon Books, 1968) p. 1.

<sup>25</sup> For instance, in 1785 the Protestant Episcopal Church became independent of the Church of England. Mark Noll suggested that 'the religious landscape was transformed every bit as much as the political landscape.' After the War, American Protestants reorganized around the concept of liberty. See Mark A. Noll, *The Old Religion in a New World: The History of North American Christianity* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002) p. 70.

*Explained and Defended in a Series of Sermons* (published posthumously in 1818) are representative of American Protestantism at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Timothy Dwight, 'one of the broadest and most scholarly examples of American culture',<sup>26</sup> continued Isaac Watts' influence in the United States by publishing an 'altered version' of Watts' *Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament*. Where Watts had 'adapted David' for 'Christian use and worship', Dwight 'adapted Watts' to 'the state of the American Churches', also versifying the psalms that Watts had omitted.<sup>27</sup> Altering 'localized passages' Dwight removed the British references from Watts<sup>28</sup> and, in the spirit of John Winthrop's 'city on a hill', rewrote the songs of Zion for the new nation. In Psalm 115, for example, the Psalmist called for Israel to trust the Lord, Watts called for Israel and Britain to trust the Lord, Dwight put the call to Israel and Zion.<sup>29</sup>

For Dwight, the United States would have been an idolatrous nation save for three things: the churches, which 'on a thousand hills now stand', belief on 'the Lord Jesus Christ', and the hymns 'that daily ascend to heaven'.<sup>30</sup>

## 2.2 The Characteristics of American Protestantism

Introducing American hymnody in *A Panorama of Christian Hymnody* (1979) Erik Routley (British), professor of Church Music at Princeton, wrote that, 'No adjective is so difficult to define as "American."<sup>31</sup> Historian R. Laurence Moore registered a similar challenge in using the word 'Protestant', claiming that its meaning was elusive.<sup>32</sup> These comments provide a helpful corrective. As both terms 'American' and 'Protestantism' are challenging to define, caution is advised in situating hymns in the context of American Protestantism. Nonetheless, these terms can be defined adequately for their use here, as the works of Bebbington and Noll demonstrate.

<sup>26</sup> Samuel Willoughby Duffield, *English Hymns: Their Authors and History* (New York and London: Funk & Wagnalls, 1886) p. 242.

<sup>27</sup> Timothy Dwight, *The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament and Adapted to the Christian Use and Worship by I. Watts, D. D.: A New Edition in Which the Psalms Omitted by Dr. Watts, Are Versified, Local Passages Altered, and a Number of Psalms Are Versified Anew, in Proper Metres* (New Haven: Samuel Wadsworth, 1821).

<sup>28</sup> For example, in Psalm 60, 100, and 115.

<sup>29</sup> Betraying a strain of anti-Catholicism, both Watts and Dwight both 'reproved popish idolatry'.

<sup>30</sup> Timothy Dwight, *Theology Explained and Defended in a Series of Sermons* (2; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1846) p. 115.

<sup>31</sup> Erik Routley, *A Panorama of Christian Hymnody* (Chicago, Illinois: G.I.A. Publications, Inc., 1979).

<sup>32</sup> R. Lawrence Moore, *Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

David W. Bebbington identified the characteristics of evangelical Protestantism as conversionism, crucicentrism, biblicism and activism in *Evangelicalism in modern Britain: a history from the 1730s to the 1980s*.<sup>33</sup> In *America's God*, Mark Noll suggested that American Protestantism from the period 1730-1860 was largely evangelical, being marked by the same four characteristics that Bebbington recognized in modern British Evangelicalism, namely: biblicism, conversionism, activism, and crucicentrism.<sup>34</sup> Bebbington's work identified evangelicalism as a stream within British Protestantism; in contrast, Noll's work within American Protestantism identified evangelicalism as the major body of water. In other words, whereas in Britain evangelicalism was Protestant, in the United States, Protestantism was evangelical. In his more recent work *The Dominance of Evangelicalism: The Age of Spurgeon and Moody* Bebbington, with Noll serving as editor, expressed these identifiers as 'The Bible', 'The Cross', 'Conversion', and 'Activism'.<sup>35</sup>

According to Noll, until some shifting in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the vast majority of mainstream Protestant denominations in the United States were evangelical.<sup>36</sup> This shift (that witnessed fragmentation along liberal-conservative lines) was evidenced by the Millenarian Conference of 1879 and *The Fundamentals* published in 1910, both reactionary toward the encroachment of liberal theology. In *The Fabric of Theology* Richard Lint addressed the link between this theological shift and hymnody.

On the surface, Protestant theological liberalism and the fundamentalist-evangelical coalition of the twentieth century were fierce adversaries, but it is important to note that both had roots in a pragmatic-experiential, low-church, antitradition heritage. The basic trend is evident in the popular hymnody of the period as well. In contrast to the strictly biblical psalms of Puritan days and the biblical paraphrases and theological themes of the eighteenth century, nineteenth-century hymns and twentieth-century choruses were centered in the feelings and experiences of the believer.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>33</sup> David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London & Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989) p. 4.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. p. 5. In his book *America's God*, Noll identifies the social history of theology between the 1730s and 1860s.

<sup>35</sup> David W. Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism: The Age of Spurgeon and Moody*, ed. David W. Bebbington and Mark A. Noll (A History of Evangelicalism: People, Movements and Ideas in the English-Speaking World; Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 2005) p. 23ff.

<sup>36</sup> Mark A. Noll, *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002) p. 5. In speaking of the era 1790-1860, Noll claims that 'the most prominent Protestant voices were also self-consciously evangelical.'

<sup>37</sup> Richard Lints, *The Fabric of Theology: A Prolegomenon to Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1993) p. 47.

In his introduction to *Theology in America: The Major Protestant Voices from Puritanism to Neo-Orthodoxy*, editor Sydney E. Ahlstrom provided a summary of the theological landscape of 19<sup>th</sup>-century American Protestantism.

As expounded by various Congregational, Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist theologians, “New Schoolism” became, in effect, the ecumenical theology of nonsectarian revivalism, the Sunday School movement, foreign and domestic missions, and a wide array of organized reform activities, notably the temperance crusade. One can almost speak of it as the theology of American Protestantism during its nineteenth century hey-day. It was frankly Arminian in its modifications of predestination dogma, vigorous in its emphasis on conversion and personal holiness, immensely moralistic in its definition of the good life, strong in millennial fervor, determined to make a model of America’s Protestant democracy, and belligerently suspicious of Roman Catholicism both as a rapidly growing church and as a possible influence on Christian belief and practice.<sup>38</sup>

There are at least two other representative movements that deserve recognition: 1. The rise of African American Protestantism,<sup>39</sup> and, 2. The rejection of marginalized groups that, similar to anti-Catholicism, drew criticism from Protestant theologians serving to protect the historical and doctrinal integrity of Protestantism.

Further to assessing the theological landscape, Ahlstrom also appraised Protestant hymnody. Ahlstrom, describing 19<sup>th</sup>-century American Protestantism, writes, ‘Perhaps nothing better expressed the piety pervading these institutions than the new hymnody’. Ahlstrom recognized the religio-political ideology of America as ‘the Lord’s Chosen Nation’ in Timothy Dwight’s hymn *Columbia, Columbia, to Glory Arise*. He believed ‘the mythic theme of America as a beacon on a hill and an exemplar for the world’ was perpetuated through nationalist hymns such as *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, ‘written by Julia Ward Howe as if by the hand of God’.<sup>40</sup>

The tandem of Ahlstrom’s theological assessment and hymnic appraisal sets the stage for my investigation of the hymn’s theological authority. To explore the role of hymns in American Protestantism, the above particulars (Sunday School movement, revivalism, missions, reform activities, Arminianism, millennialism, marginalization,

<sup>38</sup> Sydney E. Ahlstrom (ed.), *Theology in America: The Major Voices from Puritanism to Neo-Orthodoxy* (The American Heritage Series, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2003) p. 45.

<sup>39</sup> I realize the shortcomings of this term (especially in light of ‘slave religion’ vs. ‘slave religions’), but I trust that chapter seven will qualify my usage. Noll used the phrase ‘African American denominations’. The ‘black church’, an oft-used term, is increasingly proving to be inadequate.

<sup>40</sup> Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972) p. 7. Ahlstrom also suggested that Ward’s hymn, along with *Onward Christian Soldiers*, was influential in ‘awakening the Protestant host’ in the decades following the Civil War, p. 857.

and the rise of African American Protestantism) provide a rubric by which to study the theological authority of hymnody. What role did hymns play in the Sunday School and temperance movement? Did African American spirituals and improvised hymns wield theological authority among black slave populations? How were hymns used by Protestants to segregate themselves from Catholics and other religious groups? Of those 'marginalized groups' that published hymnals, did they associate in some way with the Protestant hymn tradition? How did Protestants use hymns to disassociate with the theology of marginalized groups? In the 'ecumenical theology of nonsectarian revivalism', how commanding were hymns in the widespread engagement with Arminianist conversionism? What role did hymns play in foreign and domestic missions? Did 'millennial fervor' and the 'determination to make a model of America's Protestant democracy' influence the missionary impulse and, if so, what role did hymns play in this campaign? I contend that in all of these representative movements, hymns were central and functionally canonical. I will show that hymns were foundational to spiritual expression, religious education, and regulative theology. Hymns were used to gauge and validate orthodoxy and were oftentimes at the centre of doctrinal controversy. In conversion and missions, the hymnal served as a guide to salvation.

### **2.3 Denominations and Hymnals**

Protestantism in the United States was rooted in Puritanism and Anglicanism with an abundance of smaller immigrant groups such as Moravian, Dutch Reformed, Hutterite, Mennonite, and Finnish and Danish Lutheran. Methodists and Baptists were dominant throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially following the two 'Awakenings' – the Great Awakening (1730-1770) and the Second Great Awakening (1790-1840), though Presbyterian and Lutheran denominations also flourished. In the 1931 census of Protestant bodies (the end of my period of interest), Methodist Episcopal ranked highest (4,135,775), Southern Baptists were second (3,702,315), National Convention Baptists were third (3,510,000), Methodist Episcopal South was fourth (2,346,000) and Presbyterian Church U.S.A. was fifth (1,859,495). Other large denominations included the Disciples of Christ (1,432,265), the Baptist Northern Convention (1,385,284) and Protestant Episcopal (1,261,158). Collectively, the three main Lutheran denominations (United Lutheran Church, American Lutheran Conference



and Lutheran Synodical Conference) totaled 2,767,742.<sup>41</sup> Hymnal publications mirrored these numbers, placing Baptists with 59 hymnals at the top and Methodists close behind with 57. Several other groups are noteworthy. By 1930 Unitarians had published 56 hymnals, and Universalists had published 30 hymnals;<sup>42</sup> comparatively, Presbyterians had published 22 hymnals. Reflecting Protestant activism ('organized reform activities'), the temperance movement published 54 hymnals and, between the years 1834-1866, there were a small number of anti-slavery hymn books published. William Lloyd Garrison's *A Selection of Anti-Slavery Hymns* (1834) containing 32 hymns appears to have been one of the first collections.<sup>43</sup>

## 2.4 Time Period, 1830-1930

The periodization 1830-1930 mentioned above (section 1.4) as a delimitation of this study deserves further comment. On the one hand, I simply wanted a lengthy period in which to test the functional canonicity of the hymnal across successive generations in American Protestantism. On the other hand, I wanted to work within a time period that showcased the hymnal, and was willing to work outside of typical periodizations in United States history, such as the Civil War era (1849-1865) the Reconstruction era (1865-1877), and the Gilded Age (1878-1889).

In recent years, various cultural histories have prioritized the era 1830-1930 with several works that have reinforced my interest in this specific time delimitation. In *Women's Culture: American Philanthropy and Art, 1830-1930* Kathleen D. McCarthy traced the advancement of women in American culture from the antebellum period in which women were marginalized from cultural institutions to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when women won the right to vote. McCarthy's work intersects with June Hadden Hobbs' interest in the feminization of American hymnody 1870-1920. Attention to the music of immigrants groups inspired Victor Greene's *A Singing Ambivalence: American Immigrants Between Old World And New, 1830-1930*, an historical work that examined popular consciousness and deeply held sentiments expressed through

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<sup>41</sup> Herman C. Weber (ed.), *Yearbook of American Churches* (New York: Round Table Press, Inc., 1933) p. 300.

<sup>42</sup> Though these groups were smaller than the leading denominations, they published a large corpus of hymnals.

<sup>43</sup> William Lloyd Garrison's *A Selection of Anti-Slavery Hymns* is the only anti-slavery hymn book listed in the *Dictionary of North American Hymnology*. But there were a few other anti-slavery hymn books published, such as *Hymns for Anti-slavery Prayer-meetings* by Mary Ann Rawson (1838) and *Anti-slavery Hymns* by George W. Stacy (1844).

folk music.<sup>44</sup> Greene excluded hymnody given its lyrical permanence and thus its lack of ethno-cultural expression. Ralph Luker's *A Southern Tradition in Theology and Social Criticism 1830-1930* explored intellectual history in the South set chronologically from the theological justification of slavery in antebellum America through to the rise of the social gospel. Not least, Robert T. Handy's *The Protestant Quest for a Christian America 1830-1930* explored Protestantism's attempt to permeate American society.

In *America's God*, Noll indicated the significance of 1830 as a new period of evangelical activity.

Finally, it is germane to note that the years after 1830 were marked by a fresh surge of serious evangelical writing, both historical and theological. [...] that would make the period from roughly 1825-1900 the nation's greatest era in the production of formal Christian thought.<sup>45</sup>

In *The Old Religion in a New World*, Noll again emphasized the year 1830. In comparison with typical periodizations in United States history that, in general, treat the Civil War era as the period of transition, Noll writes, 'there is considerable reason to regard the decade beginning in 1830 as a more important time of transition.'<sup>46</sup> Noll points to two major shifts within American Protestantism: the privatization of spirituality and the rise of African American denominations.

In the case of hymnody, establishing the years 1830-1930 as bookends relates to dynamics within theology, hymnody, and culture. For instance, the early 1830s witnessed the writing of the hymn *My Country 'Tis of Thee*, the birth of Mormonism and its almost immediate exploitation of American Protestant hymns (beginning with Emma Smith's 1835 hymnal), the rise of the gospel hymn, the 'new measures' in conversionism pioneered by Charles G. Finney, and the advent of American missions. By 1831, Presbyterians shifted from 'the legacy of exclusive psalmody',<sup>47</sup> and

<sup>44</sup> Greene eliminates hymns and liturgical music from his research given their textual stability as text changes demonstrate responses to the ethnic experience. See Victor R. Greene, *A Singing Ambivalence: American Immigrants between Old World and New, 1830-1930* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2004) p. xxiv.

<sup>45</sup> Noll, *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* p. 175.

<sup>46</sup> Noll, *The Old Religion in a New World: The History of North American Christianity* p. 96. Noll credits James D. Bratt's 'The Reorientation of American Protestantism, 1835-1845'.

<sup>47</sup> Darryl G. Hart, 'In the Shadow of Calvin and Watts: Twentieth-Century American Presbyterians and Their Hymnals', in Edith L. Blumhofer and Mark A. Noll (eds.), *Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land: Hymnody in the History of North American Protestantism* (Religion and American Culture; Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2004), 92-121 p. 93. Though it should be noted that the appeal to 'exclusive psalmody' was not abandoned. Factions against 'hymns of human composure' continued throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century but were largely ineffectual.

embraced 'hymns of human composure', Darryl G. Hart suggesting that Presbyterians were the 'first in the Reformed tradition to do so'.<sup>48</sup> The establishment of Sunday Schools encouraged hymn books for children, marginalized groups were highly active in hymn publication, and slave songs were gaining the recognition of musicians and historians who subsequently published various collections and commentaries.

Hymnody was generally entrenched in American Protestantism by the 19<sup>th</sup> century (though resistance to 'hymns of human composure', otherwise known as 'uninspired hymns', was maintained by some writers in the Reformed tradition). The early 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the advent of the organ and professionalization of choirs led by Boston churches, a shift accommodated by church architecture giving prominent place to the organ and choir loft. In 1871 the Fisk Jubilee Singers toured to raise funds for Fisk University; their travels included the White House in 1872 and Europe in 1873. Their success as ambassadors for Fisk University and the black race demonstrated the impact of ensembles and prompted others to organize touring choirs, such as the Hampton Singers (est. 1873); in these cases, African American spirituals and/or improvised Protestant hymns were the essential repertoire. The Utah-based Mormons also invested heavily in similar strategies, building an organ-equipped Tabernacle in 1867 and recruiting the Mormon Tabernacle Choir as an emissary for Utah Mormonism with its first tour in 1893. Meanwhile, quartets were replacing the choir on the church stage, sometimes resulting in congregational conflicts. Alongside the church-situated developments in music, revivals and camp meetings were gaining inroads. Spontaneous, emotional and often bi-racial, revivalism changed the shape of the religious landscape. Whereas choirs and quartets delimited congregational participation, camp meetings and revivals encouraged enthusiastic singing from the crowds. Further, the song leader gained elevated status. In experiential conversionism, the song leader's role may have been more compelling than the preacher's.

The other fitting bookend is 1930. The temperance movement, charged at its core by hymnody, came to completion with Prohibition legislation in 1920. The 1920s ushered in the 'Dorsey era' of blues-influenced gospel music and the rise of the radio. The Utah-based Mormons began radio broadcasts of 'hymn stories' and the Mormon

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid. p. 94.

Tabernacle choir.<sup>49</sup> The advent and popularizing of recording and radio in the 1920s require different methodologies beyond the scope of this study. Though worthy of close inspection, the hymn as ‘recorded music’ and its dissemination through radio injects significant research variations, including novelty of technology, access to technology, scope of audience, and entertainment format. Pentecostalism and the charismatic movement inaugurated at the Azusa Street revival ushered in a new era whose impact was felt throughout Protestantism by the 1920s. The pneumatological emphasis coupled with singing (and speaking) in tongues introduced a monumental change that was more in stride with gospel music than classical hymnody.<sup>50</sup> Further, the ‘demise of biblical civilization’ (evident in the United States by the 1920s) witnessed the drop-off of the Bible’s influence, creating a vacuum of biblical authority that might skew and certainly stratify<sup>51</sup> my research of the hymnal’s authority. I wish to explore the hymnal’s authority at a time when the Bible was dominant in American culture. As such, I will cut off my investigation at 1930 (though I will sometimes trace the influence of hymnody into the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century).

There were other movements in American Protestant social and ecclesial contexts, such as fundamentalism and revivalism, which stretched beyond the borders of any one denomination. These, too, will be discussed in relation to the role of hymns in subsequent chapters. As well, the prominence of certain individuals, societies and events will receive due attention below.

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<sup>49</sup> Michael Hicks, *Mormonism and Music* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003) p. 134.

<sup>50</sup> Exceptions might be noted in the *Pentecostal Hymns* series that reflected, though minimally, the pre-Azusa holiness movement. In particular, Mrs. Morris’ hymn *Have Ye Received the Holy Spirit Since Ye Believed?*

<sup>51</sup> Comparing the theological authority of hymns after the decline of the Bible in American culture creates two dispensations, i.e. the pre-decline vs. the post-decline period of biblical authority.

## Chapter Three: Hymns and Theology

In this chapter I will present a brief historical overview of hymnody and its intersection with theology, including the American Protestant context. I will discuss theological approaches to hymnody and consider the axiom *lex orandi lex credendi* in relation to hymnody and theology.

### 3.1 Introduction

Since its beginnings, the Church has sung. In *New Testament Theology* Donald Guthrie drew attention to the hymnic fragments in Philippians and Colossians to demonstrate the Christological content of early doxological literature.<sup>52</sup> For Guthrie, Paul's letters were pre-dated by 'already existing hymns about Christ',<sup>53</sup> yielding significant theological insights concerning the deification of Christ. But these hymns were embedded in canonical text. What was the theological function of hymns outside biblical texts?

### 3.2 Historical Overview

Singing appears to have been common from the time of Jesus onward. Jesus and the disciples sang a hymn at 'the Lord's Supper' (Mark 14:26; Matthew 26:30), Paul and Silas sang hymns while in prison (Acts 16:25), Paul encouraged the churches at Ephesus and Colossae to sing hymns, psalms and spiritual songs (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16) and advised the church at Corinth on the orderly inclusion of hymns in public worship (1 Corinthians 14). James encouraged the singing of praises (James 5:13).

After the apostolic period, eastern Christians continued to use hymns in worship. Early-2<sup>nd</sup> century correspondence from Pliny the Younger (governor of Bithynia) to the Emperor Trajan describes Christians singing hymns to Christ 'as to a god'. From Eusebius ('Father of Church History') it is evident that music was commonly used to communicate Christology. By the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century, those serving in positions of authority – presbyters and bishops – utilized music to convey theology. Both

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<sup>52</sup> Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Theology* (Leicester, England ; Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity Press, 1981) p. 343-365. Guthrie discusses Philippians 2:6-11 and Colossians 1:15-20 primarily, but also considers 1 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 1:3, 1 Peter 3:18-20.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* p. 343.

orthodox and heterodox writers composed hymn stanzas as a medium of expression and communication. In *Ecclesiastical History*, Eusebius extolled the hymns of Melito and Irenaeus<sup>54</sup> for expressing the belief that Christ was God and man. Eusebius asked rhetorically,

For who does not know the works of Irenaeus and of Melito and of others which teach that Christ is God and man? And how many psalms and hymns, written by the faithful brethren from the beginning, celebrate Christ as the Word of God, speaking of him as Divine.<sup>55</sup>

Eusebius denounced Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch (fl. 260s), for using music to communicate heretical teaching. Quoting a synodical letter addressed to bishops Dionysius (of Rome) and Maximus (of Alexandria), Eusebius emphasized Paul's many shortcomings and held Paul in contempt for his misuse of music. In the synodical letter, the bishops specify that Paul forbade the singing of hymns in his church, except for psalms that honored him.<sup>56</sup> Though Eusebius did not record the lyrics, he indicated that the songs paid tribute to Paul, extolling him among the people as 'an angel from heaven'.<sup>57</sup>

Arius (c. 250-336), a presbyter from Alexandria and vocal opponent of the divinity of Christ, composed hymns to propagate his views denying that the Father and Son were of the same essence. For Arius God, as 'the Unbegun', had made the Son the first created being.

The Father is alien to the Son in essence  
for the Father is without beginning  
The Unbegun made the Son the beginning of things originated  
When the Son was not the Father was God.<sup>58</sup>

Misappropriation of psalms and hymns and the prestige of the singer required the attention of the bishops at the Synod of Laodicea (c. 365), at which canons regulated the office of the singer and the uses of psalmody.<sup>59</sup>

No others shall sing in the church, save only canonical singers, who go up to the ambo<sup>60</sup> and sing from a book. (Canon 15)

<sup>54</sup> Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (eds.), *Eusebius: Church History, Life of Constantine the Great, and Oration in Praise of Constantine* (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 1; Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995) p. 247. *Eccl. Hist.* V. 28. 5.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* p. 314. *Eccl. Hist.* VII. 30. 10.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* p. 315. *Eccl. Hist.* VII. 30. 11.

<sup>58</sup> In Paul Westermeyer, *Te Deum. The Church and Music* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998) p. 66. Westermeyer included a verse of Arius' hymn, crediting the translation of Bard Thompson, Lancaster Seminary.

<sup>59</sup> Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (eds.), *The Seven Ecumenical Councils* (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 14; Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1995).

The singers and readers have no right to wear an orarium,<sup>61</sup> or to read or sing thus [habited]. (Canon 23)

No psalms composed by private individuals nor any uncanonical books may be read in the church, but only the Canonical Books of the Old and New Testaments. (Canon 59)

Augustine contributed to the discussion of hymns in his writings. In *Exposition of the Psalms*, Augustine defined a hymn as ‘a song with praise of God’.<sup>62</sup> In *Confessions*, Augustine testified that hymns and canticles had stirred his emotions,<sup>63</sup> and prescribed the singing of psalms and hymns in the same manner as the eastern Church.<sup>64</sup> In his *Letters* he defended the use of divine songs against the human compositions revealed in by the Donatists<sup>65</sup> and refuted the alleged hymn of Jesus in his letter *To Ceretius*, a hymn whose text is provided in full in the *Acts of John*.<sup>66</sup> Augustine denounced the claim that the hymn contained ‘a revelation more profound and sacred than anything contained in the canonical Scriptures.’<sup>67</sup>

Various church leaders and writers contributed to the development of liturgical music. In the east, St. Romanos the Melodist composed as many as 8000 metrical sermons (kontakia), and St. John of Damascus, an outstanding systematic theologian, served as a hymn writer of highest rank. In the west, St. Ambrose set a model for the composition and usage of hymns, Boethius created philosophical categories to better understand the nature of sacred music, and the plainchant tradition became a distinct form known as Gregorian chant (attributed to Pope Gregory the Great). Philosophers and mystics added notable works such as Thomas Aquinas’ *Pange Lingua* and Bernard of Clairvaux’s *O Sacred Head*, representative songs of the Middle Ages that expressed Trinitarianism and Christology.

The Reformation brought an increase in free composition hymns and chorales. Luther took a leading role in this, promoting music’s place next to theology,<sup>68</sup> and ‘named the *Te Deum* in third place after the Apostles’ Creed and the Athanasian

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<sup>60</sup> A raised pulpit or desk.

<sup>61</sup> A liturgical badge embroidered into the liturgical vestments.

<sup>62</sup> Philip Schaff (ed.), *The Confessions and Letters of Augustin* (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 1; Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995) p. 677.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* p. 134.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.* p. 315.

<sup>66</sup> M. R. James (ed.), *The New Testament Apocrypha* (Berkeley, CA: Apocryphile Press, 2004) p. 253.

<sup>67</sup> Schaff (ed.), *The Confessions and Letters of Augustin* p. 587.

<sup>68</sup> Westermeyer, p. 144.

Creed.<sup>69</sup> Luther's *A Mighty Fortress (Ein Feste Burg)* became the signature anthem of the Reformation. After Luther, Paul Gerhardt was considered 'the most gifted and popular hymn-writer of the Lutheran Church';<sup>70</sup> other pietist hymn writers of note include Heinrich Held (1620-1659) and Gerhard Tersteegen (1697-1769). Anabaptist leaders such as Dirk Philips and Michael Sattler composed hymns to emphasize the Lordship of Christ, the authority of God's Word and discipleship. Other reformers were more restrictive; Zwingli was opposed to music's distraction from preaching and Calvin limited singing to metrical psalms, though he is known to have composed the hymn *I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art*.

Isaac Watts is typically viewed as the father of English hymnody. Watts' most recognized work is *The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of The New Testament* in which Watts sought to accommodate Psalms to Christian worship.<sup>71</sup> Watts' method of Christianizing the Psalms was one of intentional replacement: Where David had accused his enemies, Watts accused Satan; where David described animal sacrifice, Watts described the sacrifice of Christ. Watts' method was to edit the imprecatory psalms to speak Christian language or exclude them altogether, such as Psalm 79, 137, and 140. Creating a lyrical medium by which to express Christian theology through adapted psalmody reinforced psalmody's requirement to carry theology and validated adaptations by post-biblical writers. Watts recognized two sources of hymnic text – versified psalmody and hymns of human composure – and published both genres.

Charles and John Wesley followed in the path set by Watts. Though Charles was the main hymn writer, it was his brother John that guarded theological meaning in hymnody. In the preface of *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists* John Wesley requested that other printers refrain from making changes to the lyrics of hymns written by him and his brother. Ironically, John Wesley acknowledged the need to change the lyrics to some of his and Charles' hymns due to his shifting view of Christian perfection, a Methodist distinctive otherwise known as sanctification. Further, John Wesley's theological shift is self-admitted; in his *Works*, he expresses regret over the theological inaccuracies of hymns. In light of his

<sup>69</sup> Ulrich S. Leupold (ed.), *Luther's Works* (Liturgy and Hymns, 53; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965) p. 171.

<sup>70</sup> James Mearns, 'Gerhardt, Paulus', in John Julian (ed.), *A Dictionary of Hymnology* (I; New York: Dover Publications, 1957), 409-412 p. 409.

<sup>71</sup> Isaac Watts, *The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament and Applied to the Christian State and Worship* (Teddington, Middlesex: The Echo Library) p. 8.



changing view of Christian perfection, Wesley appears to have been troubled by hymns texts that exaggerated 'Christian perfection'. In *Volume VI*, Wesley writes,

By perfection I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God and our neighbour, ruling our tempers, words, and actions. I do not include the impossibility of falling from it, either in part or in whole. Therefore, I retract several expressions in our hymns, which partly express, partly imply, such an impossibility.<sup>72</sup>

In *The Music and Hymnody of the Methodist Church*, published in 1911, Methodist hymnologist Carl F. Price attested to the editorial process applied to Charles Wesley's hymns in which hymns that 'emphasized unduly' sanctification were rejected.<sup>73</sup>

### 3.3 Hymns and Theology in American Protestantism

In 19<sup>th</sup>-century American Protestantism many writers (primarily ministers, theologians, and hymnologists) recognized the theological value of hymns. Most often to review new hymnals, provide educational materials, or debate the merit of particular hymns, they published books, articles, and reviews on hymnody and hymnals. Sometimes the conflict over musical style, performance, and doctrine generated polemical literature related to worship and music.

A detailed article in the November 1879 issue of the *New Englander* by Rev. George Harris drew attention to the need to improve public worship through chanted psalmody. Though his view tended toward that of the liturgical traditions he did not discount the hymns, particularly those of Wesley. In fact, Harris held an exceptionally high view of hymnody.

When it is remembered how much Methodism owes to the hymns of Wesley, and to the tunes which, if not of the highest order, are at least vivacious, and how largely modern revivals owe their popularity to the music which is sung, when it is remembered that, in general, theology has a deeper life in hymns than in creeds, because hymns are sung, so that one might say, let me give the church its hymns with their tunes, and I care not who gives it its confessions and articles of faith, it must be admitted that it is of first importance what hymns are sung and what music becomes familiar.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>72</sup> John Wesley, *The Works of the Reverend John Wesley*, VII vols. (VI; New York: J. Emory and B. Waugh, 1831) p. 531.

<sup>73</sup> Carl F. Price, *The Music and Hymnody of the Methodist Hymnal* (New York and Cincinnati: The Methodist Book Concern, 1911) p. 135.

<sup>74</sup> Rev. George Harris, 'Needed Improvements in Public Worship', *New Englander and Yale Review*, 38/153 (November 1879), 731-748 p. 746.

Obviously Harris revised the phrase 'If I were permitted to write all the ballads of a nation, I care not who should make the laws'<sup>75</sup> and transferred the concept to the church. Harris' view that theology is more deeply ingrained through hymns than creeds demonstrates a high view of hymnic authority. Providing examples, Harris cited the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed, both of which he argued were dispensable to a public worship service.<sup>76</sup> In contrast, the hymnal was indispensable.

It is noteworthy the compilers of *The Sacrifice of Praise: Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs Designed for Public Worship and Private Devotions* omitted Watts' hymn *When I Can Read My Title Clear*. One member of the compilation committee found the song to be 'gravely wrong in doctrine',<sup>77</sup> a bold criticism considering the hymn's widespread popularity.<sup>78</sup>

Looking back at hymns from Watts to his own time, W. T. Stead<sup>79</sup> published *Hymns That Have Helped Being a Collection of Hymns Which Have Been Found Most Useful to the Children of Men*, and suggested that the utility of a hymn surpasses its aesthetics and theology.

The hymn may be doggerel poetry, it may contain heretical theology, its grammar may be faulty and its metaphors atrocious, but if that hymn proved itself a staff and stay to some heroic soul in the darkest hours of his life's pilgrimage, then that hymn has won its right to a place among the sacred songs through which God has spoken to the soul of man.<sup>80</sup>

Stead's defence of the hymnal as 'a staff and stay' shows how critical examination of hymns is thwarted by edificatory valuation.

Emphasizing the universal charisma of hymns, Henry Ward Beecher defended the theological integrity of the hymnal. Beecher believed hymns to be virtually 'heresy-free', seeing in hymns, the 'theology of the heart'.

<sup>75</sup> This phrase by Harris is indebted to an earlier source in Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun.

<sup>76</sup> Harris, p. 746.

<sup>77</sup> 'The Sacrifice of Praise, Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, Designed for Public Worship and Private Devotion, with Notes on the Origin of Hymns', *New Englander and Yale review*, 29/111 (April 1870), 334-337 p. 334.

<sup>78</sup> This decision to remove Watts' song stood in stark contrast to its otherwise widespread publication in American Protestantism, being published in some 900 hymnals. *When I Can Read My Title Clear* is ranked by Marini in the top ten most printed songs in American Protestantism from 1737-1960.

<sup>79</sup> William Thomas Stead (1849-1912). Considered to be the father of modern journalism. The son of a Congregationalist minister. Perished in the Titanic.

<sup>80</sup> W. T. Stead, *Hymns That Have Helped Being a Collection of Hymns Which Have Been Found Most Useful to the Children of Men* (Revised edn.; New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1904) p. 15.

There is almost no heresy in the hymn-book. In hymns and psalms we have a universal ritual. It is the theology of the heart that unites men. Our very childhood is embalmed in sacred tunes and hymns. Our early lives and the lives of our parents hang in the atmosphere of sacred song. The art of singing is one that is forever winding invisible threads about persons.<sup>81</sup>

The Rev. Will C. Wood endorsed Beecher's high view of the hymnal and cited Beecher in his article *Hymns and Hymn Singing* published in the *Congregational Quarterly*.

Give hymns enough and singing enough, and the Christian laity will make head against ecclesiastical defection, against doctrinal aberration, and against spiritual declension; for a hymn carries the people's theology, their commentary, their experience.<sup>82</sup>

In Wood's estimation, hymns were the 'highest comprehension and expression of truth'.<sup>83</sup>

Writing on the doctrine of the resurrection, J. M. Brown published an article in the July 1911 *African Methodist Episcopal Church Review* titled, 'Paul's Conception of the Resurrection'. Brown utilized a number of Pauline texts, such as Philippians 3:20, 21; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17 and 1 Corinthians 15, yet, he chose to conclude his theological article with the hymn, *That Once Loved Form Now Cold*. Prefacing the hymn Brown writes, 'We admire these words of Anne Steele.'

That once loved form now cold and dead  
Each mournful thought employs  
We weep our earthly comforts fled  
And withered all our joys

Hope looks beyond the bounds of time  
When what we now deplore  
Shall rise in full immortal prime  
And bloom to fade no more.<sup>84</sup>

Brown's decision to end his theological article with a hymn text shows his use of hymns to do the work of theology. Perhaps Brown considered the hymn text the best synopsis of the Pauline view of resurrection (and immortality). Clearly his technique of featuring a hymn text at the end of a theological argument (without explanation or

<sup>81</sup> Ibid. p. 11.

<sup>82</sup> Will C. Wood, 'Hymns and Hymn Singing', *The Congregational Quarterly*, 16/4 (October 1874), 588-611 p. 591.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid. p. 590.

<sup>84</sup> J. M. Brown, 'Paul's Conception of the Resurrection', *African Methodist Episcopal Church Review*, 28/1 (July 1911) p. 464.

disclaimer) seemed appropriate to him and culturally relevant to his audience.<sup>85</sup> In any event, Brown used a hymn to accompany biblical teaching, a usage that demonstrated the Bible and the hymnal to be mutually beneficial in voicing theology.

Scottish theologian P. T. Forsyth (1848-1921), when presenting the Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching at Yale University in 1907, used a similar strategy. A previously liberal theologian who shifted moorings after embracing the doctrine of the atonement, Forsyth took opportunity to critique liberalism in the lecture 'The Preacher and the Age'.

It is shy of one thing relevant – a divine atonement, or it empties it of virile force and mordant meaning. Those who so speak seem never themselves to have resisted unto blood striving against sin, not to have been snatched from self-contempt and despair. But I venture to think John Newton's "I asked the Lord that I might grow"<sup>86</sup> one of the greatest and most realistic utterances of Christian experience. And it represents the course our sunny liberalism must take as it passes from a trout stream of the morning to the river of God which is full of deep water.<sup>87</sup>

Evidently, Forsyth used Newton's hymn because it was mutually respected on both sides of the Atlantic and both sides of the liberal-conservative fracture. For Forsyth and his audience, Newton's hymn was an authoritative voice that bridged the gap between himself (a theological moderate who affirmed the vicarious atonement) and any among his audience who denied the vicarious atonement; else it was a shield to protect him from hostility that he may have faced while confronting the neglect of atonement he believed was inherent in liberal preaching. Forsyth's use of Newton's hymn drew the attention of American theologian Robert McAfee Brown (author of *P. T. Forsyth: Prophet for Today*) who believed that Newton's hymn furnished 'perhaps the most important clue to an understanding of the development and mature thought

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<sup>85</sup> I cannot resist comment, having witnessed a similar usage of a hymn by N. T. Wright at the 2006 annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion held at Washington, D.C. At the close of a lecture on theodicy in which he addressed the Evangelical Philosophical Society, N. T. Wright quoted *There is a Green Hill Far Away*. Wright used the hymn to summarize his lecture on 'Evil and the Justice of God' in which he argued for the redemptive action accomplished by Christ amidst the world of evil. He said that through Christ God has done something to confront the evil condition of the world. In my view, the hymn brought closure to his presentation as few mediums could have. Though his presentation had been didactic, the testimony of the hymn served to assure his evangelical Protestant audience that all is well with the world. Perhaps Wright wasn't under as close inspection as was Forsyth.

<sup>86</sup> Otherwise titled *Prayer Answered by Crosses*. Newton's hymn was published in over 100 hymnals between the years 1791-1887. Newton's hymn contained various phrases that Forsyth's audience may have deemed objectionable, including 'Subdue my sins, and give me rest', 'The hidden evils of my heart', 'let the angry powers of hell assault my soul in every part', and 'pursue this worm to death'.

<sup>87</sup> P. T. Forsyth, *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind: The Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching, Yale University, 1907* (Cincinnati; New York: Jennings and Graham; Eaton and Mains, 1907) p. 154.

of Forsyth.<sup>88</sup> Newton's hymn played a key role in changing Forsyth's view of the doctrine of atonement, a remarkable example of hymnody's theological persuasion. As Forsyth had been impacted by the hymn, in turn, he used it with the hope of impacting others.

The theological impact of hymns was developed in a wider sense by Carl F. Price who devoted a chapter of his book *The Music and Hymnody of the Methodist Hymnal* to the theology of hymns. Price wrote, 'Hymns are eloquent teachers of doctrine',<sup>89</sup> elaborating that 'hymns as teachers of theology to the people can hardly be overestimated.'<sup>90</sup> Using hymn texts, Price demonstrated the teachings of Methodist theology; teachings he believed were superior to other traditions, including Catholicism,<sup>91</sup> Calvinism, Unitarianism and Lutheranism.<sup>92</sup> Ian Bradley, author of *Abide with Me: The World of Victorian Hymns* published in 1991, has expressed this analysis more recently:

Alongside its emotional intensity and earthiness, Methodist hymnody also had an important educative purpose and a significant theological agenda. The Wesleys saw hymns as a vehicle for teaching Christian doctrine. They wrote their verses to set out and explain the key articles of faith, to counter what they saw as bad teaching (such as Calvinistic concepts of election and limited atonement) and to promote particular doctrines which they championed, such as the notion of sanctification.<sup>93</sup>

Henry F. Cope emphasized the edificatory value of hymnody. In *One Hundred Hymns You Ought to Know* (1906) Cope compared hymns to sermons, 'The hymns of the English-speaking world have done more to mould their characters than all the sermons spoken or written.'<sup>94</sup> Cope substantiated his statement by comparing hymns to Hebrew Psalms testifying that hymns held in the memory were recalled in times of fear or doubt and sung in times of worship or in the hour of trial. As a pedagogical tool, Cope maintained that 'the splendid literary riches of the Bible set into the form of our great hymns then find their easiest vehicle into the mind and have their greatest potency.'<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Robert McAfee Brown, 'P. T. Forsyth', in Dean G. Peerman and Martin E. Marty (eds.), *A Handbook of Christian Theologians* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), 144-165 p. 144.

<sup>89</sup> Price, p. 129.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Marian piety in the third verse of Faber's *Faith of our Fathers*. See Ibid. p. 132.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid. p. 133, 134. Price supported the Methodist emphasis upon the Holy Scriptures and grace.

<sup>93</sup> Ian Bradley, *Abide with Me: The World of Victorian Hymns* (Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc., 1997) p. 8, 9.

<sup>94</sup> Henry F. Cope, *One Hundred Hymns You Ought to Know* (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1906) p. v.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. p. vi.

Erik Routley (1917-1982) was also convinced of the theological contribution of hymnody. In his work *Hymns and the Human Life*, he wrote that hymns had three functions: 'Codifying doctrine, unifying the body, and glorifying God.'<sup>96</sup> In *Church Music and Theology* Routley clarified that hymns, in containing theology, were 'mankind's response, however halting to God's revelation' and that such theology was 'a credal system founded in the Scriptures'.<sup>97</sup>

### 3.4 Theological Approaches to Hymnody

Contributing to S. T. Kimbrough Jr.'s 1992 work *Charles Wesley: Poet and Theologian*, Thomas A. Langford suggested that 'theology-as-hymn' is a communicator of theology, but its limitations must be appreciated.<sup>98</sup> This statement reflects the 'obstacle' that fences off hymn texts before they receive exegetical analysis. If there are limitations to consider, I suggest that the limits are of a more practical nature. Theologians can assess the theological content of any body of literature they choose, but it is advisable to ask two questions to justify exegetical attention: 1. Does this source have an inherent theological authority, and, 2. Will I find a rich deposit of theology in this body of literature?

Bringing these questions to the Bible yields a double affirmative, though the second part requires a disclaimer: 1. The Bible has an inherent theological authority, and, 2. It is rich in 'raw' theological deposit *but* that deposit requires condensing toward propositional or testimonial statements typically found in catechisms and creeds. I suggest that these questions brought to 'the hymnal' also yield a double affirmative, but the hymn writer has already undertaken the step of condensing toward propositional or testimonial statements.

In one sense Langford is correct, for surely the hymnal is limited. But the same must said of the Bible. Neither is fully comprehensive. Even the books within the biblical canon vary greatly in their contribution to theology.<sup>99</sup> Therefore, the notion of limitation needs to be recast, for both Bible and hymnal. Rather than minimizing hymnic theology because hymns are outside of the biblical canon, I propose that methods of theology should be applied to hymns by virtue of the hymnal's

<sup>96</sup> Erik Routley, *Hymns and the Human Life* (London: John Murray Publishers Ltd., 1959) p. 19.

<sup>97</sup> Routley, *Church Music and Theology* p. 13.

<sup>98</sup> S.T. Kimbrough Jr. (ed.), *Charles Wesley: Poet and Theologian* (Nashville, Tennessee: Kingswood Books, 1992) p. 97.

<sup>99</sup> For instance, neither Song of Songs nor the book of Esther makes direct mention of God.

authoritative status and vital theological function. Thus applied methods of theology can assist in understanding the canonical function of these hymns.

Finally, Langford asked, ‘Can one bring an established theological pattern to the interpretation of the hymns?’<sup>100</sup> This question is fair given that hymnic literature is a distinct genre of literature. Still, any implication that theologians might be stymied by hymns as a textual innovation is puzzling: First, because hymnic-poetic texts are not fenced off as incomprehensible in biblical hermeneutics and, second, because theologians have already developed hermeneutical methods to interpret wisdom literature that includes hymnic-poetic texts.<sup>101</sup> Indeed, psalmody is oftentimes emphasized in Protestant theology – the ‘Messianic Psalms’ subjected to exhaustive typological approaches serving as a prominent example. Brian Brock, in *Singing the Ethos of God* (2007) goes further, demonstrating through Augustine and Luther the ‘influence of the Psalter on Western theology’.<sup>102</sup> Therefore, theologians have demonstrated the will and the means to exegete hymnic-poetic texts.<sup>103</sup>

Hymnic-poetic texts must also be considered in the larger picture of theological sources and statements, even in distinction to the Bible. In his work *Logic of Theology*, Dietrich Ritschl offered a corrective to a common assumption of ‘biblical theology’.

Theology in the sense of theorizing with a view to regulative statements can be found in the biblical writings at most in an approximate form. The expectation that the Bible contains a collection of uniform, tangible statements of which direct use can be made in a ‘biblical theology’ is a fiction.<sup>104</sup>

Ritschl separated theology as *source* and *statements*. The Bible (source) contains theological content not typically formatted in ‘a collection of uniform, tangible statements’, such as creeds and catechisms. Post-biblical creeds and catechisms (statements) provide regulative theology by way of description, instruction or testimony. Hymns, through either the conscious or unconscious efforts of their

<sup>100</sup> Kimbrough Jr. (ed.), p. 98.

<sup>101</sup> For example, the Song of Moses, the Song of Deborah, the Psalms, the Song of Songs, Lamentations, the Song of Mary, the Song of Zechariah, and the Song of the Lamb.

<sup>102</sup> Brian Brock, *Singing the Ethos of God: On the Place of Christian Ethics in Scripture* (Grand Rapids, Michigan and Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007) p. xii.

<sup>103</sup> While it may appear that I have labored unnecessarily upon Langford, I have tried to reply briefly to the series of questions that he raised in his article ‘Charles Wesley as Theologian’. As Langford has published his inquiries, they deserve attention – especially if they suggest a guarded approach to hymn texts, i.e. ‘Don’t treat the hymnal as a theological authority lest the hymnal be granted an illegitimate canonicity.’

<sup>104</sup> Dietrich Ritschl, *The Logic of Theology*, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986) p. 68.

authors, functioned in a similar capacity. (I will argue below, sections 3.5 and 9.4, that hymns can also be considered as *lex orandi* or *lex cantandi*).

Theology, defined in a narrower sense by Ritschl, does not seek to explain texts from the Bible and tradition but is 'reflection by way of testing the function of regulative statements'.<sup>105</sup> Together with Ritschl's treatment of doxology, this definition aligns with the 'exegetical-theological task' identified years earlier by Karl Barth in *Evangelical Theology*. To Barth, 'the central affirmations of the Bible are not self-evident'<sup>106</sup> and require exegesis, in which 'the truth of the Word must be *sought* precisely'.<sup>107</sup> Theology is the community's task. It must make its faith audible through teaching, preaching and pastoral counseling.<sup>108</sup> It is the work of theology that brings the truth of the canonical text to the attention of the community in the language of the community.

Of particular interest, Barth used hymn texts to reinforce theology. Paul Gerhardt's phrase 'Let this suffice you, and be still in the God of your life' supplied Barth with a succinct statement of sufficiency found in God alone, without which, he argued, a theologian could not exist.<sup>109</sup> 'The Lord alone is King, but I am a faded flower', also by Gerhardt, curtailed for Barth the nonsensical quest for fame that may tempt the theologian's ego.<sup>110</sup> Twice he called to mind the hymn, *Come, O Come Thou Quickening Spirit (Veni Creator Spiritus)* by Heinrich Held and, in the context of describing evangelical theology as pneumatic, declaring Held's hymn to be unequalled by even the best theology.<sup>111</sup>

If hymns are assigned among regulative statements (Ritschl), if they have the capacity to teach and codify doctrine (Price/Routley), and if hymns have the potential to be superior expressions of Christian experience (Forsyth), then the capacity of hymnic expression to exceed the best theology (Barth) is a fair deduction. Acknowledging this sequence raises a causality question reminiscent of the dichotomous puzzle 'Which came first, the chicken or the egg?' Do hymnic texts shape theology or does theology shape hymnic texts?

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid. p. xxii.

<sup>106</sup> Karl Barth, *Evangelical Theology* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1964) p. 29.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid. p. 30.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid. p. 32.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. p. 84.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. p. 134.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid. p. 52.



### 3.5 *Lex Orandi Lex Credendi*

To explore the causal relationship that may exist between hymns and theology, the axiom *lex orandi lex credendi*<sup>112</sup> is useful. Usually attributed to Prosper of Aquitaine,<sup>113</sup> this axiom has been used to explore and explain the causal relationship between the law of prayer (*lex orandi*) and the law of belief (*lex credendi*). At the time that Prosper of Aquitaine wrote, prayer was formalized within the liturgy of the western church and was an authoritative expression of dogma. As worshipers engaged in liturgical prayer, it shaped and determined their belief. Transposed, both terms (prayer and belief) can be expanded: 'prayer' (*orandi*) expanded to represent expressive devotion, (liturgy, hymnody, worship), and, 'belief' (*credendi*) expanded to represent expressive doctrine, (creed, dogma, theology).

In *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine and Life* (1980) Geoffrey Wainwright suggested that Protestants and Catholics hold different views toward *lex orandi lex credendi*. Within Roman Catholicism the axiom has been used to accommodate change in doctrinal positions by appealing to liturgical practice.<sup>114</sup> In contrast, a fundamental task of the Reformers was 'to establish doctrinal control over worship, and the critical primacy of doctrine in relation to liturgy has remained characteristic of Protestantism.'<sup>115</sup> The Roman Catholic Church values the *Magisterium* as the ultimate authority and, should the law of prayer and the law of belief find themselves out of sync, it is the prerogative and responsibility of the Pope and bishops to realign either as required to maintain an 'exact correspondence between the worship of the Church and Christian truth.'<sup>116</sup> Teresa Berger, providing a thoughtful explanation of the dynamics between devotion and dogma within Catholicism, illustrates *lex orandi lex credendi* at work: The Feast of the Immaculate Conception was celebrated since the 15<sup>th</sup> century but was not defined by papal decree until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Berger, writes, 'In seeking to substantiate Marian dogma, the church's magisterium seized on Prosper's axiom.'<sup>117</sup> In this instance, praxis clearly

<sup>112</sup> Simplified form of three variations: *Ut legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*, *Legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*, or *Lex orandi legem credendi constituit*.

<sup>113</sup> Also attributed to Pope Celestine I (422-432). See Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1985) p. 175.

<sup>114</sup> Wainwright, p. 218, 219.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.* p. 219.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.* p. 224.

<sup>117</sup> Berger, p. 33.

preceded the regulative statement in dogma and a law of belief was formulated to reflect the law of prayer.

I would like to investigate the axiom in relation to historical theology and its application in the American Protestant context. First, the axiom must be situated in relation to its disproportionate influence in formative Christianity. After the ecumenical creeds and the canonization of Christian Scripture there is, arguably, less opportunity for devotion to change established dogma. In other words, devotion is more likely to reinforce ecumenical creeds. For example, Nicene Christology is reinforced by the hymn *All Hail the Power of Jesus Name*. But devotion can play a key role in reformation and revival movements, thus empowering *lex orandi* at certain times in shaping *lex credendi*.

19<sup>th</sup>-century American Protestantism was situated in a religio-cultural landscape that was highly susceptible to considerable doctrinal impact from devotion. Restorationism and utopianism set the stage for Shakers and Mormons, experientialism and Spiritualism prompted interest in the Intermediate State, and Millennialism added fuel to the fire of 'the burned-over district'.<sup>118</sup> Cultural movements such as revivals and camp meetings gave, at the very least, seasonal license to devotional authority over biblical and ecclesial authority. In all of these movements, hymns were at the centre. Particularly in conversionism hymns influenced religious conviction and its expression, from Sunday School to the mission field. In American Protestantism, hymns were *lex orandi* or, more specifically, *lex cantandi* (the law of singing), for through singing penitents converted to a life of faith and, throughout that life of faith, converts expressed their piety in song. In evangelism and mission, they trusted hymns to do the same for others.

Second, the axiom can be appreciated in light of historical theology and the Protestant resistance to ecclesial authority over Scripture. Primacy of doctrine over liturgy reflected, for Protestants generally, supremacy of the Bible over the Church. But in American Protestantism, biblical and ecclesial authority was wedged by conversionism and revivalism, and the hymnal was introduced as a new type of power broker. If the Bible was the book of the preacher, the hymnal was the book of the

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<sup>118</sup> A term coined by Charles Finney referring to the saturation of religious evangelism in New York State, including campaigns by the Shakers, Mormons, and Spiritualists.

song leader. Together these books shared access to the minds and hearts of Protestants.

While the Great Awakening of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the Second Great Awakening of the early-19<sup>th</sup> century are remembered for their preachers, such as Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield,<sup>119</sup> as well as Lorenzo Dow, Alexander Campbell, and Charles Finney, respectively, the evangelistic thrust of Protestantism that followed these revivals brought the song leader to the foreground. By the 1870s, the song leader shared an equal role (with the preacher) in evangelism. As song leaders used hymns in conversionism at camp meetings and revivals, the theological authority of hymns in conversion was carried over to church services and Sunday School (thereby multiplying the theological authority that was already inherent to hymnody in the congregational context). Thus hymns institutionalized experiential conversionism. In this way, hymns were the ‘prayers’ of the people with hymnals serving as ‘creedal collections’, making hymns a source of both *lex orandi* and *lex credendi*. American Protestants sang what they believed and believed what they sang. Within this reciprocity, hymns shaped theology and hymnals codified theology. According to Mark A. Noll, ‘nothing so profoundly defined the *lex credendi* of evangelicalism as the *lex cantandi*’.<sup>120</sup>

Finally, as hymns are often regarded (in secondary critical analysis) as worship expression, doxology – the study or expression of praise – deserves some discussion. Teresa Berger has been helpful in understanding hymns as doxological material. No argument against Berger is intended here, but as the hymns of American Protestantism are scrutinized, it can be argued that ‘praise’ is not central to the lyrical content. In fact, if ‘praise’ is defined as the declaration of God’s glory and honor, many hymn texts of Protestantism would not comport, thus (in light of the above definitions) making the rubric of doxology inadequate. As American Protestantism was as much driven by sensational experience as it was by doctrinal heritage, one could expect hymn texts to be focused on individual testimony as much as community identity. Songs that described or prescribed spiritual experiences were oftentimes

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<sup>119</sup> ‘No books are in request but those of piety and devotion; and instead of idle songs and ballads, the people are everywhere entertaining themselves with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. All which, under God, is owing to the successful labors of the Rev. Mr. Whitefield.’ See Joseph Tracy, *The Great Awakening: A History of the Revival of Religion in the Time of Edwards and Whitefield* (Boston: Tappan & Dennet, 1842) p. 60.

<sup>120</sup> Mark A. Noll, *American Evangelical Christianity: An Introduction* (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 2001) p. 268.

expressed in themes of edification, education and evangelism toward human beings rather than doxological language of praise and thanksgiving toward God.

Distinguishing theology from doxology, Ritschl indicated that the designation 'doxological theology' could be misleading.<sup>121</sup> Though he did not directly apply doxology to hymnody or hymnody to Prosper's axiom, he delivered an applicable principle.

But it is true that doxological statements which grow out of 'standing in' the story and the experience of the presence of God are part of theology and its statements to the degree that they show the open end of every creed and the thought-patterns which are connected with such creeds. In this sense theology on a broad front has a 'doxological margin', an open flank, in that the final results of arguments press towards doxological language in which open theological statements – metaphysically speaking – are offered to God as a gift.<sup>122</sup>

Ritschl provides two useful concepts: 'regulative statements' and 'doxological margin'. These can be applied to hymn texts; the first as 'theological statements' and the latter as influencers during 'the doxological margin' when the worshiper experiences the presence of God. In this paradigm, hymns shaped faith and belief at key crisis points, especially conversion. To some, hymns may have been the first point of impact with a biblical message, or the kernel of the message carried after childhood memorization into adult years.<sup>123</sup> Rather than develop this argument further, as the hymn writer and singer circumstances are virtually infinite, may it suffice to say hymn texts that gained ground in the 'doxological margin' were a persuasive and independent source of theology.

### 3.6 Conclusion

There is an appreciable intersection between hymnody and theology. Hymns have been a part of devotional and theological life virtually without interruption since the time of Jesus and his disciples. Hymnic texts are embedded in the canonical texts of Christianity. The eastern church has emphasized hymnody since the patristic period, a tradition emulated in the west. Many writers have recognized the potential of hymnic sources to deliver theology, including Eusebius, Luther, Barth, Guthrie, Langford, and

<sup>121</sup> Ritschl, p. 285.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid. p. 284, 285.

<sup>123</sup> Albeit a biblical message first interpreted by the hymn writer and then interpreted by the singer. I will continue the discussion concerning childhood hymns below in sections 6.5, 9.1 and 9.14.

Berger. Many writers have used hymns to deliver theology, including Arius, St. Romanos, Luther and Watts. In American Protestantism, various writers attested to the theological contribution of hymnody. For Henry Ward Beecher, the hymnal provided 'the theology of the heart'. Rev. Will C. Wood claimed that hymns were 'the highest comprehension and expression of truth'. Carl F. Price wrote, 'Hymns are eloquent teachers of doctrine, and Erik Routley described hymns as 'a credal system founded in the Scriptures'.

Ritschl argued that the Bible does not provide the expression of theology, thus 'regulative theology' is provided by extra-biblical *statements*. Further, Ritschl suggested that experiences in the presence of God are part of theology; that the 'doxological margin' facilitated an expressed theology or 'open theological statement'. Barth's emphasis upon theology as 'audible faith' valued the statements of the community. Though Barth did not tie hymnic statements to audibility, he did commend hymns as theological statements. Recognizing hymnody as a theological source (though limited), Thomas A. Langford sought to articulate an exegetical approach. Teresa Berger applied theological method to Wesleyan hymnody and, with Wainwright, considered hymnic sources as *lex orandi*. Mark Noll argued that Protestant hymns were *lex cantandi*.

The above connections are my own contrivance, but bringing these voices into conversation demonstrates adequately that hymnody intersects with theology resulting in received authority.

## Chapter Four: Deuterocanonical Status of Hymns

Having demonstrated in chapter three the intersection of theology and hymnody, I will now present the authoritative status of the hymnal as deuterocanonical. In this chapter I will explore the role and status of the hymnal using two guiding questions: Did Protestants in America use the hymnal as a deuterocanonical source? Was the hymnal considered to be almost equal to the Bible in terms of its influence over the faith and praxis of American Protestantism?

### 4.1 Introduction

Categorical assignment of literature as 'Scripture' or 'revelation' in Christianity is longstanding. Believing apostolic writings to be trustworthy accounts of both Jesus' life and the activities of the first generation of his followers, the early church relied heavily upon texts and, by necessity, the assessment of text-authority. Writings of universal usage that were deemed to be of genuine apostolic derivation or association were eventually awarded canonical status. By the mid-fourth century a list of 27 books was recognized broadly as constituting the New Testament.<sup>124</sup> Once the New Testament canon was determined, other works were, by contrast and default, secondary.<sup>125</sup>

Inspirational works considered secondary to the Bible can be gathered under the category 'deuterocanonical', a term applied to texts of significant influence and authority, but not included in the canonical literature of the Church. As mentioned above<sup>126</sup> the Judeo-Christian scriptures include hymnic-poetic texts, such as the Song of Moses, the Song of Deborah, the Psalms, Mary's Song, and Zechariah's Song. Given their inclusion in canonical texts, these songs are considered canonical literature. Extracted from their textual-historical contexts for usage in worship, canonical songs function as stand alone texts. With the innovation of metrical

<sup>124</sup> As evidenced by the 39th *Festal Letter* of Athanasius written in 367 C.E.

<sup>125</sup> A representative work is the *Apocrypha*. A collection of inter-testamental works later included in the *Vulgate* (the Latin translation of the Bible), these texts have been valued as deuterocanonical by Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy, but have been regarded as noncanonical by Protestant traditions. Though believed to contain works of historical and devotional import, Protestants do not consider the *Apocrypha* divinely inspired as they do the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament.

<sup>126</sup> See page 32, fn 101.

psalmody (versifications of Psalms), textual adaptations of the Psalms became common.<sup>127</sup>

Early Protestantism witnessed an interest in metrical psalms for congregational use.<sup>128</sup> Psalms were paraphrased to fit rhythmic structures and resulting collections were published as 'psalters'. While some opposed the alteration of canonical Psalm texts and belittled metrical psalms as 'apocryphal songs',<sup>129</sup> versified psalmody became authoritative for congregational worship expression. This practice took precedence in the American colonies where *The Bay Psalm Book* was the first book published in America by the Puritans (page 13 above).<sup>130</sup>

Taking the innovation of metrical psalmody further, Watts represented a significant shift toward the theological amendment of psalmody and, in particular, its 'Christianization'.<sup>131</sup> Parallel with Henry Wilder Foote's assessment, 'Next to the English Bible and the Book of Common Prayer the metrical psalms were the most influential literary contribution made by the Reformation to the religious life of the English people',<sup>132</sup> I suggest that the hymn tradition emerging after the psalmody (and hymns) of Watts was one of the most influential theological contributions made to the religious life of American Protestants.

## 4.2 Hymns as Sacred

Adjectives of distinction were generously applied to hymns, and exclusivist terminology employed for hymns emphasized their spiritual quality and provided a sense of their value and ranking. Several adjectives expressed an elevated status of hymns in American Protestantism and culture, such as hallowed, sacred, inspired, and holy. Adjectival references to hymns in this manner conveyed the perception of the song user(s). Writers who referred to hymns with such terms were usually representative of their congregation, group, or denomination. Apart from the Bible

<sup>127</sup> For example, the *Genevan Psalter* (1542), the *Book of Psalms* (1562) by John Daye (later known as the *Sternhold-Hopkins Psalter* named after translators Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins). A 1696 psalter, published by Nahum Tate and Nicholas Brady called the *New Version*, rendered the *Sternhold-Hopkins Psalter* the *Old Version*.

<sup>128</sup> Though Lutheranism included an interest in hymns from its outset.

<sup>129</sup> Henry Barrows (c. 1550-1593) criticized paraphrased psalms as 'apocrypha erroneous ballads'. Robert Browne denounced metrical psalms as alterations of Scripture. See Westermeyer, p. 183.

<sup>130</sup> Foote, p. 1.

<sup>131</sup> In his essay 'Toward the Improvement of Psalmody', Watts provided an explanation of his approach and methodology.

<sup>132</sup> Foote, p. 23.

itself, literature was not typically attended with such hagiographic terminology to set it apart. For instance, it would be difficult to locate sermons or catechisms described as 'holy', 'sacred', or 'hallowed' in the literature of this period.

Under the title *The National Hymn-Book of the American Churches*, Robert Ellis Thompson published a collection of hymns used by the main churches of American Protestantism consisting of Baptists, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians and Reformed.<sup>133</sup> Comparing 30 hymnals published between 1858 and 1891, Thompson found 156 'sanctioned' hymns common to the hymnals of these denominations.<sup>134</sup> According to Thompson, such hymns were afforded noteworthy status<sup>135</sup> (discussed further in section 5.2).

Others were more generous with accolades for hymns. The publishers of *Zion's Harp* provided a detailed subtitle for their hymnal indicating that the hymnal was comprised of 'the most approved spiritual hymns'.<sup>136</sup> An article on hymnology published in *Littell's Living Age* (1856) portrayed hymns as 'holy', admiring their almost-cosmic ministry impact.

Saints, martyrs, and apostles have taken up the strain; they have bridged the lapse of time by a pathway of holy hymns, which stretches over the ages, like the galaxy over the firmament, that the sons of God may commune together on earth as they do in heaven.<sup>137</sup>

Historian Philip Schaff (1819-1893)<sup>138</sup> was also impressed with the universal role of hymns in Christendom. In his hymn collection published under the title *Christ in Song*, Schaff referred to 'The hymns of Jesus' as 'the Holy of holies in the temple of sacred poetry'<sup>139</sup> that provided a 'sanctuary' for Christianity throughout the ages.

From this sanctuary every doubt is banished; here the passions of sense, pride and unholy ambition give way to tears of penitence, the joys of faith, the

<sup>133</sup> Thompson also included the Moravian hymnal given the disproportionate influence of Moravians upon American hymnody.

<sup>134</sup> Of the 156 hymns common to these 30 hymnals, 90 are included in Stephen Marini's list of the most printed hymns.

<sup>135</sup> Robert Ellis Thompson, *The National Hymn-Book of the American Churches* (Philadelphia: John D. Wattles, 1893). Preface.

<sup>136</sup> N. H. Dover, *Zion's Harp for Prayer, Conference, Class Meetings, and Families*. (Published by the Trustees of the Free Will Baptist Connection, 1844).

<sup>137</sup> 'Hymnology', *Littell's Living Age*, 50/634 (July 19 1856), 129-143 p. 130.

<sup>138</sup> Schaff was competent in various fields. He held the Chair of Church History and Biblical Literature at Mercersburg Seminary. At Union Theological Seminary he held chairs in Theological Encyclopedia and Christian Symbolism, and Church History. Schaff was a prolific writer in church history and presided over the American Revised Bible translation project from 1870-1885.

<sup>139</sup> Philip Schaff, *Christ in Song: Hymns of Immanuel* (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Company, 1868) p. v.



emotions of love, the aspirations of hope, the anticipations of heaven; here the dissensions of rival churches and theological schools are hushed into silence; here the hymnists of ancient, mediaeval, and modern times, from every section of Christendom – profound divines, stately bishops, humble monks, faithful pastors, devout laymen, holy women – unite with one voice in the common adoration of a common Saviour.<sup>140</sup>

Princeton University professor Charles Hodge took up Schaff's hymnal.<sup>141</sup> Alert to the theological influence of hymns, Hodge argued that cardinal doctrines were safeguarded in hymns. Confronting various theories of the atonement he believed were fallacious, Hodge appealed to the universal authority of hymns and used Schaff's collection as an authoritative source.

After all, apart from the Bible, the best antidote to all these false theories of the person and work of Christ, is such a book as Doctor Schaff's "Christ in Song." The hymns contained in that volume are of all ages and from all churches. [...] We want no better theology and no better religion than that set forth in these hymns. They were indited by the Holy Spirit in the sense that the thoughts and feelings which they express, are due to his operations on the hearts of his people.<sup>142</sup>

Though Hodge qualified his referral to the Holy Spirit's inspiration of hymns and fenced off the Bible as 'apart', his high view of hymnody indicates a deuterocanonical assignment – at least of the hymns that were included in Schaff's collection. While his argument related to one specific doctrine (the atonement) and one particular hymnal (Schaff's), his line of reasoning is applicable to all doctrines expressed in reputable hymnody and any reputable hymnal.

Hodge was not alone in his view that 'cardinal doctrines were safeguarded in hymns'. In 'Guards to the Purity of Our Doctrinal Teaching' delivered at the Centennial Methodist Conference in 1884, R. N. Davies featured hymns as a protector of orthodox teaching.

Another guard to the purity of our doctrinal teaching will be found in the use of hymns written by the Wesleys and other hymns adopted by them. An old and successful method of filling the minds of the people with particular doctrines or sentiments was to embody the doctrines or sentiments in verse, and teach the people to sing it.<sup>143</sup>

<sup>140</sup> Ibid. p. vi.

<sup>141</sup> Schaff's *Christ in Song* was first published in America in 1868. (It was later published in London in 1879). Hodge wrote his *Systematic Theology* in the years 1872-1873.

<sup>142</sup> Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (I; United States of America: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003) p. 591.

<sup>143</sup> R. N. Davies, 'Guards to the Purity of Our Doctrinal Teaching', in H. K. Carroll, W. P. Harrison, and J. H. Bayliss (eds.), *Proceedings, Sermons, Essays, and Addresses of the Centennial Methodist Conference held in Mt. Vernon Place Methodist Episcopal Church, Baltimore, MD., December 9-17, 1884* (Baltimore, Maryland: Cranston and Stowe, 1884), 254-264 p. 262.

Further, Davies used the hymnal to confront the doctrinal errors of Calvinism and Unitarianism. Given the weight of a centennial address, clearly the theological authority of the hymnal was of central importance to Methodism.

Hymnologist Erik Routley drew attention to a 'canon' of hymns familiar to the person who attended church. While Routley's use of the word 'canon' is not to be confused with *the* canon applied to the Bible, this standard collection of hymns, according to Routley, would 'have a place in the church goer's common life more assured perhaps than any other religious literature, the Bible not excluded.'<sup>144</sup> In this assessment, Routley seems to have been willing to negotiate Protestant biblicism.

In his published sermon, *The Religious Uses of Music*, Henry Ward Beecher issued one of the most forceful statements on hymnody to be found in 19<sup>th</sup>-century literature.

In the first place, I hold that there is more sound instruction to be given to a congregation by this method [hymn lyrics] than by almost any other. Indeed, I doubt, if you were to analyze your religious emotions, whether you would not trace them back to hymns more than to the Bible itself. If any one will consider the source of his thoughts of heaven, I think he will land in Dr. Watts, rather than in the Revelator, Saint John. I think that the hymns of Dr. Watts, and Charles Wesley's hymns, in which they describe heaven, its occupations, its glowing joys, and its zeal and rapture, have more to do with forming men's ideas of the promised land than any other literature, not excepting the Bible.<sup>145</sup>

### 4.3 Hymnologists and Theologians

Caroline Leonard Goodenough's 1931 self-published *High Lights on Hymnists and Their Hymns* provides a personal account of her lifelong interest in hymns. Embarking on a project to write an article on hymns, Goodenough at first thought that her background experience would suffice to equip her. She quickly realized that the task was far more involved than she had imagined:

I soon discovered that I was launched on the vast sea of exploration in the lives of the wonderful people who have enriched our literature in what I believe is the most valuable part of it, with the exception of the sacred scriptures.<sup>146</sup>

<sup>144</sup> Routley, *Hymns and the Human Life* p. 288.

<sup>145</sup> Henry Ward Beecher, 'The Religious Uses of Music', *The Sermons of Henry Ward Beecher* (Plymouth Pulpit Eighth Series: March 1872-September 1872; New York: J. B. Ford & Company, 1872) p. 293.

<sup>146</sup> Caroline Leonard Goodenough, *High Lights on Hymnists and Their Hymns* (Rochester, Massachusetts: Published by the author, 1931) p. 4.

Henry F. Cope author of *Hymns You Ought to Know* (section 3.3), believed that, 'Few things in literature exert a greater power over us than good hymns; they are to be counted as amongst the most potent factors in religious nurture.'<sup>147</sup> To Cope, the 'riches of the Bible' were carried in the great hymns with 'their greatest potency'.<sup>148</sup>

Cope introduced his work with the words of Henry Ward Beecher.

If one had a hundred hymns in his memory, and if with every changing mood he was accustomed to have to himself some sweet descant of experience, he would not easily be made unhappy, nor would he wander far from the path of rectitude.<sup>149</sup>

P. T. Forsyth (section 3.3) provided a moving testimony (at the Lyman Beecher Lectures given at Yale University) in which he briefly described his Spirit-led journey through theology and philosophy, that later found correction in Pauline thought and a sense of identity in John Newton lyrics. In addition to his view that Newton's *I Asked the Lord that I Might Grow* was 'one of the greatest and most realistic utterances of Christian experience',<sup>150</sup> Forsyth made a forthright statement of the hymn's authority.

I withdrew my prime attention from much of the scholar's work and gave it to those theological interests, imbibed first from Maurice,<sup>151</sup> and then more mightily through Ritschl,<sup>152</sup> which came nearer to life than science, sentiment, or ethic ever can do. I immersed myself in the Logic of Hegel, and corrected it by the theology of Paul, and its continuity in the Reformation, because I was all the time being corrected and humiliated by the Holy Spirit. To me John Newton's hymn which I spoke of is almost holy writ.<sup>153</sup>

Acclaiming Newton's hymns as almost canonical is noteworthy, for surely Forsyth would have had a sophisticated sense of the margin between canonical and noncanonical literature. His words, delivered at Yale University at the turn of the century, are also revealing of his audience, whom we can safely assume, would have been familiar with Newton's corpus. That the Yale gathering would have shared Forsyth's view of attributing a deuterocanonical status to Newton's hymn is less clear, but Forsyth must have felt his comparison warranted.

Other writers made testimonial statements related to hymnody. Accolades made of Thomas Ken's hymns by James Montgomery were published in the 1874 *Congregational Quarterly*.

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<sup>147</sup> Cope, p. v.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid. p. vi.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid. Preface.

<sup>150</sup> Forsyth, p. 154.

<sup>151</sup> Frederick Denison Maurice (1805-1872)

<sup>152</sup> Albrecht Ritschl (1822-1889)

<sup>153</sup> Forsyth, p. 285.

Thomas Ken (1637-1711) has left as a precious legacy three companion hymns, "Morning," "Evening," and "Midnight." [...] Montgomery says, "Had he endowed three hospitals, he might have been less a benefactor to posterity." [...] The Doxology is the closing stanza of both Morning and Evening Hymns. [...] Montgomery remarks that "this Doxology has probably been used more than any other composition in the world, the Lord's Prayer excepted."<sup>154</sup>

Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887) found *Jesus Lover of My Soul* to be worthy of the greatest acclaim for its power and majesty.

I would rather have written that hymn of Wesley's, "Jesus lover of my soul, Let me to thy bosom fly," than to have the fame of all the kings that ever sat on the earth. It is more glorious. It has more power in it. I would rather be the author of that hymn than to hold the wealth of the richest man in New-York. He will die. He *is* dead, and does not know it. He will pass, after a little while, out of men's thoughts.(...) But that hymn will go on singing until the last trump brings forth the angel band; and then, I think, it will mount up on some lip to the very presence of God. And I would rather have written such a hymn than to have heaped up all the treasures of the richest man on the globe.<sup>155</sup>

Similarly, Dwight Lyman Moody (1813-1899) was deeply impacted by *Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling*. Suggesting that its composition was above all his achievements, he writes, 'I would rather have written *Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling* than anything I have been able to do in my whole life.'<sup>156</sup>

In his 1931 publication *Lyric Religion*, Boston University professor H. Augustine Smith, recommended, 'the hymn itself must be elevated to a high place in worship'.<sup>157</sup> He viewed singers as students of lyric religion and suggested that, through singing hymns, they gained knowledge of 'factual history' and 'the spiritual experience of the human race'.<sup>158</sup> In his list of 150 hymns (discussed further in section 5.2) Smith assigned biblical texts to each hymn, perhaps assuming that hymn writers were usually inspired to write from biblical texts.<sup>159</sup> Though many of his pairings appear contrived, his effort to demonstrate biblical sources for all 150 hymns was an attempt to portray each hymn's attachment to the Bible, thereby making each hymn a source

<sup>154</sup> Wood, p. 606.

<sup>155</sup> Henry Ward Beecher, *Plymouth Pulpit: The Sermons of Henry Ward Beecher* (New York: J. B. Ford & Company, 1869) p. 179.

<sup>156</sup> Ernest K. Emurian, *Forty Stories of Famous Gospel Hymns* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1959) p. 109.

<sup>157</sup> H. Augustine Smith, *Lyric Religion: The Romance of Immortal Hymns* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1931) p. v.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.* p. v, vi.

<sup>159</sup> Though Smith attempted to tie every hymn to a biblical text, some of his pairings are not convincing. For instance, *Before Jehovah's Awful Throne* is paired with Psalm 100.

of biblical teaching and truth. Smith's earlier role in editing *Hymns for the Living Age* also featured a section on biblical passages, albeit a less detailed one.<sup>160</sup>

The Stone Lectures at Princeton (1927) delivered by Louis F. Benson resulted in a monograph titled *The Hymnody of the Christian Church*. In discussing the role of the hymnal as a medium of doctrine, Benson writes:

It is important to remember that in the mind of the plain everyday Christian, where feeling conditions reflection so strongly, the hymns he used devotionally, and especially those he loves, do more to form his religious thinking than anything else except the Bible. For doctrine then, the hymn book takes its place beside the catechism.<sup>161</sup>

To Benson, the role of the hymnal was significant in faith formation and, apart from the Bible, shaped the religious thinking of the Christian more than any other work. As a Presbyterian, Benson's recognition of the hymnal above the catechism is significant. Even more revealing, Benson used canonical language when speaking of the Bible and the hymnal.

That is to say the Church puts in her people's hands two books: the canon of Scripture as the revelation of the spiritual view of life, and a canon of hymnody as a manual of the spiritual life.<sup>162</sup>

While Benson indicated 'the two canons must accord',<sup>163</sup> he did not make any distinction when applying the designation of 'canon' to both Bible and hymnody, (though his contrasting use of the definite and indefinite article may have communicated two levels of canonicity). In any event, Benson considered the Bible and hymnal to be mutually constitutive in faith formation.

#### 4.4 Hymns Described in Hymnal Prefaces

Hymnals often include introductory material typically consisting of a preface. Prefaces vary to some extent, but most include acknowledgements, editorial comments, process of authorization, hymn selection rationale, and some type of reference to the nature and role of hymnody. Oftentimes, the editorial comments will reflect the status of hymns in the faith community.

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<sup>160</sup> H. Augustine Smith (ed.), *Hymns for the Living Age* (New York: The Century Co., 1923) p. 7.

<sup>161</sup> Louis F. Benson, *The Hymnody of Christian Church* (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1927) p. 19.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.* p. 20.

Published in 1834, *The Wesleyan Harp* was an attempt to provide a collection of hymns 'different from the common psalmody of the day'.<sup>164</sup> As such, the compilers, Abraham D. Merrill and William C. Brown, clarified spiritual singing as 'a powerful auxiliary in the propagation of divine truth'.<sup>165</sup> N. H. Dover hoped that his 1844 hymnal *Zion's Harp* would 'be blessed by the Holy Spirit in promoting individual, family, and social piety, and prove a blessing to the church of God in general'.<sup>166</sup> The United Brethren in Christ published a hymnal in 1849 whose compiler, H. G. Spayth, identified the hymnal as a 'text book by the side of the Bible' proving to be 'equally effective' to both Bible and sermons.<sup>167</sup>

Hymnologists attested to the relationship between Christian unity and hymnody. Luther A. Weigle, chairman of the Publication Committee for the 1935 *Pilgrim Hymnal* wrote, 'It is commonplace that we come nearer to full Christian unity in our hymns than in any other feature of the life of our churches.'<sup>168</sup> In *Hymns in the Lives of Men* (1943) Robert Guy McCutcheon credited hymns as 'the most effective bond between Christians'.<sup>169</sup> Rev. Bradford K. Pierce, who compiled *Hymns of the Higher Life* (1868), considered hymns to be the utmost expression of Christian unity.<sup>170</sup> Pierce writes, 'Perhaps in nothing is the substantial unity of the Christian Church, with all her varying modes of worship and symbols of belief, more significantly seen than in her hymns and spiritual songs.'<sup>171</sup> Though Pierce did not elevate the hymnal above the Bible, he did not discuss the Bible (or biblical text) as a universal expression of Christian unity. Rev. Pierce further acclaimed the revelatory nature of hymnody.

The theology of the intellect may be discordant; but the theology of the heart is harmonious. Hymns are the expression of religious emotions, inspired by one eternal Spirit, in the contemplation of one divine Saviour, or in adoration of one heavenly Father.<sup>172</sup>

<sup>164</sup> Abraham D. Merrill and William C. Brown, *The Wesleyan Harp* (Boston: Published by the compilers, 1834). Preface.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid. Preface.

<sup>166</sup> Dover. Preface.

<sup>167</sup> H. G. Spayth, *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the United Brethren in Christ* (Circleville, Ohio: Published at the Conference Office of the United Brethren in Christ, 1849). Preface.

<sup>168</sup> Sidney A. Weston (ed.), *The Pilgrim Hymnal* (Boston and Chicago: The Pilgrim Press, 1935) p. iv.

<sup>169</sup> Robert Guy McCutcheon, *Hymns in the Lives of Men* (New York; Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943) p. 6.

<sup>170</sup> Rev. Pierce's reference to the 'Christian Church' is probably overstated, given that his hymnal is published within the Protestant tradition.

<sup>171</sup> Bradford K. Pierce, *Hymns of the Higher Life* (New York: Broughton and Wyman, 1868) p. 3.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

The preface to *The Service of Song for Baptist Churches* presented the 1872 hymnal for Baptist congregations as a work, 'similar to the Bible', that provided 'all the forms of Christian doctrine'. Editors S. L. Caldwell and A. J. Gordon stated that, as the Bible required the contributions of many authors, so too should the hymnal. Akin to the language of textual criticism, Caldwell and Gordon alerted the reader that their work falls 'back on the original and uncorrupted text'.<sup>173</sup>

Methodists were especially concerned with preparation of conference-authorized hymnals. *The Methodist Pocket Hymn-Book* (1830) included an appeal for loyalty to the hymnbook published by the Methodist denomination. The request was set in the context of episcopal authority: 'We most earnestly entreat you, if you have any respect for the authority of the Conferences, or of us, [...] to purchase no Hymn Books, but what are signed with the names of your Bishops.'<sup>174</sup> At the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church South in 1902, the Rev. Dr. Dewitt C. Huntington argued that churches throughout the conference should be using the same Bible and the same hymnal,<sup>175</sup> another example of a mutually constitutive view of the Bible and hymnal.

The preface of the 1878 *Hymnal of the Methodist Episcopal Church* instructed its readers that hymn singing was a compulsory activity. In fact, the terminology is strangely dogmatic: 'The accepted doctrine of the Church is, that every person in the congregation ought to sing, not one in ten only.'<sup>176</sup> The preface described the rigorous process of hymn selection, beginning with the selection of a 15-person committee by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. After the committee considered various papers they began the work of revision, reporting their progress to the Board of Bishops. No hymn in the then-current collection could be excluded from the revised collection without two-thirds of the committee voting for its rejection. Once the committee had completed their work, they submitted the revised hymnal to the Board of Bishops for approval. Following revisions requested by the bishops, the hymnal was approved and recommended by the bishops to the Church. Once the hymnal was approved for publication a group of eleven pastors co-wrote an 'Address

<sup>173</sup> S. L. Gordon and A. J. Caldwell, *The Service of Song for Baptist Churches* (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1872) p. iv.

<sup>174</sup> Charles A. Johnson, 'Camp Meeting Hymnody', *American Quarterly*, 4/2 (Summer 1952), 110-126. The abridged quotation from the 1830 *Methodist Pocket Hymn-Book* cited here as it appears in Johnson's article.

<sup>175</sup> Price, p. 35.

<sup>176</sup> *Hymnal of the Methodist Episcopal Church with Tunes*, (New York: Nelson & Phillips, 1878) p. vi.

to the Members and Friends of the Methodist Episcopal Church' featured in the front section of the hymnal. The pastors commended the hymnal 'as one of the choicest selections of evangelical hymnals ever published', trusting that it would 'aid in private meditation and devotion'.<sup>177</sup>

#### 4.5 Hymnal Concordances

Further to the hymnal's comparison with the Bible (section 4.4), editors S. L. Caldwell and A. J. Gordon of *The Service of Song for Baptist Churches* encouraged the didactic usage of the hymnal, stating that, 'A hymn-book is not used in public worship alone. Its hymns may be studied by the young, and by all Christians, and committed to memory with great profit.'<sup>178</sup> Rev. Charles S. Nutter's 1893 work *Historic Hymnists* demonstrated a similar conviction of hymnody, Nutter claiming 'there is not a stanza [...] that is not worthy of patient study.'<sup>179</sup> The view of the hymnal as a resource for study and private devotion was not uncommon and may have set the stage for hymnal concordances.

The 1880 hymnal concordance prepared by William Codville for the *Hymnal of the Methodist Episcopal Church* became a devotional source for Oliver S. Baketel. As a pastor, Baketel had experienced the difficulty of finding suitable hymns to accompany his sermons but, upon discovering Codville's reference work, determined to prepare a concordance of his own for the *Methodist Hymnal*. Introduced with the episcopal authority of Bishop D. A. Goodsell, the concordance was printed in 1907. While Bishop Goodsell endorsed the concordance for the benefit of pastors wanting a resource for hymn selection, he first recommended the concordance to laity as a resource in private devotions.<sup>180</sup> In the introduction Goodsell writes, 'It was characteristic of the earlier days of the Methodist Episcopal Church that its communicants knew the hymns of their day almost as well as they knew their Bibles.'<sup>181</sup>

<sup>177</sup> Ibid. p. v.

<sup>178</sup> 'But as the Bible, the manual of Christian knowledge, inspired by one and the self-same Spirit, is in the varied style of so many different writers, so our manuals of Christian song should partake of a similar variety, which is possible by drawing from the singers of all times, countries, and communions.' See Gordon and Caldwell, p. 3.

<sup>179</sup> Charles S. Nutter, *Historic Hymnists. A Portrait Gallery of Great Hymn Writers* (Boston: Published by the author, 1893). Preface.

<sup>180</sup> Oliver S. Baketel, *Concordance to the Methodist Hymnal. The Official Hymnal of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1907) p.

ix.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.



The Church of Christ Scientist also published a concordance for their denominational hymnal with the cover bearing a remarkable resemblance to the Methodist hymnal and concordance. The *Christian Science Hymnal*, first printed in 1898, was paired with the *Concordance to Christian Science Hymnal* in 1926 and *Hymnal Notes* in 1933. The printing of the concordance to complement the *Christian Science Hymnal* could be viewed as an example of a 'legitimation strategy' used by a group marginalized outside of Protestantism. For outsiders, the publication of a concordance demonstrated a Methodist-like devotion to hymnody. In the case of Christian Science, the concordance was patterned to the distinctive vocabulary used in the writings of Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science. As Eddy was also a hymn writer (composing seven hymns for the *Christian Science Hymnal*) the emphasis upon the authority of hymnody by the Church of Christ Scientist is to be expected, (a theme I will discuss in chapter eight section 8.14).

#### 4.6 Hymns and Homiletics

The inspirational value of hymns was evident in homiletics. This is reminiscent of the didactic tradition in English hymnody whereby rectors composed hymn texts to accompany sermons. By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century hymns (in American Protestantism) sometimes inspired sermons or were the subject of sermons.<sup>182</sup> Leading preachers of the period used hymns as a homiletical source, such as Phillips Brooks (1835-1893) who employed hymns and poems<sup>183</sup> to illustrate his text, and Henry Ward Beecher who used hymns systematically.<sup>184</sup>

Lauded as 'the most brilliant and fertile pulpit-genius of the nineteenth century, and the most widely influential American of his time',<sup>185</sup> Beecher also discussed hymns and sermons. In *Yale Lectures on Preaching*, Beecher devoted an entire lecture to music and worship entitled 'Relations of Music to Worship'. Beecher described

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<sup>182</sup> This is reminiscent of the didactic tradition in English hymnody whereby some rectors composed hymn texts to accompany sermons.

<sup>183</sup> Some of the poems Brooks cited had been set to music for hymnals, e.g. In the sermon 'The Sacredness of Life', Brooks cited a stanza from Alexander Pope's text *Rise, Crowned with Light*. This hymn was printed in over 160 hymnals.

<sup>184</sup> Beecher assigned a biblical passage and two or more hymns for each of his sermons.

<sup>185</sup> John Henry Barrows, *Henry Ward Beecher. The Shakespeare of the Pulpit* (New York and London: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1893) p. vi.

music as 'one of the most important auxiliaries to preaching'<sup>186</sup> and 'an agent in affecting, not so much the understanding, as that part of man's nature which the sermon usually leaves completely barren.'<sup>187</sup> In *Life Thoughts*, Beecher contrasted sermons with the impact of a child singing.

Labored sermons sometimes sweep over the mind as winds sweep over the sea, leaving it more troubled than before; when one little hymn, child-warbled, would be to the soul like Christ's "Peace, be still," to the waves of Galilee.<sup>188</sup>

Beecher's high view of the hymnal is reflected in its biblical composition. Perhaps reflective of the preponderance of Bible quotations in patristic literature, Beecher claimed, 'If the Bible should perish out of our language, it could almost be gathered up again in substance from our hymns.'<sup>189</sup> If Beecher is a representative voice, the hymnal's functional canonicity was tied to its content as versification of Scripture.

*Present Day Hymns and Why They Were Written* (1940) by John Barnes Pratt appears on the surface as a typical hymnology source, yet Pratt's purpose in writing the book was intended as a resource for ministers who desired research information on hymns, in order to provide sermons on hymns. Pratt identified his objective in preparing the work:

This book is intended as a source of reference to clergymen who wish to prepare a series of human interest sermons on the subject and also to librarians who often have requests for a book revealing the background of recent hymns used in the Christian churches of America.<sup>190</sup>

In *The Preparation of Sermons* (1948), Princeton homiletics professor Dr. Andrew Watterson Blackwood<sup>191</sup> encouraged the young minister to acquire 'books relating to the Bible' and to 'value most the church hymnal, in which he will find all sorts of leads for sermons.'<sup>192</sup> Blackwood gave several hymn examples, including *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*, which he suggested could serve as the basis of a sermon.<sup>193</sup> Later on in the book under the chapter 'The Variety of Sermon Plans', Dr.

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<sup>186</sup> Henry Ward Beecher, *Yale Lectures on Preaching* (New York: Fords, Howard, & Hulbert, 1892) p. 114.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.* p. 115.

<sup>188</sup> Henry Ward Beecher, *Life Thoughts* (Boston: Phillips, Samson and Company, 1858) p. 106.

<sup>189</sup> Wood, p. 590.

<sup>190</sup> John Barnes Pratt, *Present Day Hymns and Why They Were Written* (New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1940). Preface.

<sup>191</sup> Dr. Blackwood (1882-1966) served as a professor of Bible at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary and professor of homiletics at Princeton Theological Seminary.

<sup>192</sup> Andrew W. Blackwood, *The Preparation of Sermons* (Nashville; New York: Abingdon Press, 1948)

p. 77.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.* p. 78.

Blackwood included the Hegelian method of preaching<sup>194</sup> and promoted the three stanzas of Charles Wesley's hymn, *Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies* to serve as the thesis, antithesis and synthesis. For relating to children, Blackwood encouraged preachers to use a song or a 'memory hymn' for boys and girls in the service.<sup>195</sup>

Similarly, Robert Guy McCutcheon believed in the didactic function of hymnody. Though conceding that the style of formal didacticism common with Watts' hymns was less followed in American hymnody, McCutcheon identified the role of hymns in the teaching ministry of the church, and challenged preachers to be knowledgeable with hymnals.

Hymns do have a teaching function. A preacher is a teacher. Next to the Bible, the hymnal is the preacher's finest textbook; a teacher should be familiar with the textbook he uses.<sup>196</sup>

In current research, Mary Louise VanDyke has concentrated on the organizational structure of hymnals. Paying close attention to indices, VanDyke suggested that the index feature of hymnals served as 'a preaching tool'.<sup>197</sup> Aware that hymns were often used to complement a sermon, VanDyke proposed 'that some nineteenth-century evangelical hymnals were indexed in a way that encouraged a minister to consult topical or subject headings before he began to write his sermon.'<sup>198</sup>

## 4.7 Conclusion

A principal concern in American Protestantism was the authority of the Bible, with most Protestant denominations in the United States defending the Bible as infallible.<sup>199</sup> While the hymnal was not recognized as canonical in a technical sense, it was believed to contain authoritative and devotional material. In most Protestant denominations, it was common to refer to hymns as inspired and hymnals as authorized (designations typically used for the Bible), reflecting a deuterocanonical status and type of 'functional canonicity'. Especially in the case of episcopal and

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<sup>194</sup> A message that consists of three parts: thesis, antithesis, and synthesis.

<sup>195</sup> Blackwood, p. 239.

<sup>196</sup> McCutcheon, p. 37.

<sup>197</sup> Mary Louise VanDyke, 'Indices: More Than Meets the Eye', in Mark A. Noll and Edith L. Blumhofer (eds.), *Sing Them over Again to Me: Hymns and Hymnbooks in America* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2006) p. 122.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Hodge, p. 151. 'All Protestants agree in teaching that "the word of God", as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only infallible rule of faith and practice.'

Reformed traditions, each hymnal compilation was carefully supervised and required formal ratification prior to congregational usage.

In the culture of American Protestantism the hymnal was a significant companion to the Bible. Provided largely through the writings of influential authors and works, there is sufficient evidence to assert that American Protestantism did indeed use the hymnal as a deuterocanonical source and considered it to be almost equal to the Bible in matters of faith and praxis. Prominent theologians, hymnologists, and preachers of the period promoted and, when necessary, defended the theological content and edificatory impact of hymnody. In devotional, liturgical, doxological, and educational usage, the hymnal was a clear counterpart to the Bible – at times surpassing the Bible in denominational attention and devotional expression.

## Chapter Five: Dominant Hymns

In this chapter I will present representative listings of hymns that reflect both ideological and popular rankings of hymns. Do these rankings demonstrate the canonical estimation of hymns? Do these rankings suggest that hymns performed a vital theological function?

### 5.1 Introduction

In contemporary American society the making of 'top ten' lists is common. In the domain of music, 'top songs' lists are synonymous with 'the most purchased' or 'the most played'. Since 1957 *Billboard's* top 100 ratings has been the industry standard for measuring weekly popularity of singles. With the advancement of digital technology, digitized song formats have complicated the chore of tracking song popularity, but product sales and airplay logs supplied by commercial radio stations remain trusted measurements. In the contemporary Christian music industry (largely American Protestant), *Christian Copyright Licensing International* provides quarterly statistics of the top 25 songs used by churches throughout the world based on reported usage by churches.<sup>200</sup>

Accessing the hymn usage from past centuries poses a bit more of a challenge. Did an official or unofficial canon of popular hymnody<sup>201</sup> exist in American Protestantism? If so, how can that canon be determined and evaluated? What were the dominant hymns of American Protestantism?

### 5.2 Dominant Hymns in Hymnological Sources

In 1885, James King (Vicar of St. Mary's, Berwick-Upon-Tweed) authored the work *Anglican Hymnology*, in which he devised a quantitative method by which hymns used in the Anglican Communion could be measured for eminence. Comparing the contents of fifty-two hymnals, King listed the hymns that were printed in at least thirty of the fifty-two hymnals. Using this method, King ranked 105 hymns out of 2,000 hymns. From these, King identified four hymns which had been printed in fifty-

<sup>200</sup> CCLI is represented in North America, Europe, Africa and Asia-Pacific.

<sup>201</sup> This chapter will focus on 'adult hymnody' of American Protestantism. Susan Warner's *Wide, Wide World*, though a domestic children's novel, featured adult hymns. Children's hymnody, African American spirituals and improvised hymns, and hymns of marginalized groups, will be discussed in chapters six, seven, and eight respectively.

one of the hymnals along with six others that had been printed in forty-nine of the hymnals, thus creating a 'top ten list'<sup>202</sup> – though he lamented the fact that 'of the twenty thousand hymns existing in the English language, not a single one is to be found in all the fifty-two Hymnals'.<sup>203</sup>

King's methods were emulated in the United States, where not a few hymnologists published works promoting select hymns. *The National Hymn-Book of the American Churches* prepared by Robert Ellis Thompson (section 4.2) serves to enlighten the topic of dominant hymns. Indeed, his study of American hymn usage is unequalled in 19<sup>th</sup> century works. Thompson claimed to have set aside 'his own tastes and preferences',<sup>204</sup> consulting only the hymnals of leading denominations of his day (though he also included the Moravian hymnal given its disproportionate influence). Altogether, Thompson used thirty hymnals published between the years 1858 and 1891 and compiled a list of 156 common hymns. Thompson worked with two criteria to establish a common hymn:

1. It must be printed in at least one hymnal of a leading denomination.<sup>205</sup>
2. It must be printed in a hymnal of both the Protestant Episcopal and Lutheran churches.<sup>206</sup>

While Thompson's criteria appear a bit confusing, his first criterion reflects the major denominations in American Protestantism.<sup>207</sup> The second criterion was employed to shorten the list of hymns, a measurement that privileged the Protestant Episcopal and Lutheran denominations.

Presbyterian minister and hymnologist Louis F. Benson (1855-1930) used hymn lists established by James King and Robert Ellis Thompson to rank hymns, arriving at a total of 106 hymns. Next, Benson established his own selection of 107 hymnals that he examined to determine the frequency in which the 106 common hymns were

<sup>202</sup> See Appendix 1: Common Hymns in Anglican Hymnody, by James King.

<sup>203</sup> James King, *Anglican Hymnody: Being an Account of the 325 Standard Hymns of the Highest Merit According to the Verdict of the Whole Anglican Church* (London: Hatchards, Piccadilly, 1885) p. xi.

<sup>204</sup> Robert Ellis Thompson, *The National Hymn-Book of American Churches* (Philadelphia: John D. Wattle, 1893) p. 5.

<sup>205</sup> Baptist, Congregationalist, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, or Reformed.

<sup>206</sup> Thompson used this second criterion to shorten the list of hymns. In the preface he writes, 'The list of hymns would have been longer but for two circumstances. The first was the requirement that every hymn taken should be found in the hymnal of the Protestant Episcopal Church. The second was the narrowing of even this range by the character of the Lutheran hymnals.'

<sup>207</sup> In the preface Thompson writes, 'As regards the method on which this book has been compiled, some explanation is needed. It includes no hymn which has not had the sanction of at least one hymn-book of each of the seven denominations mentioned on the title-page.'

printed. Using eighty percent as a measurement of 'first rank', Benson established thirty-two hymns<sup>208</sup> fulfilling that requirement.<sup>209</sup> Benson also distinguished 'hymns' from 'gospel hymns'.

A so-called gospel hymn, which has temporary vogue in certain quarters, but which the great bodies of Christians reject from their worship, is not one of the best hymns.<sup>210</sup>

As a result, Benson excluded gospel hymns from consideration.

In addition, Benson published *Studies of Familiar Hymns, First Series* featuring twenty-five hymns of distinction<sup>211</sup> from *The Hymnal* (1895) used in Presbyterian and Congregational churches.<sup>212</sup> When a revised Presbyterian hymnal was printed in 1911, he published *Studies of Familiar Hymns, Second Series* that featured twenty-four hymns<sup>213</sup> from the new hymnal. There is no duplication of hymns between the two lists tallying forty-nine hymns that Benson deemed 'familiar'.

Henry F. Cope,<sup>214</sup> author of *One Hundred Hymns You Ought to Know*, appealed to his own hymn preferences but also drew attention to the frequency of usage, frequency of printing, and hymns typically known by memory. First published as a column in *The Chicago Tribune*, *Hymns You Ought to Know* was published in book form in 1906. Appreciating 'the power of hymns' in 'spiritual nurture and character determination', Cope sought to provide a collection of hymns that were 'counted of greatest worth and force'.<sup>215</sup>

*The Evolution of Our Christian Hymnology* by Francis B. Reeves<sup>216</sup> prepared for the 1911 Presbyterian Social Union of Philadelphia and published as a monograph a year later, reflects a thorough examination of hymns used in American churches. Reeves organized hymns and hymn writers of influence by categories, thereby creating multiple lists. In a chapter entitled 'Some Hymns By Inspired Women', Reeves included almost seventy hymns.<sup>217</sup> At the outset of this chapter, nine hymns by Anne

<sup>208</sup> See Appendix 2: The Best Church Hymns, by Louis F. Benson.

<sup>209</sup> Louis F. Benson, *The Best Church Hymns* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1899) p. xvii.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.* p. xii.

<sup>211</sup> See Appendix 3: Familiar Hymns, First Series, by Louis F. Benson.

<sup>212</sup> Louis F. Benson, *Studies of Familiar Hymns* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1903) p. ix, x.

<sup>213</sup> See Appendix 4: Familiar Hymns, Second Series, by Louis F. Benson.

<sup>214</sup> Henry F. Cope (1870-1923) served as the general secretary of the Religious Education Association from 1907-1923.

<sup>215</sup> Cope, p. vii.

<sup>216</sup> Francis B. Reeves is listed as an elder in the 1878 minutes of the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

<sup>217</sup> See Appendix 5: Hymns by Inspired Women, by Francis B. Reeves.

Steele are given attention. Indeed, Reeves considered Steele's, *Father, Whate'er of Earthly Bliss* to be a 'blessed hymn' and, that sung 'to any other tune than *Naomi* would seem to the American churches almost like sacrilege'.<sup>218</sup> Three hymns by Charlotte Elliott are listed: *Just As I Am; O Holy Saviour, Friend Unseen*; and, *My God, is any Hour so Sweet?*,<sup>219</sup> along with *Nearer, My God to Thee* by Sarah Flower Adams, to which Reeves added,

[T]his one, along with *Just as I Am, Lead Kindly Light, Jesus Lover of My Soul* and *Rock of Ages*, has been accorded first or second place by a good majority. No one would presume to issue a hymn book without it.<sup>220</sup>

Reeves also awarded distinction to Fanny J. Crosby, listing fifteen of her hymns.

Reeves paid tribute to both Watts and Wesley, listing twenty hymns by Watts as 'gladsome and highly regarded to this day'<sup>221</sup> and twelve by Wesley, 'the greatest hymner [sic] of his time'.<sup>222</sup> Reeves also featured hymns by George Duffield, Alexander Pope, Philip Doddridge, William Williams, John Keble, James Montgomery and Horatius Bonar. As an addendum, Reeves collated a list of hymns by 'inspired men' whose achievements in hymnody entitled them 'to have their names written in the book of life'.<sup>223</sup> Indicating the international appeal of certain hymns, Reeves listed sixteen hymns as 'world favorites'.<sup>224</sup>

H. Augustine Smith, Professor of Church and Community Music and Fine Arts at the Boston University College of Music, compiled various works: the *Hymnal for American Youth*,<sup>225</sup> *Hymns for the Living Age*<sup>226</sup> and *Hymns of Worship and Service for the Sunday School*.<sup>227</sup> In *Lyric Religion* (section 4.3) Smith provided detailed studies on 150 hymns ranging from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and drew from other hymnological works. Similar to Benson, Smith did not include gospel hymns. For

<sup>218</sup> Francis B. Reeves, *The Evolution of Our Christian Hymnology* (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Co., 1912) p. 99.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.* p. 100.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.* p. 101.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.* p. 116.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.* p. 117.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.* p. 124.

<sup>224</sup> See Appendix 6: World Favorites, by Francis B. Reeves.

<sup>225</sup> H. Augustine Smith (ed.), *Hymnal for American Youth* (New York: The Century Co., 1919).

<sup>226</sup> Smith (ed.), *Hymns for the Living Age*.

<sup>227</sup> H. Augustine Smith, *Hymns of Worship and Service for the Sunday School* (New York: The Century Co., 1913).



instance, in Smith's list of famous women writers, Fanny Crosby is conspicuous by her absence.<sup>228</sup>

### 5.3 Dominant Hymns in Newspapers and Periodicals

In 1896 British journalist W. T. Stead published *Hymns that have Helped*, a work, suggested Ian Bradley, 'that points perhaps more clearly than any other to the extraordinarily powerful hold that hymns had on the Victorians.'<sup>229</sup> The American edition of Stead's book was published in 1904.<sup>230</sup> In the American edition, Stead noted 154 hymns that were highly regarded for their spiritual influence in ministering to the needs of people. Further, he provided a list of the best one hundred hymns that were collected through the votes of nearly 3,500 readers of the London *Sunday at Home*,<sup>231</sup> a list that would prove to have lasting impact upon American Protestant hymnody.

The January 1887 edition of *The Sunday at Home*, a periodical printed by the Religious Tract Society (London) invited its readers to submit lists of the best one hundred hymns in the English language. More than 3,400 readers submitted a list. Though not the first of British sources to appraise hymns,<sup>232</sup> the *Sunday at Home* hymn list contributed to a notable shift in hymn ranking – especially in the United States. Almost before the ink was dry, American newspapers reported the results, predating Stead's American edition of the results by seventeen years. Some papers carried syndicated reports while others published personal responses critical of the results. One *Christian Recorder* respondent expressed disagreement with the ranking of certain hymns.

Strange to say, Lyte's "Abide with Me, fast falls the eventide," is second, with 3,204 votes, and Wesley's "Jesus, Lover of my Soul" third, 3,126 votes. I would put Wesley's hymn before Lyte's, although the latter is worthy of a high place. I account "Rock of Ages" the king of the hymns and "Jesus, Lover of my Soul" the queen. I am astonished to find Robinson's "Come, thou fount of every blessing" only eighty-seventh on the list. Possibly it has been

<sup>228</sup> H. Augustine Smith, *Lyric Religion: The Romance of Immortal Hymns* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1931) p. 13, 14.

<sup>229</sup> Bradley, p. 190.

<sup>230</sup> First published in England in 1897.

<sup>231</sup> W. T. Stead, *Hymns That Have Helped* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1904) p. 262-265.

<sup>232</sup> American newspapers had already printed responses to earlier works. For instance, the 16 February 1867 issue of *The Christian Recorder* published in Philadelphia carried an article 'Hymnic. Who Wrote Our Hymns?' The author was responding to an essay on English Church Hymns by Sir Roundell Palmer. Palmer placed *Rock of Ages*, *When I survey the wondrous Cross* and *Jesus shall reign where'er the sun* among the top hymns.

oversung. It has done frequent duty at prayer-meetings, so much so that I think it may have somewhat tired the ears of some of us. I do not know of any hymn that I would want to hear sung every week at my service. I am sorry to say that Ray Palmer's hymn, "My faith looks up to Thee," is given only the sixty-ninth place. It received 1,174 votes. C. F. Alexander's hymn, "There is a green hill far away," comes next in order with 1,130 votes. The two hymns are not to be compared and Dr. Palmer's should have had two thousand more votes.<sup>233</sup>

The *Sunday at Home* account soon gained a life of its own, eventually losing its geographical moorings. Within a year of its publication in London, *The Sioux Valley News* attributed the hymn-ranking survey to an American periodical:

*The Christian Union*<sup>234</sup> lately invited its readers to send in lists containing what in their judgment were the best 100 hymns in the English language. More than 3,400 lists were received. The first hymn upon the larger number of lists was Toplady's "Rock of Ages," having received 3,215 votes. The second in point of popularity was Lyte's "Abide With Me;" the third, Wesley's "Jesus, Lover of My Soul."<sup>235</sup>

The error is clear enough when compared with a report published in *The Daily Northwestern*.

A London periodical lately invited its readers to send in lists containing what in their judgment were the best 100 hymns in the English language. More than 3,400 lists were received. The first hymn upon the larger number of lists was Toplady's "Rock of Ages," having received 3,215 votes. The second in point of popularity was Lyte's "Abide With Me;" the third, Wesley's "Jesus, Lover of My Soul."<sup>236</sup>

W. T. Stead's account, published in 1904, may have served to 'set the record straight'.

Early in 1887 the Editors of the *Sunday at Home* invited their readers to send lists of the Hundred English Hymns which stood highest in their esteem. Nearly three thousand five hundred persons responded to the invitation; and by the majority of votes the following hundred were selected. The first on the list, "Rock of Ages," received 3,215 votes, the last, *Sometimes a Light Surprises*, 866. It was only to be expected that the former hymn would prove to be the most popular of all; but the next three to it each received about 3,000 votes, - "Abide with me," "Jesu, Lover of my soul," and "Just as I am."<sup>237</sup>

Throughout the late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> centuries, American newspaper headlines dedicated to hymnody were prominently displayed:

<sup>233</sup> Marshall, 'The Hymns We Love', *The Christian Recorder*, 25/22 (1887).

<sup>234</sup> *The Christian Union* was published weekly in New York between the years 1870 and 1893. The confusion may have been due to an affiliate relationship in which the *Christian Union* absorbed the *Sabbath at Home*.

<sup>235</sup> 'Favorite Hymns', *Sioux Valley News*, 2 February 1888 p. 2.

<sup>236</sup> 'The Most Popular Hymns', *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, 22 December 1887 p. 2.

<sup>237</sup> Stead, *Hymns That Have Helped* p. 262.

'Who Wrote Our Hymns?' (*The Christian Reader*, 16 February 1887)

'Noted Hymn Writers' (*Decatur Daily Republican*, 17 November 1887)

'The Hymns We Love' (*The Christian Reader*, 2 June 1887)

'Hymnology' (*Janesville Daily Gazette*, 17 March 1890)

'Methodist Hymnal: How the Coming Book Will Be Different Than the Old One' (*Tyrone Daily Herald*, 5 July 1901)

'Two Famous Hymns' (*Marshall Expounder*, 11 October 1901)

Not only had Americans imported English hymnody, but a popular voting method of hymn rankings as well. Early into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, hymn surveys were a familiar attraction in American newspapers. In 1911, the *New Castle News* asked its readership, 'What Old Hymns Do You Like Best?' – a question that would be asked of American readers many times over in the years to follow. Hymn rankings rose to a competitive level as interest groups<sup>238</sup> sought to substantiate the dominance of their preferred hymns. Newspapers regularly featured poll results establishing 'bragging rights' for top hymns:

'Luther's Famous Hymn' (*The Fort Wayne Sentinel* Saturday 17 March 1917)

'Abide With Me Wins Favorite Hymn Poll' (*New Castle News* 5 April 1923)

'Holy, Holy, Holy Most Popular Hymn at Hood – Abide With Me, Old Time Favorite Stands Tenth in List' (*The News, Associated Press* 26 March 1924).

Papers throughout the nation circulated at least one hymn poll conducted among Methodists.

A New York Methodist Episcopal church which has taken a poll of its congregation in an effort to determine the ten best hymns announces that the following received the requisite number of ballots: 1. *Nearer My God to Thee*, 2. *Abide With Me*, 3. *Jesus, Lover of My Soul*, 4. *I Love to Tell the Story*, 5. *Lead, Kindly Light*, 6. *Rescue the Perishing*, 7. *Rock of Ages*, 8. *Onward, Christian Soldiers*, 9. *What a Friend We Have in Jesus* 10. Four others were tied for tenth place: *Love Divine*, *All Love Excelling*, *Just As I Am*, *Faith of Our Fathers* and *In the Cross of Christ I Glory*.<sup>239</sup>

Though various factors contributed to the 'best hymns debate', at the heart of the dispute was the role of the American gospel hymn. Mentioned above (page 56), Louis F. Benson had protested the candidacy of the gospel hymn, but once American readers had a voice in the ranking, their preference for gospel hymns was a force to be reckoned with. In turn, some clergy opposed gospel hymns. Newspapers often

<sup>238</sup> Church groups, college communities, residents of regional districts, etc.

<sup>239</sup> 'Name Ten Best Hymns', *Coshocton Daily Times*, 14 February 1911 p. 7.

hosted the hymn debate. The *Trenton Evening Times* published the testy remarks made by the Rev. John Thompson who delivered an address before the Minister's Forum of the Methodist Episcopal Church and brought theological content to the fore.

The time has come when more attention should be paid to the hymns sung in our churches. We are singing a good many hymns which are nothing more than doggerel. They would be just as good sung backward. Many of them are full of theological untruths. If a preacher preached the heresies sung in many of these hymns he would be rushed to trial and theologically decapitated. All great religious leaders, such as John Wesley, Martin Luther and others, knew the value of good hymns. They put true religion into their hymns. Our church hymns should be sublime sentiment instead of doggerel. It is time to drop the empty sentimentality and return to the gospel in our music.<sup>240</sup>

But the rise of some gospel songs would not be denied. In twenty short years, *In the Garden* soared to the top of the 'hymn charts.' In 1932 The *San Antonio Light* listed it at seventh place.

By the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, newspaper hymn polls were a cultural phenomenon. Commencing the 1961 national survey, one paper boldly carried the headline 'Poll to Pick Favorite Hymns, Settle Dispute, Begins Today'.<sup>241</sup> More than 1,000 newspapers participated in the 1961 survey with results from 61,455 respondents, each receiving a free copy of *Hymn Thoughts for Today* for their efforts. The *Denton Journal*, in the midst of promoting hymn polls, gave a succinct explanation of the controversy.

Many people felt that the old hymns best expressed their faith and directly portrayed the great stories of the Bible. Others believed the newer gospel songs with their strong melodies had a greater appeal to modern American church-goers.<sup>242</sup>

The National Newspapers Hymn Poll contended, 'Our National Newspapers Hymn Poll should end this dispute and determine which hymns have the most meaning for American churchgoers today'.<sup>243</sup> The results<sup>244</sup> were tabulated by an independent research organization<sup>245</sup> and *The Old Rugged Cross* was crowned the 'Most Beloved Hymn'.<sup>246</sup> The above polls demonstrate the central role that newspapers played in ranking hymns and the public's enthusiasm for 'hymn ratings'. In the theological

<sup>240</sup> 'Hymns Are Empty in Churches Now', *Trenton Evening Times*, 10 July 1914 p. 5.

<sup>241</sup> 'Poll to Pick Favorite Hymns, Settle Dispute, Begins Today', *Moberly Monitor-Index*, 22 July 1961 p. 2.

<sup>242</sup> 'Poll to Pick Favorite Hymns Begins in the Journal This Week', *Denton Journal*, 21 July 1961 p. 1.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

<sup>244</sup> See Appendix 7: Favorite Hymns 1961 National Poll.

<sup>245</sup> Audience Analysis Inc., Bala-Cynwyd, Pennsylvania.

<sup>246</sup> 'Old Rugged Cross Selected as Nation's Favorite Hymn', *Jefferson City Post-Tribuner*, 30 November 1961 p. 12.

arena, an American gospel hymn with the bloody imagery of atonement was the crowd favorite.

#### 5.4 Dominant Hymns in *The Wide, Wide World*

Published in 1850 by Susan Warner,<sup>247</sup> *The Wide, Wide World* was popular among literary works of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, being second only to Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1852 *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.<sup>248</sup> Its impact was still felt many years later when, in 1894, *The Atlantic Monthly* acclaimed the book as 'vastly more wholesome than much that passes for better fiction today.'<sup>249</sup> No less than seventeen hymns are cited in *The Wide, Wide World* including *Behold the Savior at Thy Door*; *Christ a Redeemer and Friend*; *Rock of Ages*; and *A Charge to Keep I Have*.<sup>250</sup> In addition to lyrics provided for the reader – sometimes as many as six stanzas<sup>251</sup> – the book provides a remarkable view of the status and role of hymnody in mid-19<sup>th</sup> century American culture. The hymn book serves as the constant companion for Ellen, the book's main character. In regard to spiritual formation, the hymn *Behold the Saviour at thy Door* is used by a guardian figure to bring Ellen to the decision of conversion to Christianity (a more detailed discussion of hymns and conversion will be provided in chapter nine). The hymn book is Ellen's source of solace and hope, discussing 'hymn meanings' one of her favorite disciplines. Warner's inclusion of these hymns indicates her awareness that hymnody was vital to faith formation and sustenance through the trials and tragedies of life.

#### 5.5 Dominant Hymns in *Evangelized America*

Grover C. Loud's *Evangelized America* (1929) documented the history of American revivalism. Reporting the activities of evangelists and preachers, Loud traced figures from Jonathan Edwards and the Great Awakening to Billy Sunday and the rise of Fundamentalism. Of particular interest, each of Loud's twenty-three chapters is introduced by a hymn.<sup>252</sup> Loud expressed no desire to rank hymns, yet his use of hymns as markers in American revivalism demonstrates that hymns were

<sup>247</sup> Under the pseudonym Elizabeth Wetherell.

<sup>248</sup> The publishers of this 1987 reprint make this claim. See cover, Susan Warner, *The Wide, Wide World* (New York: The Feminist Press).

<sup>249</sup> 'Comment on New Books', *The Atlantic Monthly*, 73/437 (March 1894) p. 425.

<sup>250</sup> See Appendix 8: Hymns in *Wide, Wide World*.

<sup>251</sup> *Behold the Savior at Thy Door* four verses, p. 75; *How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds* five verses, p. 451; *Hark My Soul it is the Lord* six verses, p. 452; *Jesus Lover of My Soul* three verses p. 453.

<sup>252</sup> See Appendix 9: Cultural Hymns, by Grover C. Loud.

representative of episodes in revivalism. Loud's method indicates his awareness of hymnody and confidence that his audience would share his knowledge.

## 5.6 Dominant Hymns in *Religion in Nineteenth Century America*

Similar to Loud, Grant Wacker's *Religion in Nineteenth Century America*, begins each of its ten chapters with a hymn.<sup>253</sup> Wacker doesn't provide rationale for his method or justify his selections but it is clear the hymns were used representatively for a particular period in American religious history. For instance, *My Country 'Tis of Thee* corresponds with the chapter entitled 'Founders', *The Spirit of God like a Fire is Burning* introduces Wacker's treatment of restoration fervor, and *Battle Hymn of the Republic* aligns with his chapter on the Civil War. Though Wacker's use of hymns as chapter headings is not unique, his selection is. Despite at least two important omissions, such as a Fanny Crosby composition or a Sunday School hymn, Wacker's inclusion of an African American spiritual (*Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*) and a Mormon hymn is noteworthy. The latter is particularly striking given Protestant hostility toward Mormonism. In comparison, Grover C. Loud's treatment of Mormonism is introduced by an accepted hymn of Protestantism, *On Jordan's Stormy Banks*. Perhaps Loud thought that using a Mormon hymn would appear as tacit approval of Mormon hymnody. Given his expressed view that Joseph Smith was a plagiarist,<sup>254</sup> best lumped among the American prophets who 'descended from their backwoods Sinais',<sup>255</sup> it is likely that Loud deliberately refrained from printing a Mormon hymn alongside those beloved by Protestants. In contrast Wacker, governed by modern historical methods, had no reason to suppress a Mormon hymn. As hymns were a vital medium of Mormon expression (discussed in section 8.10), Wacker's showcase of W. W. Phelps' hymn *The Spirit of God Like a Fire is Burning* correctly illustrates the dominance of hymnody in Mormonism.

## 5.7 Dominant Hymns in Stephen Marini's Ranking

One of the most comprehensive lists of hymn ranking in American Protestantism – *The American Protestant Hymns Project: A Ranked List of Most Frequently Printed Hymns, 1737-1960* – has been compiled by historian Stephen Marini. Though his

<sup>253</sup> See Appendix 10: Cultural Hymns, by Grant Wacker.

<sup>254</sup> Grover C. Loud, *Evangelized America* (New York: Dial Press Incorporated, 1928) p. 149. Loud held the view that Smith plagiarized Solomon Spaulding's *Manuscript Found*.

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.* p. 145.

method was similar to other works noted above, Marini's data reflects a broader sampling. Comparing 175 hymnals, Marini compiled a list of the most printed hymns across almost 40 different denominations. As well, Marini consulted tune books, songsters and gospel hymnals, thereby including gospel hymns, though the proportion of gospel hymnbooks was only twenty percent.<sup>256</sup> Finally, Marini's work encompassed over 200 years, giving a long view of the American hymnal tradition. Marini's list, printed in *Wonderful Words of Life*,<sup>257</sup> ranks 266 hymns<sup>258</sup> that appear in at least thirty-five of the 175 hymnals consulted.<sup>259</sup> More recently Marini subdivided his results into two distinct eras, providing a list of the 'top 21' hymns of Classical Evangelical Hymnody<sup>260</sup> and the 'top 20' hymns of Modern Evangelical Hymnody.<sup>261</sup> While this categorization yielded different rankings between the two eras, English hymnody remained dominant in both. Drawing attention to this dynamic Marini writes,

American evangelicals have proven to be quite conservative about their hymn texts, retaining much of the classical canon through the late nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries. Perennial favorites such as Watts's "Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed" and Charles Wesley's "Jesus Lover of My Soul" in fact were even more popular after 1860 than before.<sup>262</sup>

Marini's research demonstrated that classical English hymnody remained dominant in denominational hymnals from 1737 up to the year 1970. Though Marini enriched his research in hymn rankings he did not include African American sources or hymnals of marginalized groups, nor did his inclusion of five youth hymnals in his latest study make an appreciable difference to his results.

## 5.8 Conclusion

The ranking of hymns by writers of the period indicates the value of hymnody in multiple areas, such as music appreciation, hymnist recognition, poetic value, religious expression, and denominational distinctives. While these areas overlap at

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<sup>256</sup> Stephen Marini, 'From Classical to Modern: Hymnody and the Development of American Evangelicalism, 1737-1970', in Edith L. Blumhofer and Mark A. Noll (eds.), *Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land: Hymnody in the History of North American Protestantism* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2004), 1-38 p. 9, 10.

<sup>257</sup> Richard J. Mouw and Mark A. Noll (eds.), *Wonderful Words of Life: Hymns in American Protestant History and Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004).

<sup>258</sup> See Appendix 11: Most Printed Hymns 1737-1960, by Stephen Marini.

<sup>259</sup> Marini has since added another 25 hymnals. This includes 40 interdenominational works largely consisting of gospel songs.

<sup>260</sup> See Appendix 12: Classical Evangelical Hymnody, by Stephen Marini.

<sup>261</sup> See Appendix 13: Modern Evangelical Hymnody, by Stephen Marini.

<sup>262</sup> Marini, p. 18.

various points, the crucial intersection here is the theological authority of hymnody. Hymnologists, theologians, historians, journalists, and novelists alike had an investment in hymnody, not simply because of its musical merit, but because of its vital theological function. Without this, the other criteria (music appreciation, hymnist recognition, etc.) might not have produced such a remarkable interest in hymnody. These divergent concepts of ranking produced two types of canons, one ideological and the other populist. While they were separated by different measures of officiation and theological presuppositions (the first ecclesial, the second cultural), both parties were shaped by hymnic theology.

Calculated hymn rankings published in hymnological sources employed a quantitative formula based on most printed hymns in  $x$  number of hymnals. Some hymnologists selected hymns determined to be of lasting value and compiled lists based on theological, devotional, and musical merit. James King focused on Anglican hymnody while Americans Louis F. Benson and H. Augustine Smith compiled hymn lists drawn from a broader hymnal selection, including Scottish and Canadian hymnals, while excluding gospel hymns. Francis B. Reeves provided several categorical lists, though unranked, within the same book. But all these rankings included ideological appraisal. Benson's rejection of gospel hymns, for example, indicates the devaluation of certain types of hymns. For Benson, gospel hymns were not recognized by reputable traditions and did not deserve elevation in the canon of hymnody. Yet Benson did not reject the edificatory value of sentimental hymns given his theological defense of the children's hymn *I Want to Be an Angel* (section 6.12).

Cope and Stead were influenced primarily by the edificatory role of hymns and sought to quantify hymns that were of exceptional influence in the lived faith of individual Christians. Susan Warner's inclusion of seventeen hymns in her domestic novel reflected a similar interest. The constant presence of familiar hymns throughout Warner's novel suggests that hymns were essential to conversion and genuine faith. By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, newspaper editors used a polling method to assess popular hymns, a quantification method interested in popular usage. The volume of responses and the national coverage of these polls indicate high interest from readers.

Though neither Grover C. Loud nor Grant Wacker may have envisioned their hymn selections as a stand-alone list of ranked hymns, both used hymns because of the capacity of hymns to serve as cultural markers, thereby each generating a list. For



Loud and Wacker, hymns were endowed with authority to represent select movements or eras in American culture. Stephen Marini, interested in hymns as a primary source in the social history of theology provided a list ranked by printing, thus presenting top-ranked hymns from two 'hymn eras' in American Protestantism.

Functional canonicity of hymns was both official and unofficial, depending on one's view. Benson and Smith promoted hymns that carried historical authority. In creed-like rhetoric, Benson argued against the inclusion of gospel hymns based on their rejection by 'the great bodies of Christians'. For Benson, the best hymns deserved preservation, suggesting procedural canonization of hymnody. In contrast, newspaper hymn polls surveyed public opinion to determine hymn ranking and did not rate longevity. Views expressed by W. T. Stead and Rev. John Thompson were representative of the dispute that pitted emotional utility against theological integrity. To Stead, a hymn's edificatory impact was more important than its theological content, even if it contained heresy. To Rev. John Thompson, doggerel hymns that were 'full of theological untruths' could not be rescued by sentimentalism.

Hymnologists tended to value the enduring capacity of hymns. Smith omitted and Benson rejected outright the fashionable gospel songs of their day, evidence that a two-tier valuing of church music existed in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century. In such a 'market', Benson and Smith represent a tradition that judged hymns by their universal usage and acceptance by liturgical traditions. Though gospel hymns were gaining in popularity in the modern period of evangelical hymnody, Marini's finding that gospel hymns were printed less than hymns of the classical canon aligns with Reeves' observation that omission of certain hymns, such as *Just As I Am* and *Lead Kindly Light*, was unthinkable within American Protestantism. Yet the 1913 hymn *The Old Rugged Cross*, ranked as #1 in the 1961 national newspaper poll, must have been printed in hymnals with a vengeance. Though it competed with hymns that had a 200-year head start, George Bennard's hymn shared 76<sup>th</sup> place<sup>263</sup> in Marini's most printed hymns 1737-1970. But Bennard's hymn is one of few exceptions. American Protestant hymnals, at least up until the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, were still dominated by classic English hymnody.

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<sup>263</sup> This number is a little misleading since some hymns shared the same placement. Bennard's hymn is actually among the last few hymns to be included on Marini's list.

There are similarities between the hymn-ranking process and the canonization of the New Testament writings, in which literature produced in the early church period, was later evaluated for its authorship, authority and usage. Canonical hymnody – as represented by hymnologists Benson, Smith, and Cope, and indicated by Marini's results – favored a corpus that was decidedly English Protestant. Although there are a few exceptions from the Latin tradition<sup>264</sup> and German hymnody,<sup>265</sup> the evidence indicates that, by the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, American Protestantism remained closely tied to the hymns of English theologians. Using the New Testament canon as illustration, Watts was authoritative in a Pauline sense and Wesley Johannine. Watts wrote sixty-six of the 266 hymns (25%) in Marini's list; Wesley twenty-four (9%), both leading an honored group of authors whose achievements in hymnody (according to Reeves) 'entitled them to have their names written in the book of life'.

Analyzing the dominant hymns, a composite list of hymns based on the American rankings listed above is revealing. *Just As I Am* ranks highest with placements on seven of eight lists.<sup>266</sup> Included in six lists are the hymns *How Firm a Foundation*, *Jesus Lover of My Soul* and *Rock of Ages*. Four hymns are listed in five of the eight rankings: *My Faith Looks Up to Thee*, *Nearer My God to Thee*, *Onward Christian Soldiers*, *Stand Up Stand Up for Jesus*, and *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*. Obviously these hymns have the advantage of longevity. Surprisingly, *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name* falls short of 'the top 10' and Heber's *Holy, Holy, Holy* and Newton's *Amazing Grace* rank much lower than one might expect, at 'three of seven' and 'two of seven' respectively. Finally, if Reeves' list of 'inspired women' appeared to be an overstated tribute, it is exonerated. In the composite list, women authored two of the top-ranked hymns, *Just As I Am* by Charlotte Elliott and *Nearer My God to Thee* by Sarah Flower Adams. In Marini's list, sixteen women accounted for twenty-five hymns.

In the hymn rankings and listings mentioned above, there is acknowledgement within the period of the authors that hymns performed a vital theological function. The varied approaches used to determine ranking reflect the authority of hymnody at a personal, ecclesial, and cultural level.

<sup>264</sup> Such as *Gloria Patri*, *Te Deum* and *O Sacred Head (Salve caput cruentatum)*

<sup>265</sup> Such as *Fairest Lord Jesus (Schönster Herr Jesu)* and *A Mighty Fortress (Ein' feste Burg)*.

<sup>266</sup> The eight lists include Thompson, Benson (one list made by combining both series of Familiar Hymns), Cope, Warner, Loud, Wacker, 1961 national poll, and Marini.

## Chapter Six: Children's Hymns

In this chapter I will situate children's hymns in the context of the Sunday School movement. First, I will explore the catechetical role of the hymnal, hymn memorization, and present some of the theological debates roused by children's hymns. Secondly, I will explore the content of children's hymnody.

### 6.1 Introduction

In due course the superintendent stood up in front of the pulpit, with a closed hymn-book in his hand and his forefinger inserted between its leaves, and commanded attention. When a Sunday-school superintendent makes his customary little speech, a hymn-book in the hand is as necessary as is the inevitable sheet of music in the hand of a singer[.]<sup>267</sup>

In Mark Twain's 1870s vignette of rural Missouri, it is noteworthy that the symbol of authority in the superintendent's hand is a hymn book, not a Bible. But this picture is not far-fetched and may in fact give us a representative view of the hymnbook's authority in the average American Protestant Sunday School. By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, American Protestant churches had institutionalized Sunday School and regularly used hymns as an essential medium to instill both religious beliefs and values in children. The hymnal became a type of catechetical source for Sunday School scholars.<sup>268</sup>

The Sunday School movement figured into Sydney E. Ahlstrom's commentary of 'theology in America' (page 16 above) in which he identified the 'immensely moralistic' nature of American Protestantism and its involvement in reform movements, especially the temperance crusade. Hymns profoundly demonstrate this moralistic emphasis generally, as well as contribution to the temperance movement in particular. While Sunday School was multi-faceted in its curriculum, hymn texts were at the centre of salvation and faith formation, and provided a tangible and memorable medium by which to communicate values and beliefs to children. These values and beliefs focused on work ethic, moral conduct, and abstinence – Protestant behavioral ideals inspired through the pervasive authority of hymns. In addition, children's hymns pushed the envelope of sentimentalism and speculative theology

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<sup>267</sup> Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) p. 50.

<sup>268</sup> A scholar was a student. According to Anne M. Boylan, scholars were usually between the ages of six and twelve. See Anne M. Boylan, *Sunday School: The Formation of an American Institution 1790-1880* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988) p. 141.

that put the Sunday School and its hymnody in the national spotlight of theological debate.

Alongside the Bible, the hymnal enjoyed central place in the religious education and spiritual formation of children, becoming an essential catechetical tool. By the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, the pedagogical methods of most Sunday Schools reflected the catechetical role of hymnody. Even in some Reformed contexts, formal catechism was reduced while hymnody was increased. In *I Sing for I Cannot be Silent: The Feminization of American Hymnody, 1870-1920*, June Hadden Hobbs described evangelical Eudora Welty who 'learned no catechism, no creed, and no liturgy' but learned 'many hymns by heart'.<sup>269</sup>

## 6.2 Historical Background of Sunday Schools

Tracing the foundations of Sunday School theory Marianna C. Brown argued that, beginning with the Puritans, Christian communities and cities adopted mandates to educate children. Brown's panoramic view examined almost three centuries from 1630 to 1900 and emphasized the shift, begun in 1809, from secular to religious instruction.<sup>270</sup> While Sunday School as a type of social movement is credited to Robert Raikes in 18<sup>th</sup>-century England, Brown also commended Dr. Lyman Beecher's pioneering efforts in reforming the American Sunday School from the English model (that educated the poor and middle-class) to the American Sunday School system that served to educate children of all social classes, including the upper class.<sup>271</sup> Iladel Sherwood, examining Sunday School from the late-18<sup>th</sup> century to 1976 articulated a distinction between developments in England and America.

In England, the Sunday School started apart from the church and remained virtually independent of the church. This is not so in America, where the Sunday School reached its fullest dimension as the church's tool of instructing children.<sup>272</sup>

Within a generation after the American Revolution, Sunday Schools had become normative. In 1810, Sunday School attendance was reported to be 300,000 students,

<sup>269</sup> June Hadden Hobbs, *I Sing for I Cannot Be Silent: The Feminization of American Hymnody, 1870-1920*, eds. David Bartholomae and Jean Ferguson (Pittsburgh Series in Composition, Literacy and Culture; Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997) p. 1, 2. Eudora Welty's Sunday School experience dated to the early 1900s.

<sup>270</sup> Marianna C. Brown, *Sunday-School Movements in America* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1901) p. 23, 24.

<sup>271</sup> *Ibid.* p. 24.

<sup>272</sup> Iladel Sherwood, *200 Years of Sunday School in America* (Nashville, Tennessee: Dynamic Manuscripts, 1976) p. 49.

with numbers rising to 20 million by 1890.<sup>273</sup> Though these numbers may appear exaggerated, various sources attest to the significant growth of Sunday School attendance and the dominance of American Protestant Sunday Schools in these statistics. The 1911 International Sunday School Convention reported 14,946,504 pupils and 1,670,686 teachers in the United States.<sup>274</sup> Figures from the 1917 Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches indicate that American Protestant Sunday School attendance was virtually at par with church membership.<sup>275</sup> Of the main Methodist churches,<sup>276</sup> Sunday School attendance (7,218,463) equaled adult church membership (7,487,332). Presbyterian denominations yielded a similar result with a total church membership of 2,048,204 and 1,930,971 Sunday School scholars. Accounting for denominations within the Constituent Bodies of the Federal Council,<sup>277</sup> church membership totaled 17,996,453 and Sunday School Scholars totaled 17,227,601.<sup>278</sup> Mirroring these results, the World Sunday School Association reported 24,030,039 scholars in North America in 1930.<sup>279</sup> The 1935 Yearbook of American Churches reported 21,038,526 Sunday School scholars.<sup>280</sup> Considering these numbers in the United States, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Sunday Schools were attended by approximately 17% of the population.<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> Rev. A. S. Gumbart, *The International Sunday School Lessons for 1893* (New York: Ward & Drummond, 1892) p. 12.

<sup>274</sup> 'Sunday School Statistics', *Adams County News*, 24 June 1911 p. 5.

<sup>275</sup> Though Canada is included in this report, the Canadian statistics are not significant. For instance, records of the Eighth International Sunday-School Convention held in Boston 23-25 June 1896 indicate that Canadian Sunday Schools made up about 4% of North American figures. Applying this to the number of Sunday Schools represented (140,000) Canada would have had approximately 5,600 Sunday Schools and the United States 134,400.

<sup>276</sup> Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Episcopal South, African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Colored Methodist Episcopal, and Methodist Protestant.

<sup>277</sup> Baptists, Congregational, Disciples of Christ, Evangelical Association, Lutheran, Mennonite, Methodist, Moravian, Presbyterian, Reformed, and United Brethren.

<sup>278</sup> These numbers appear more significant when contrasting Protestant figures with those of the Roman Catholic Church. The 1926 statistics of the Roman Catholic Church published in the 1935 Yearbook of American Churches show a great disparity between the Church Census totaling 20,199,594 and the Sunday School Scholars Census totaling 1,201,330.

<sup>279</sup> 'Sunday School Statistics', *Indiana Evening Gazette*, 10 December 1930 p. 2.

<sup>280</sup> Herman C. Weber (ed.), *Yearbook of American Churches: A Record of Religious Activities in the United States for the Years 1933 and 1934* (1935 edn., New York: Association Press, 1935) p. 5.

<sup>281</sup> Calculating 21 million for Sunday School attendance and 123 million for total U.S. population. By comparison, as reported by Ian Bradley, 'By 1888 three out of four children in England were attending Sunday Schools'. See Bradley, p. 49.

### 6.3 Key Developments in Sunday School

In 1824 the American Sunday School Union was established, providing a national inter-denominational institution by which to deliver Christian education to children.<sup>282</sup> This was the largest Sunday School organization in the antebellum era, publishing a wide range of teaching resources by 1835.<sup>283</sup> In the year 1832, the first *National Sunday School Convention* was convened in Philadelphia and, from 1872 onward, conventions were held every three years. With growing participation from abroad, the convention changed its name to the International Sunday School Convention and published the *International Uniform Lesson*. Though at times the American Sunday School Union functioned in a type of monopoly, other Sunday School organizations with sectarian or regional interests existed in the United States, including the New York Sunday-School Union, the Unitarian Sunday-School Society, the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, and the Methodist Episcopal Sunday School Union. International and inter-denominational cooperation gained in popularity, witnessed by the World Sunday School Convention that first met in 1889, expanding later to become the World's Sunday School Association (1907) and the World Council of Christian Education (1947). The geographic expansion and numerical growth of Sunday School testifies to its dominant role. Certainly no other single institution was as capable of educating and influencing children in the subject of religion and morality. So pervasive was its influence that by the early-20<sup>th</sup> century Sunday School attendance was required of children whose mothers applied for pensions (the precursor of welfare).<sup>284</sup> The U.S. Department of Labor Children's Bureau included a form to be completed by the Sunday School teacher required to verify each child's attendance.<sup>285</sup> As Anne M. Boylan substantiated in her documentation of the Sunday School movement 1790-1880, it earned recognition as 'an American institution'.<sup>286</sup>

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<sup>282</sup> The American Sunday School Union, the name adopted in 1824, was originally named the Philadelphia Sunday and Adult School Union.

<sup>283</sup> *Descriptive Catalogue of Books and Other Publications of the American Sunday School Union Designed for Sunday Schools, Juvenile, Family and Parish Libraries and for General Reading.*

<sup>284</sup> Michael Reese, 'A Mother's 'Natural Right': Public Welfare for Single Mothers in King County, 1913-1930', *Pacific Northwest Historians Guild*, (2007),

<[www.pnwhistorians.org/Research/abstractDetail.asp?id=68](http://www.pnwhistorians.org/Research/abstractDetail.asp?id=68)>, accessed 25 November 2007.

<sup>285</sup> Julia C. Lathrop, 'Laws Relating To "Mother's Pensions" In the United States, Denmark and New Zealand', in U.S. Department of Labor Children's Bureau (ed.), (Government Printing Office, 1914) p.

54.

<sup>286</sup> Boylan.

## 6.4 Catechetical Role of Hymnody

Catechism, a summary of Christian belief usually associated with a particular tradition or denomination, is typically constructed in a series of questions and answers. Catechumens in Christian communities are most often children who have been baptized as infants. By learning the catechism they are preparing for *confirmation* of their faith, a rite of passage common to the adolescent years. Many American Protestant churches employed catechism in the faith formation of children.

But at the outset of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the growing influence of Arminianism and success of conversionism, brought changes to methods of faith formation. In contrast to the emphasis placed on the nurture of children toward confirmation, faith formation followed conversion. In contrast to *confirmation*, the experience of personal conversion was the central focus, and faith formation of children was prioritized subsequent to conversion. Religious education was less focused on denominational distinctives and moral didacticism became prominent, with the interdenominational Sunday School the main centre of faith formation and hymnody one of its main texts.

Various factors, such as professionalization of clergy, urbanization, and the increasing activity of children in society led to the home yielding much of its role in conversion and faith formation to the Sunday School. By the late-19<sup>th</sup> century the Sunday School was the primary resource of religious education for children.

In *The Sunday School Guide and Parents Manual* (1838) A. B. Muzzey suggested the didactic role of the Sunday School to be superior to the home.

But some may ask here if parents can, in no instances, perform the whole task of the religious instruction of their children. We reply, that parents in general cannot instruct their children so thoroughly in the Scripture, and in the whole circle of moral and religious duties, as a competent and faithful Sabbath School Teacher may.<sup>287</sup>

In her treatment of Sunday School in 19<sup>th</sup>-century America, Anne M. Boylan documented its central role in training children.

Whereas in 1820 Protestants had thought about children's religious experiences primarily in terms of family and church, by 1880 it was impossible to conceive of them without reference to the Sunday school.<sup>288</sup>

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<sup>287</sup> A. B. Muzzey, *The Sunday School Guide and Parent's Manual* (James Munroe and Company, and Benjamin H. Greene; Boston, 1838) p. 12.

<sup>288</sup> Boylan, p. 160.

Parallel with the trend away from catechism (amidst the ascendancy of Sunday School) was a significant shift in theology. The view held by Calvinist denominations that children were depraved from birth and morally responsible for their sinful condition gradually gave way to the Arminian view that children were not accountable until they became aware of sin and its consequences. Once children acted knowingly under free moral agency they became accountable for actions of sin. The condition of sin – *original sin* – was considered distinct from sinful action; the latter considered the measure of accountability. This shift seemed to gain additional momentum with the broad acceptance of Pestalozzi's methods (practical application and self-discovery) in the 1860s.<sup>289</sup> Sunday School educators were encouraged to let children express themselves and this was realized, in part, through children choosing their own hymns to sing.<sup>290</sup> Marianna C. Brown argued that hymns were one of the greatest means of quickening spiritual life.<sup>291</sup> June Hadden Hobbs maintained that by the 1870s, children's hymns became 'an element of communal worship' in addition to their role as 'devotional aids'.<sup>292</sup>

Several editors drew attention to the emotional capacity of children and the ability of music to fulfill this need. Paul N. Crusius, chairman of the Editorial Committee of *The Elmhurst Hymnal and Orders of Worship for the Sunday School, Young People's Meetings and Church Services*, identified the first matter of providing for the 'specific expression to the religious experience and emotion of youth'.<sup>293</sup> L. O. Emerson also stressed the attributive effect of music's appeal to the emotions.<sup>294</sup> Though Chas. H. Gabriel compiled songbooks that focused on instructional lyrics he believed that a song was the expression of some phase of the heart's emotion.<sup>295</sup>

Hymn lyrics mirrored the changing landscape transforming the rigid anthropological construct usually associated with Calvinism to the appreciation of individual personality and 'a romanticized view of childhood'.<sup>296</sup> Henry King Lewis, author of *The Child: Its Spiritual Nature*, provided a firsthand account of the shift deriving his

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<sup>289</sup> Ibid. p. 151.

<sup>290</sup> Brown, *Sunday-School Movements in America* p. 203.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid. p. 199.

<sup>292</sup> Hobbs, p. 71.

<sup>293</sup> *Elmhurst Hymnal and Orders of Worship for the Sunday School, Young People's Meetings and Church Services*, (St. Louis and Chicago: Eden Publishing House, 1921) p. III.

<sup>294</sup> L. O. Emerson (ed.), *The Harp of Judah: A Collection of Sacred Music for Choirs, Musical Conventions, Singing Schools and the Home Circle* (Boston: Ditson & Company, 1863). Preface.

<sup>295</sup> Chas. H. Gabriel, *Sunshine Songs for the Sunday School* (Chicago, Illinois: Meyer & Brother, 1895). Preface.

<sup>296</sup> Boylan, p. 151.



theological cues directly from hymnody. In contrast to earlier hymn lyrics that emphasized depravity and wretchedness, late-19<sup>th</sup> century hymnody was much less 'depressing to the child's tender spirit'. Lewis writes,

The modern character of Hymnody in sweetness and purity and spiritual grace from a hard, theological form of doctrine, marks the progress of the Church of Christ towards the life and action of Apostolic times.<sup>297</sup>

While Calvinist and Arminian groups were separated by doctrine, they shared an interest in the Sunday School as the means by which to nurture children in faith formation. By the early-19<sup>th</sup> century, Sunday School hymns and Scripture occupied a place once dominated by formal catechism. In *The Development of Sunday School Hymnody in the United States of America, 1816-1869*, Virginia Cross argued, 'Extensive memorization of scripture and hymns dominated the period from 1804 to 1820 as a reaction against overuse of the catechism.'<sup>298</sup> While there were a number of issues related to the paradigm shift,<sup>299</sup> experientialism and inter-denominationalism were influential. As catechism favored well in neither category, hymns and Scripture, at least in Sunday School, effectively replaced catechism. In his 1837 book, *The Sabbath School Teacher: Designed to Aid in Evaluating and Perfecting the Sabbath School System*, Rev. John Todd, pastor of the First Congregational Church in Philadelphia, attempted to answer the question, 'Is it best to teach Catechism in these [Sabbath] schools?'

Till within a short time, Catechisms of all kinds have nearly been proscribed in most of our schools, and the impression seemed to be gaining ground, that they were to be laid aside with the rubbish of other times, [...] The objection seemed to be, that the memory alone is cultivated by learning catechism; that the child cannot understand them, and that they are sectarian in their tendency.<sup>300</sup>

Summarizing, Todd advised that catechism be retained, but only used once per month.

In contrast to the waning use of catechism faced by Todd, the use of hymns in Sunday School was securely fixed. The question Todd asked of hymnody was 'What hymns

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<sup>297</sup> Henry King Lewis, *The Child: Its Spiritual Nature* (London and New York: MacMillan & Co., Ltd., 1896) p. 190. Lewis' chronological scheme of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century 'Church of Christ' progressing toward the 1<sup>st</sup>-century 'Apostolic Church' may be tongue-in-cheek given that later periods cannot progress literally toward an earlier time period.

<sup>298</sup> Virginia Ann Cross, 'The Development of Sunday School Hymnody in the United States of America, 1816-1869', Dissertation (New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1985) p. 50.

<sup>299</sup> For example, Pestalozzi's method, the expansion of Arminianism, etc.

<sup>300</sup> Rev. John Todd, *The Sabbath School Teacher: Designed to Aid in Elevating and Perfecting the Sabbath School System*. (Northampton and Philadelphia: J. H. Butler and W. Marshall & Co., 1837) p. 53.

shall be used?' rather than 'Should hymns be used?' Todd answered, 'In very many schools, perhaps the majority in the land, hymns are used, selected and arranged on purpose for Sabbath Schools, such as the *Union Hymns* and the like.' The hymnal endorsed by Todd was, quite likely, *Union Hymns* – the 1835 publication by the American Sunday School Union.<sup>301</sup>

In *Religious Instruction by Sunday-School Hymns* Frederica Beard wrote, 'A distinction has to be marked in our minds between hymns which as songs of praise and adoration are addressed to God or Christ, and those hymns which are about a person or subject.'<sup>302</sup> Similarly in *Worship in the Sunday School*, Dr. Richard Morse Hodge differentiated between songs addressed to God and those addressed to 'no one in particular' or 'exhortations to fellow-beings', claiming the latter type of songs 'are never worship'.<sup>303</sup> Hodge's 1906 commentary criticized much of children's hymnody as 'too emphatically doctrinal'.<sup>304</sup>

Though songs of praise were not abundant in children's hymnals, this was consistent with the didactic purposes of hymn editors and compilers.<sup>305</sup> For example, Chas. H. Gabriel and W. S. Nickle presented their songbook as 'a collection of cheerful, tuneful, pleasing and instructive childish songs'.<sup>306</sup> *Little Branches*, a 57-song compilation by Gabriel and Nickle contained two 'praise songs', *Our Hearts O'erflow with Praises* and *Our King*.<sup>307</sup> *Sunshine: Songs for Sunday School*, another work by Gabriel published two years later in 1895 and expanded to ninety-three songs, was a little more generous. Gabriel incorporated six worship songs common to adult hymnbooks, including *Holy, Holy, Holy* and *All Hail the Pow'r of Jesus Name*, but maintained his didactic purpose. In the preface to *Sunshine: Songs for the Sunday*

<sup>301</sup> There was at least one other hymnal by that title published in 1834 – *Union Hymns adapted to Social Meetings and Family Worship selected from Church Psalmody*.

<sup>302</sup> Frederica Beard, 'Religious Instruction by Sunday-School Hymns', *The Biblical World*, 16/1 (July 1900), 18-23 p. 22.

<sup>303</sup> Richard Morse Hodge, 'Worship in the Sunday School', *The Biblical World*, 27/1 (January 1906), 42-47 p. 46.

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.* Morse was concerned that church ministry focused on itself and reduced God's purposes to the church, rather than world evangelism.

<sup>305</sup> In general, children's hymnals lacked introduction to the cardinal doctrines of Christianity, e.g. Incarnation, Justification, Resurrection, Trinity. This is reflected to some extent in adult hymnody. Marini demonstrated that the most printed hymns in American Protestantism have 'puzzling absences in the realm of doctrine.' For instance, there are few hymns 'explicitly about the Godhead', and there are no hymns about the Trinity or the resurrection. See Stephen A. Marini, 'Hymnody as History: Early Evangelical Hymns and the Recovery of American Popular Religion', *Church History*, 71/2 (June 2002), 273-306 p. 283.

<sup>306</sup> Chas. H. Gabriel and W. S. Nickle, *Little Branches* (Chicago: Meyer & Brother, 1893). Preface.

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid.*

*School*, Gabriel described hymns as ‘teachers of Scripture truths’ claiming that ‘a song, well committed and rightly sung, is more to be desired than a lesson carelessly prepared and indifferently taught.’<sup>308</sup> The publications of children’s hymnals reflected the growing interest in age-specific hymns and the priority of delivering the values and teachings of Protestantism through song lyrics used in sacred and social settings.<sup>309</sup>

Hymnody’s use as a strategic tool to communicate effectively to children is well established. Stephen Rachman, current Professor of English at Michigan State University specializing in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>-century British and American literature, recognized the influence of children’s hymns. In his article ‘Shaping the Values of Youth: Sunday School Books in 19th Century America,’ Rachman writes,

Hymns and hymnals have always been an essential and popular part of religious services and the Sunday-School movement recognized that music was as important a medium for appealing to children as literature.<sup>310</sup>

L. O. Emerson believed music retained the interest of students.<sup>311</sup> Henry C. Nott, editor of *Immortal Songs for Church and School*, highlighted the essential goal of a songbook as one that would ‘aid young people to fully appreciate the beauty and wealth of spiritual treasure contained in the many splendid hymns.’<sup>312</sup> Henry J. Howland, credited as the originator of the Infant Sunday School in America, formed a Sunday School class that featured the teaching and singing of hymns, in addition to the use of Bible pictures to interest the children.<sup>313</sup> In the case of the *American*

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<sup>308</sup> Chas. H. Gabriel, *Sunshine. Songs for the Sunday School* (Chicago: Meyer & Brother, 1895).

Preface.

<sup>309</sup> The Singing School, distinct from Sunday School, had become an established cultural institution by the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century in America. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, itinerant schoolmasters carried their impact to many communities. See Paul Westermeyer. *Te Deum. The Church and Music* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998) at 249. At first, singing schools were designed as an arm of the church as a solution to the problem of declining quality in church music, a problem identified by Thomas Symmes and John Tufts. Their lasting influence in teaching music theory and appreciation parallels the increase in hymnals published with printed tunes. Mid-19<sup>th</sup> century hymnals published for use in Singing Schools included a wide variety of material. *The Jubilee* (1858), *Asaph* (1861) and *The Harp of Judah* (1863) are representative of music collections that, in addition to sacred music, included music theory lessons. By the early-20<sup>th</sup> century, sociability and recreational songbooks were published by publishers with evangelical affiliation, such as the Rodheaver Company, e.g. *Sociability Songs* (1928).

<sup>310</sup> Stephen Rachman, ‘Shaping the Values of Youth: Sunday School Books in 19th Century America’, <<http://digital.lib.msu.edu/projects/ssb/index.cfm?CollectionID=58>>, accessed December 27 2005.

<sup>311</sup> Emerson (ed.). Preface.

<sup>312</sup> Henry C. Nott (ed.), *Immortal Songs for Church and School* (Cleveland, Ohio: Central Publishing House, 1923). Preface. Nott explained the need for a hymnal ‘for Sunday schools and Young Peoples services as well as for congregations, for whom the introduction of the regular Hymnal of the church may not yet be feasible.’

<sup>313</sup> Brown, *Sunday-School Movements in America* p. 117.

*Sunday School Hymnal*, the editors claimed that all of its songs were understandable to children and that its selection process was dictated by age-specificity.<sup>314</sup>

## 6.5 Hymn Memorization

Gabriel's reference above to hymns as 'well committed' is idiomatic. The verbal phrase, 'commit a hymn to memory' was sometimes abbreviated to 'commit a hymn'. Sherwood, in recording the prevalence of memorization among Sunday School children, described remarkable accomplishments of students who memorized entire gospels, over 100 hymns and all of Dr. Watts' psalms.<sup>315</sup> The memorization of hymns in childhood carried through to the senior years of devout Protestants. Exemplary in the practice was Phillips Brooks (1835-1893), Bishop of Massachusetts in the Episcopal Church and author of *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, acclaimed for committing 200 hymns to memory.<sup>316</sup> Obituaries and memorials of both young and old commonly included favorite hymns, and occasionally recounted the great number of hymns the deceased committed to memory.

Yet, according to Virginia Cross, 'In the second period of Sunday School hymnody [1832-1842] the tendencies toward memorization declined.'<sup>317</sup> But literature of the period indicates that memorizing hymns remained a priority. Surprisingly, Cross cited the preface of *The New Sunday-School Hymn-Book* (published between 1831-1835) appearing to contradict her own view.

The Sunday-school Hymn-book is used not only in Sunday-schools, at Sunday-school Monthly Concerts, in Teachers Meetings and by Bible-classes, but thousands of children commit and recite a hymn as one of their Sunday-school exercises.<sup>318</sup>

Cross was correct in perceiving a change in this decade, but rather than it being a decline in the practice of memorization, this period witnessed reevaluation of memorization outcomes. Sunday School educators recognized the need for students to internalize and understand Scripture texts and hymn lyrics they were committing to memory.

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<sup>314</sup> *The American Sunday School Hymn Book*, (Philadelphia: American Sunday-School Union, 1860) p. preface. The publishers write, 'No hymn has been admitted whose meaning may not be readily apprehended by children.'

<sup>315</sup> Sherwood, p. 64. The time period is difficult to determine but is obviously no earlier than the influence of Watts' hymns.

<sup>316</sup> Smith, *Lyric Religion: The Romance of Immortal Hymns* p. 297. According to Smith, Brooks came from a musical home where memorizing hymns was expected.

<sup>317</sup> Cross, p. 120.

<sup>318</sup> *Ibid.* p. 121.

Other than examining the pedagogical results, the American Sunday School Union showed no signs of devaluing hymn memorization. The 1830 *American Sunday-School Teachers Magazine* published an account of a Methodist Episcopal Sunday School superintendent who endorsed the continued emphasis upon hymn memorization. Illustrating the influence of Sunday Schools in producing children of appropriate behavior, the superintendent testified 'that a considerable outward change is manifested in several of the scholars; children who were notorious for wild and romping manners, now spend the time formerly devoted to play, in reading the Scriptures, and committing hymns to memory.'<sup>319</sup>

But at mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the memorization of Scripture and hymns was still criticized in some quarters. *The Christian Recorder* published the view of one writer who questioned the practice of 'cramming children with hymns or verses',<sup>320</sup> a criticism challenging the method of memorizing lyrics and texts at the expense of understanding. Judging from Charlotte Maria Haven's defence of Scripture and hymn memorizing, it seems that some critics viewed hymn memorization as a dated technique.

The old-fashioned custom, if so it may be called, of committing to memory portions of the Scriptures and hymns, is one which ought not to be discontinued among our pupils. [...] It is well known how long the verses and hymns, committed in childhood remain fixed in the memory[.]<sup>321</sup>

The American Sunday School Union addressed the distinction between memorization and internalization. In *The Teacher Teaching: A Practical View of the Relations and Duties of the Sunday-School Teacher*, Frederick Adolphus Packard claimed that the success of Sunday School was not evident in statistics, such as attendance and the number of hymns and verses memorized, but in the godly character of the students.<sup>322</sup>

Even under criticism that surfaced, hymn memorization was retained, though its effectiveness was evaluated more closely than ever before. This was a new emphasis of accountability in teaching outcomes, rather than a diminution in the practice of memorization as Cross proposed. Indeed, hymn lyrics shared virtually the same

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<sup>319</sup> 'Maryland Sunday-Schools', *The American Sunday-School Teachers' Magazine*, VII (1830), 59-62 p. 62.

<sup>320</sup> 'How Early Can Children Come to Christ[?]', *The Christian Recorder*, 16 November 1861.

<sup>321</sup> Charlotte Maria Haven, *Beginning and Growth of the Christian Life; or, the Sunday-School Teacher* (Boston: Crosby, Nichols, and Company for the Sunday-School Society, 1855) p. 141.

<sup>322</sup> Frederick Adolphus Packard, *The Teacher Teaching: A Practical View of the Relations and Duties of the Sunday-School Teacher* (Philadelphia: American Sunday-School Union, 1861) p. 13, 14.

function as Bible verses; both were considered essential and authoritative sources for shaping the faith and behavior of children.

As the Sunday School became further established in American society, so did hymn memorization. Hymn memory contests were robust in the early-20<sup>th</sup> century and became increasingly organized. Such contests required of students an extensive familiarity of hymns evident in these instructions to Sunday School teachers.

Select fifty of the best hymns of the church that every one should know. Sing three or four of them each Sunday – planning so as to add a new one each Sunday. Give the names of composer of the hymns and music with a little history of the hymn. Encourage committing these hymns to memory. Plan a test at the end of six months which may be arranged in the form of a contest as follows: At least 25 hymns should be used to each member of the different classes, a blank with spaces for the name of the hymn, author, composer, and first line should be given – as many blanks as hymns. As the pianist plays the hymns each member is to fill in blanks. At close blanks are collected by classes and the class having the highest average in the test will be the winner.<sup>323</sup>

Another issue related to hymn memorization concerned the type of hymns memorized. One consideration was the need to memorize adult hymnody, identified in 'Teaching Children Rhymes'.

It is an error to confine children to the learning of children's hymns, because when they become older these will have lost much of their fitness. Why should we not fill our children's minds with the choicest evangelical hymns in the language? These they will remember after we are dead and gone. They should not merely be learned once and then left for others, but repeated again and again, and sung over in order to fix them in the memory, and to lay a basis for lasting associations. The old words and the old tune come back to us with indescribable tenderness. Let the pious mother, when causing her boy to learn some sacred song, say to herself, 'Perhaps, years hence, my son will remember the saving truth of this hymn, as having been taught by his mother.'<sup>324</sup>

Though the use and role of hymns in Sunday School may have been questioned and even challenged in some circles, the prevailing view of the International Sunday School Convention at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century considered hymns to be a valuable resource in Sunday School. This was reflected by Richard Hodge's recommendation that hymns be read responsively and that instruction on worship should include 'the history and meaning of hymns',<sup>325</sup> and by Louisiana superintendent Susan Morgan Juden who recommended that lessons 'be derived from the fundamental truths

<sup>323</sup> 'Church Forum', *Athens Messenger*, Friday 13 May 1927 p. 8.

<sup>324</sup> 'Teaching Children Rhymes', *Weekly Standard*, Wednesday 17 August 1864 p. 1.

<sup>325</sup> Hodge, 'Worship in the Sunday School', p. 43.

expressed either in Bible verse or hymns'.<sup>326</sup> Frank L. Brown, Chairman of the Intermediate Department Committee of the International Sunday School Association defined 'graded supplemental work as 'that which fits the Bible, hymns, and other necessary material to the life [of the scholar] as it develops from year to year and period to period.'<sup>327</sup> The Unitarian Sunday School Society published *Quarterly Lessons* based exclusively on hymns.<sup>328</sup> David C. Cook published *Our Sunday School Quarterly*, a curriculum that included hymns.<sup>329</sup>

*Efficiency in the Sunday School* was a systematic treatment of religious education for children. Written by Cope, author of *One Hundred Hymns You Ought to Know* (see pages 30 and 44 above), it is not surprising that his work was attentive and directive to the value and usage of hymns for children. Cope writes, 'The act of singing together teaches as much and as effectively as all the class-work. Think of the hymns! There are some we will remember as long as we live.'<sup>330</sup>

## 6.6 Opposition to Children's Hymns

While Sunday School hymns were examined for effectiveness during the mid-1800s, content and usage came under severe scrutiny soon afterward. Henry King Lewis, author of *The Child: Its Spiritual Nature*, charged Episcopalians and Presbyterians of 'indoctrinating their children through the medium of "Divine songs" with the theology of their respective churches.'<sup>331</sup> Lewis' chapter entitled, 'The Voice of the Professing Church Through Its Children's Hymns', was a thorough critique of 'the vestiges of patristic and mediaeval theology [that] float upon the melodies which little children are taught from the cradle to sing.'<sup>332</sup> Rev. William P. Merrill, pastor of the Sixth Presbyterian Church, expressed his disapproval of Sunday School hymns when addressing the 1906 Presbyterian Sunday School Institute. Dr. Merrill spoke on

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<sup>326</sup> Susan Morgan Juden, 'Supplemental Lessons', *Organized Sunday-School Work in America 1905-1908. Triennial Survey of Sunday-School Work Including the Official Report of the Twelfth International Sunday School Convention* (Chicago: The Executive Committee of the International Sunday-School Association, 1908) p. 243.

<sup>327</sup> Frank L. Brown, 'Intermediate Supplemental Work', *Organized Sunday-School Work in America 1905-1908. Triennial Survey of Sunday-School Work Including the Official Report of the Twelfth International Sunday School Convention* (Chicago: The Executive Committee of the International Sunday-School Association, 1908) p. 271.

<sup>328</sup> Rev. Henry G. Spaulding, *Quarterly Lessons on Forty Hymns* (Boston: John Wilson and Son, Cambridge University Press, 1887).

<sup>329</sup> Sherwood, p. 56.

<sup>330</sup> Henry F. Cope, *Efficiency in the Sunday School* (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1912) p. 114, 115.

<sup>331</sup> Lewis, p. 187.

<sup>332</sup> *Ibid.* p. 186, 187.

'Music in the Sunday School' and criticized hymns used in Protestant Sunday School as 'trivial, grotesque and frequently dangerous',<sup>333</sup> claiming that all evangelical hymns 'were absolutely unfit for the use of children in a Sunday school.'<sup>334</sup>

The profile of Sunday School hymns was brought into the national spotlight in the wake of Governor Woodrow Wilson's critique of *The Beautiful Isle of Somewhere*. As reported in the *Washington Post*, Governor Wilson<sup>335</sup> issued a serious indictment of the song following its performance by a choir of 6,000 children at his address to the Sunday School Superintendents Association of Trenton, New Jersey. Not only did Governor Wilson call the song 'silly and meaningless', he criticized Sunday School teaching methods that departed from biblical teachings. Taking aim at Sunday School hymns, Wilson claimed the lyrics 'do not adhere closely to the Bible'.<sup>336</sup> Wilson challenged his audience of superintendents that they were 'misleading the young' and advocated a return to psalmody in replacement of modern hymns, by appearance an argument grounded in the historical conflict pitting metrical psalms against hymns of human composure. As Wilson's father had served as a dean at Southwestern Theological Seminary and Wilson himself served as the President of Princeton University, his academic background in theology was appreciable.

Some clergy disagreed with Wilson's critique. Rev. Dr. George S. Duncan believed that 'silly' was too sweeping a term of hymnody, but he agreed in part with Wilson that 'a few up-to-date hymns stray too far from the Bible and its real teachings'.<sup>337</sup> Rev. Dr. J. Howard Wells responded that the Governor's address was in 'very bad taste and unjust'.<sup>338</sup> The Rev. Dr. P. A. Menzel conceded the theology of some hymns to be poor, but defended modern hymns, claiming many of them to be 'wonderfully beautiful and better than most of the old hymns'.<sup>339</sup> Governor Wilson's address spawned additional rebuttals in other American newspapers. In one article published in *The Mansfield News*, it was pointed out that the same song [*Beautiful Isle of Somewhere*] was thought worthy of being sung at President Garfield's funeral.<sup>340</sup>

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<sup>333</sup> 'Minister Says Sunday School Hymns Are Dangerous', *Oakland Tribune*, 21 March 1906 p. 9.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid.

<sup>335</sup> Woodrow Wilson served as Governor of New Jersey 1911-1913 and as President of the United States 1913-1921.

<sup>336</sup> 'Call Wilson Unjust: Clergymen Answer Criticism of Hymns', *Washington Post*, Wednesday 4 October 1911 p. 4.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid.

<sup>338</sup> Ibid.

<sup>339</sup> Ibid.

<sup>340</sup> 'The Isle of Somewhere', *The Mansfield News*, Tuesday 10 October 1911 p. 5.



The preoccupation with war vocabulary also came under the watchful eye of critics. Spurred on by *Battle Hymn of the Republic* and *Onward Christian Soldiers* (both popular militaristic songs featured in adult hymnals) battle imagery was common in children's songbooks and in some it was a dominant feature. In *Sunshine: Songs for Sunday School*, published in 1895 by Gabriel, militaristic themes were featured in almost 20% of the hymns. *The Christian Soldier*, *Soldiers of Christ*, and *We Are Little Soldiers* coupled with marching songs such as *We Are Marching*, *Marching On With Gladness*, *Marching Home*, encouraged children to spiritualize the role of soldier in following Jesus in battalion-like formation. Ira Sankey pushed the envelope further in his 1901 *Gems of Song for the Sunday School* including *Forward Christian Soldiers*; *A Soldier of the Cross*; *Marching On*; *Sound the Battle Cry*; *Soldiers of Zion*; and *Sunday School War-Cry*, along with the adult hymns *Onward Christian Soldiers* and *The Son of God Goes Forth to War*.

In hymns of this genre, Christ was typified as the captain and the Sunday School as his army. The song, *The Sunday School Army*, provides an example:

On we go with armor shining bright  
 With sword in hand to battle for the right  
 United in the service of the Lord  
 We're marching at our Captain's word  
 Valiant soldiers of the Lord are leading  
 Earnestly for help the church is pleading  
 Slowly backward the foe is receding  
 Forward march today<sup>341</sup>

Though the context of this song is the 'pleading church', the song title focuses attention on the Sunday School. While church and Sunday School could be referred to synonymously, it was the Sunday School as an arm of the church that garnered recognition as the drafting and training institution of the child-soldier. The dominance enjoyed by the Sunday School, especially in the area of new hymnody, was threatening to some church leaders.<sup>342</sup>

Militarism in children's songs drew harsh criticism from Sunday School superintendent L. R. Leipold, who asked, 'Can it be that Sunday school hymns,

<sup>341</sup> Gabriel, *Sunshine Songs for the Sunday School*. Hymn no. 13.

<sup>342</sup> Hobbs, p. 59, 60. Citing William J. Reynolds, Hobbs stated that ministers and administrators began to feel that Sunday School was a 'competitor', possibly drawing funds away from the general church. Hobbs argued that Sunday School was the first to popularize gospel hymns leading to a degree of polarization between church and Sunday School.

martial in spirit and tone, unwittingly breed war spirit in child minds?'<sup>343</sup> Leipold's concern was motivated by his analysis of twenty popular children's hymns used in American Sunday Schools. Leipold believed the songs to have 'an astounding emphasis on vocabularies abounding in fighting terms and unwittingly fostered a spirit of international ill-will.'<sup>344</sup> But Leipold's assessment was contested, reverends Frederick M. Eliot and Charles L. Grant sharply disagreeing. While Eliot conceded that most of the hymns taught in Sunday Schools had a militaristic quality, he believed that 'the message was distinct from war hymns' and addressed specifically concerns of the hymn, *Onward Christian Soldiers*.

I don't believe it tends to develop strong, militant Christians. Instead, it implies spiritual warfare rather than national warfare. It has an army of which Christ is the captain. It seems to me that is the right kind of an army.<sup>345</sup>

This view aligned with earlier teaching from Frederica Beard who, in 'Religious Instruction by Sunday-School Hymns', explained the pragmatic use of militaristic songs.

The children need bright, inspiring music. Watch a boy spontaneously sing, "Dare to be a Daniel," while his lips remains closed when other songs are sung. Here the heroic element appears. "Only an armor-bearer" is another of the same tone and effect.<sup>346</sup>

The renunciation of war language can be further understood in light of Marini's commentary that 'post-Civil War American Evangelicals spoke a dramatically altered hymnic language that expressed intimacy with Christ.'<sup>347</sup> While this is true, war language was so deeply embedded in hymnody that its critics were not successful in weeding it out. Given the argument represented by Rev. Eliot, militarism was more easily transposed to a figurative spiritual warfare, not unlike Isaac Watts' approach to war language in psalmody in which he spiritualized the enemies of Israel.<sup>348</sup>

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<sup>343</sup> 'Hymns in Church Not Militaristic, Pastors Declare', *La Crosse Tribune and Leader-Press*, Sunday 9 December 1934 p. 6.

<sup>344</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>345</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>346</sup> Beard, p. 21.

<sup>347</sup> Stephen A. Marini, 'From Classical to Modern: Hymnody and the Development of American Evangelicalism, 1737-1970', in Edith L. Blumhofer and Mark A. Noll (eds.), *Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land: Hymnody in the History of North American Protestantism* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2004), 1-38 p. 28.

<sup>348</sup> For example Psalm 18, 'While with sin and hell I fight'.

## 6.7 *The Prodigal Child: Moral Conduct Songs*

Sunday School hymnals and songbooks of the 19<sup>th</sup> century bear at least one of the characteristic marks of the Enlightenment: the social agenda of moral improvement. Hughes Oliphant Old attested to the expectation after the Enlightenment, that worship included a moral didactic thereby shaping the lives of worshipers to improve their contribution to society. Explained as ‘the service of worship’, it is contrasted with ‘worship as service’.<sup>349</sup> Though Old was not critical of this practice, he distinguished the result (from the activity of worship) as a ‘social benefit’.<sup>350</sup> This may be considered a specialized genre of hymnody that was not worship *per se*, but songs of conduct measured by Protestant ethics.

A dominant theme among these songs was ‘the prodigal’, derived from the parable of the son who squanders his inheritance and the forgiving father waiting for him to return home.<sup>351</sup> Dozens of children’s hymns<sup>352</sup> were written on the theme of ‘the prodigal’,<sup>353</sup> such as *The Prodigal’s Return*; *The Prodigal Child*; *Calling the Prodigal*; *The Prodigal’s Prayer*; *Come Now, Weary Prodigal*, and *The Prodigal Astray*, with at least eighteen versions bearing the same title of *The Prodigal Son*. Though ‘prodigal child’ versions may have addressed gendered exclusion, two songs recast the story directly to girls, *The Prodigal Daughter* and *The Prodigal Girl*.

The most printed prodigal hymn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was *The Returning Prodigal* written by Lydia H. Sigourney. The text was written in narrative style and concluded with angels celebrating,<sup>354</sup> an interpolation from The Parable of the Lost Coin.<sup>355</sup> Later versions would add a sixth verse that encouraged personal application.<sup>356</sup>

The long-lost son, with streaming eyes,  
From folly just awake,  
Reviews his wanderings with surprise;  
His heart begins to break.

<sup>349</sup> Hughes Oliphant Old, *Themes and Variations for a Christian Doxology: Some Thoughts on the Theology of Worship* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1992) p. 6.

<sup>350</sup> Ibid.

<sup>351</sup> Luke 15:11-31. The character of the older brother is not mentioned in the text of Sunday School songs.

<sup>352</sup> At least 80 songs from hymns published between 1830 and 1930 featured ‘prodigal’ in the title.

<sup>353</sup> While the term ‘prodigal’ refers to the extravagance of the younger son (*filius prodigus*) its meaning evolved in English language to suggest rebellion and wandering. The term ‘prodigal’ does not appear in the biblical text itself. Its first usage is credited to the *Vulgate*.

<sup>354</sup> The reaction of the oldest son is not mentioned, though the dialogue between the father and the oldest son makes a significant contribution to the parable (Luke 15:25-32).

<sup>355</sup> The closing text from the Parable of the Lost Coin was also featured in Arthur Sullivan’s oratorio, *The Prodigal Son*, though Sullivan’s oratorio was written later (first performed in 1869).

<sup>356</sup> O, let thy boundless mercy shine, On my benighted soul, Correct my passions, mend my heart, And all my fears control.

“I starve,” he cries, “nor can I bear, The famine in this land,  
 While servants of my Father share, The bounty of his hand.  
 With deep repentance I’ll return, And seek my Father’s face;  
 Unworthy to be called a son, I’ll ask a servant’s place.”  
 Far off the Father saw him move, In pensive silence mourn,  
 And quickly ran with arms of love, To welcome his return.  
 Through all the courts the tidings flew, and spread the joy around  
 The angels tuned their harps anew, the long-lost son is found!<sup>357</sup>

The song’s inclusion in the 1853 publication *Family and Social Melodies*, suggests that the song gained exposure beyond the Sunday School.

In *The Prodigal Call*, Mrs. Caroline Dana Howe set the parable in a dialogical context and spiritualized the biblical story for all children; the father represented God the Father, and the youngest child represented all children. Children were regarded culpable because of condition and action, a hermeneutical approach that rendered all children prodigal by nature and behavior.

O Prodigal! Come I am waiting, Am waiting and watching for thee  
 Come share in my love and my blessing, Till hunger for ever shall flee.  
 O Prodigal! Wasting thy substance, And starving while plenty is near  
 Why stay from the arms of thy Father, Thy Father to whom thou art dear?

Thy heart of its sin is repenting, Thy coming afar I behold  
 I hasten to give thee my blessing, My prodigal child to enfold.  
 O Prodigal, dead and yet living, Wherever on earth thou may’st be  
 Whatever thy sins and thy errors, God still holds a blessing for thee.

[Refrain]

Come, Come, return to thy home  
 child of my care, there’s bread and to spare.<sup>358</sup>

Eminent hymn writer and hymnal editor Charles Gabriel, author of *I Stand Amazed (How Marvelous, How Wonderful)* wrote the children’s hymn *God is Calling the Prodigal*, probably the most printed song of this type written in the early-20<sup>th</sup> century.

God is calling the prodigal, come without delay  
 Hear, O hear Him calling, calling now for thee  
 Tho’ you’ve wandered so far from His presence, come today  
 Hear His loving voice calling still

Patient, loving and tenderly still the Father pleads  
 Hear, O hear Him calling, calling now for thee  
 O return while the Spirit in mercy intercedes

<sup>357</sup> Baron Stow and S. F. Smith (eds.), *The Psalmist, a New Collection of Hymns for the Use of Baptist Churches* (Boston, Mass.: Gould, Kendall & Lincoln, 1843) p. 253, 254.

<sup>358</sup> Rev. Robert Lowry and W. Howard Doane, *Brightest and Best. A Choice of New Songs, Duets, Choruses, Invocation and Benediction Hymns, for the Sunday School and Meetings of Prayer and Praise* (New York and Chicago: Biglow & Main, 1875).

Hear His loving voice calling still

Come, there's bread in the house of thy Father, and to spare

Hear, O hear Him calling, calling now for thee

Lo! the table is spread and the feast is waiting there

Hear His loving voice calling still<sup>359</sup>

[Refrain]

Calling now for thee, O weary prodigal come

Calling now for thee, O weary prodigal, come

Other songs such as *Do No Sinful Action*, *Ever Hold to the Right*, and *Happy Are They That Keep His Commandments* served to reinforce the precept of moral uprightness. Marianna C. Brown testified to the belief that music and hymns were helpful in keeping children distracted from bad influences.<sup>360</sup> Moral conduct songs warned against association with evil and encouraged children to assume a role in spiritual warfare. *Do No Sinful Action* depicted wicked spirits luring children into sin.

There's a wicked spirit watching 'round you still

And he tries to tempt us, into harm and ill

List not to the tempter, tho' 'tis hard for you

To resist the evil, and the good to do<sup>361</sup>

*We Are Little Soldiers*, a song that encouraged children to fight against Satan, reinforced the power of hymnody as a type of spiritual weapon.

Satan will entrap us if we don't look out

When we see him coming we raise our army shout

We are little soldiers but we know the right

When the foe is near us we pray and sing with might<sup>362</sup>

Sherwood took issue with the forcefulness of lyrics respecting the doctrine of sin, criticizing as 'a horrible picture' the Sunday School songs that demonized the motives of children as 'Cain-like'.

But, oh, what a horrible sight

When children with anger and rage

Like lions will quarrel and fight

While none can their anger assuage

Oh, Satan is then very nigh

Delighted that thus they have shown

A murdering spirit and why

Because tis kin to his own<sup>363</sup>

<sup>359</sup> D. B. Towner and E. O. Excell (eds.), *Famous Gospel Hymns* (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1907) p. 80.

<sup>360</sup> Brown, *Sunday-School Movements in America* p. 203.

<sup>361</sup> Gabriel, *Sunshine Songs for the Sunday School*. Hymn no. 89.

<sup>362</sup> Compare the instruction of this hymn with the text of Revelation 12:10,11 in which believers conquer 'the accuser' (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb and their testimony.

## 6.8 *I'm a Young Abstainer: Temperance Songs*

Prohibition was reinforced in hymnals and songbooks with greater measure than any other social issue (including abolitionism). The extreme action against drinking establishments in the United States at the time was understandable. A chronic social crisis of national proportion had emerged through widespread alcohol abuse. Abstinence was associated with Christian sanctification, and whiskey and all its evils were attributed directly to Lucifer and the hosts of rum.<sup>364</sup> Similar to moral conduct songs (section 6.7 above) that sometimes introduced the figures of Satan and evil spirits, demonology was reinforced in temperance hymns. One temperance song warned the child that a demon was near the cup and that those who drank were 'blind to his snare'. The lyrics portrayed a graphic image: 'The fangs of the serpent are hid in the bowl, deeply the poison will enter thy soul.'<sup>365</sup> Prolific hymnist Rev. R. Lowry, renowned for *Christ Arose, Shall We Gather at the River*, and *What Can Wash Away My Sin?*, also wrote, *There's a Demon in the Glass – Dash it Down!* These fear-based lyrics strengthen Marianna C. Brown's case that some children's songs were indeed 'startling'. Henry Lewis criticized the theology of children's hymns, horrified that the individual child was being taught 'to sing songs that, if realised as a fact, would crush its little heart.'<sup>366</sup>

Other than those hymnals dedicated exclusively to temperance, few hymnals gave as much space to temperance songs as the *New American Sunday School Hymn Book*. This hymnal, that included 20 temperance songs, merits particular attention.<sup>367</sup> While most children's hymnals were printed by individuals and, in some cases by denominations, the *New American Sunday School Hymn Book* was published for national distribution by the American Sunday School Union (with an overseeing committee made up of pastors and Sunday School superintendents from New York carefully discerning its contents). In presenting the hymnal as remarkable in simplicity, well-suited for Sunday School and varied in its arrangements, the editorial

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<sup>363</sup> Sherwood, p. 39. Russell Sanjek traces this hymn to Rowland Hill's *Divine hymns attempted in easy language for the use of children. Designed as an appendix to Dr. Watts's Divine Songs*. See Russell Sanjek, *American Popular Music and Its Business: The First Four Hundred Years* (2; New York: Oxford University Press, 1988) p. 201.

<sup>364</sup> H. S. Taylor and Dr. J. B. Herbert, *The Battle Cry. A New Collection of Temperance & Prohibition Songs* (Cincinnati: Fillmore Bros., Publishers, 1887) p. 6.

<sup>365</sup> *The American Sunday School Hymn Book*, p. 318.

<sup>366</sup> Lewis, p. 186.

<sup>367</sup> In contrast, children's hymnals such as the *Epworth Hymnal*, *Sunshine Songs for Sunday School* and *Brightest and Best*, only included one or two temperance songs.

board provided this disclaimer regarding appropriateness: ‘As they are hymns for the Sunday-school, with the exception of a few on temperance, every hymn can be sung with perfect propriety on the Lord’s day.’<sup>368</sup>

The temperance movement and Sunday School hymnody had a relationship of reciprocal influence: The temperance movement influenced hymn writers and, in turn, hymn writers wrote temperance songs that spurred on the temperance movement. Sherwood argued that Sunday School music was modified as a result of the temperance movement, the temperance movement ‘reach[ing] into the heart of the Sunday school music.’<sup>369</sup>

Hobbs considered *We Shall Never Be Drunkards* to have been a characteristic example of temperance hymns in *Songs of the Bible for Sunday School*.<sup>370</sup> The *New American Sunday School Hymnal* included a selection of temperance songs that demonized the drunkard. *I’m a Young Abstainer* was thorough in its indictment of the drunkard’s character.

The drunkard is a foolish man, he staggers down the streets  
And he is pointed to with scorn by every one he meets [...]

The drunkard is a careless man, he throws his cash away  
He does not save his money up against an evil day [...]

The drunkard is a cruel man and thus we often see  
His wretched wife and family in rags and misery [...]

The song had seven verses in total in which the drunkard was defined by his wickedness, the consequences of his depravity upon himself, and the misery of his loved ones described in certain terms. Not only was the drunkard a target of the temperance hymn; social drinkers were also denounced.

And moderate drinkers too, the voice addresses you.  
Come, go along, you surely are to blame, while in the drinking train  
For alcohol has slain His thousands strong.<sup>371</sup>

Children’s hymnals were not dedicated equally to the social message of temperance. Bishop John Heyl Vincent insisted that lessons on temperance be kept to a

<sup>368</sup> *The American Sunday School Hymn Book*. Preface.

<sup>369</sup> Sherwood, p. 40. Sherwood also recognized the influence of the Civil War.

<sup>370</sup> Hobbs, p. 71.

<sup>371</sup> *The American Sunday School Hymn Book*, p. 314. This is an interesting adaptation of 1 Samuel 18:7 ‘As they danced, they sang: “Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands.”’ (NIV)

minimum,<sup>372</sup> a measure that may have influenced his limited use of temperance hymns. For instance, the 1885 *Epworth Hymnal* edited by Vincent, testified to his commitment to Christ-oriented hymnody. In addition to having 40 songs devoted to the person of Christ (which in itself is a very high number among children's hymnals) there were many songs of salvation and the Christian life. Vincent's expectations of the Sunday School superintendent included the role of selecting hymns about Jesus for the children to sing. In regard to temperance songs, the *Epworth Hymnal* includes only four and, of note, the lyrics are inherently different than the common fare of temperance songs.<sup>373</sup> In contrast to the *New American Sunday School Hymnal*, the *Epworth Hymnal* did not publish songs demeaning to 'drinkers', but songs that were motivational toward a moral lifestyle, avoiding the condemning language evident in songs used by the *New American Sunday School Hymnal* and temperance hymnals. *We'll Help the Cause Along* by W. H. Doane serves to demonstrate:

We must work and pray together, Working, praying for the right  
 We must fight against the evil, Till we conquer by our might [...]  
 In defence of truth and justice, Like a bulwark we must stand  
 And the soul that's full of courage, Will give courage to the hand [...]

*The Temperance Songster* (1867)<sup>374</sup> and *The Battle Cry* (1887)<sup>375</sup> are illustrative of hymnals dedicated to temperance and prohibition. These hymn books reflected the mounting educational philosophy of the late-19<sup>th</sup> century for, soon after their publication, both the International Lesson System and the Bible Study Union Graded Lesson System published *Temperance Lessons*.<sup>376</sup> This order of events suggests that the disapproval of drinking was conveyed to children through hymnody in advance of Sunday School curriculum. It follows that the success of the temperance movement realized in the early-20<sup>th</sup> century may be due, in part,<sup>377</sup> to a half-century precedent of

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<sup>372</sup> John H. Vincent, *The Modern Sunday-School* (New York; Cincinnati: Hunt & Easton; Cranston & Curts, 1887) p. 46, 297. Vincent denied requests by two individuals – Mr. B and Mrs. L – who are 'bent on giving up the regular lesson once a month for a temperance lesson.' Vincent indicated that Sunday School is for the purpose of teaching 'fifty-two Bible lessons a year'. Coupled with his conviction that Sunday School songs should be about Jesus Christ, it is probably fair to say that Vincent endorsed the temperance message but would not prioritize it above Bible lessons and songs about Jesus.

<sup>373</sup> Many temperance songs were actually prohibition songs. They tended to demonize both alcohol and the drunkard.

<sup>374</sup> Nathaniel Saunders, *The Temperance Songster. A Collection of Songs and Hymns for All Temperance Societies* (Rhode Island: Handy & Higgins, 1867).

<sup>375</sup> Taylor and Herbert.

<sup>376</sup> Brown, *Sunday-School Movements in America* p. 84, 163.

<sup>377</sup> There were other significant influences, especially lobbyist organizations, e.g. The American Temperance Society (est. 1826), The Independent Order of Good Templars (est. 1850), The Prohibition Party (est. 1867), The National Woman's Christian Temperance Union (est. 1874), etc.



temperance hymnody in Sunday School.<sup>378</sup> The generation raised on temperance songs in Sunday School was later positioned as adults to support the political agenda against alcohol that eventually led to the United States government passing legislation affecting prohibition from 1919-1933.<sup>379</sup>

So let each thoughtful child  
 drink of this fountain mild  
 from early youth  
 Then shall the song we raise  
 Be heard in future days  
 Ours be the pleasant ways  
 Of peace and truth<sup>380</sup>

In *Sweet Freedom's Song*, authors Robert J. Branham and Stephen J. Hartnett emphasize Lowell Mason's use of music 'as a persuasive weapon, particularly in the realm of moral reform, where psalms and hymns were popular.'<sup>381</sup> Ian Bradley identified temperance hymns (in purpose unlike liturgical and evangelistic hymns) as 'a distinct hymnodic genre' that 'promoted social reform'.<sup>382</sup> In this sense, temperance hymns and songs contributed to the societal momentum against alcohol abuse and consumption. Societies such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union (est. 1873) made extensive use of hymnody, Ira Sankey recounting how hymns were effective in converting drunkards (see section 9.7). Hymns carried the message in a memorable form, deepened the conviction of singers, and struck the conscience of saloon proprietors. *Overthrow of Alcohol*, a popular temperance song that captured the real goal of the temperance movement, was first printed in the 1860 *New American Sunday School Hymnal*. This song, and others like it, carried the manifold pledges of abstinence, 'I'll sign the temperance pledge', 'We shall never be drunkards', and 'The murderous cup I'll drink no more'. Another children's hymn was used for proselytization, 'Sign our pledge and sing our song'. In this way children's hymns shaped the credo of the temperance crusade as a fixed-text doctrinal source.

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<sup>378</sup> Obviously the use of temperance hymns went beyond the Sunday School, e.g. Temperance rallies made use of temperance songs, public lobbyists sang hymns and temperance songs, etc.

<sup>379</sup> It would be interesting to examine children's songbooks published by Canadian Sunday schools in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century for the inclusion temperance songs. See for example, *The Wave of Sunday-School Song* (Toronto: Methodist Book Room, 1878). This hymnal does not have any temperance songs.

<sup>380</sup> *The American Sunday School Hymn Book*, p. 325.

<sup>381</sup> Robert J. Branham and Stephen J. Hartnett, *Sweet Freedom's Song: "My Country 'Tis of Thee" And Democracy in America* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002) p. 8.

<sup>382</sup> Bradley, p. 187.

## 6.9 *Work for the Night is Coming: Songs of Duty*

The concept of work was a leading theme in children's hymnals, *Work for the Night is Coming* setting the standard. In the hymn's three verses, the word 'work' is used 16 times and the word 'labor' once.<sup>383</sup>

Work, for the night is coming, Work through the morning hours;  
Work while the dew is sparkling, Work 'mid springing flowers;  
Work while the day grows brighter, Under the glowing sun;  
Work, for the night is coming, When man's work is done.

Work, for the night is coming, Work through the sunny noon;  
Fill brightest hours with labor, Rest comes sure and soon.  
Give every flying minute, Something to keep in store;  
Work, for the night is coming, When man works no more.

Work, for the night is coming, Under the sunset skies;  
While their bright tints are glowing, Work, for daylight flies.  
Work till the last beam fadeth, Fadeth to shine no more;  
Work, while the night is darkening, When man's work is o'er.

This hymn shares 53<sup>rd</sup> placement in the most printed hymns established by Marini<sup>384</sup> and is printed in over 800 hymnals published between the years 1860 and 1930. Stead included this hymn in his work *Hymns That Have Helped* and recounted an educator's anecdote concluding that *Work for the Night is Coming* was the only song in Sankey's collection that could be sung in public schools and 'wouldn't give offence to a Secularist conscience'.<sup>385</sup> Though the text makes no mention of deity and doesn't require a Christian context, the hymn's meaning was indeed related to Christian teaching. One Sunday School lesson entitled, 'James – A Great Christian Leader' provided a strong admonition to students.

If Paul is the apostle of faith, Peter of hope, and John of love, James is the apostle of works. [...] Behold the Judge standeth before the door. So this apostle of work would sing to us, 'Work for the night is coming, when man's work is o'er.'<sup>386</sup>

The song was also capable of evoking deep sentiment, as in the case of a dying child singing the words as a last witness to her father.

[A] father, who, though for a long time a professor of religion, had grown sadly delinquent in Christian duty, arose with many confessions, asking for

<sup>383</sup> Perhaps Weberian analysis would detect a correlation between the Calvinist virtues of work and conduct, and the spirit of Capitalism.

<sup>384</sup> Stephen A. Marini, 'American Protestant Hymns Project: A Ranked List of Most Frequently Printed Hymns, 1737-1960', in Richard J. Mouw and Mark A. Noll (eds.), *Wonderful Words of Life* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004) p. 257.

<sup>385</sup> Stead, *Hymns That Have Helped* p. 219.

<sup>386</sup> 'James - a Great Christian Leader', *Kingsport Times*, 20 September 1935 p. 3.

prayers. He stated with a tremulous voice that his little daughter's Sunday-school hymns, sung with her dying breath, *Stand up for Jesus, Dare to do right, Even me*, and *Work, for the night is coming*, had awakened deep repentance, caused a renewal of his vows, and filled his heart with a new peace and trust in Jesus.<sup>387</sup>

There are many such memorials of pious children that describe their last hours as a time of singing or reciting hymn lyrics, providing a source of comfort to the child and their loved ones.

In *Annotations Upon Popular Hymns*, Charles Seymour Robinson correlated work with the theme of 'judgment' based on John 9:4.

The poem is an earnest call to activity, suggested by the saying of Jesus, "the night cometh, when no man can work." It is for us, therefore, to use to its utmost the time that is left. There is found among the children's hymns one concerning "a starless crown." Who wants to wear such?<sup>388</sup>

*Work for the Night is Coming* may serve to illustrate what Hughes Oliphant Old categorized 'worship as service',<sup>389</sup> what Frederica Beard considered to be 'a hymn about a subject',<sup>390</sup> and what Richard Hodge classified as hymns that addressed 'no one in particular' or 'exhortations to fellow-beings'.<sup>391</sup> This hymn was representative of many work songs of the era and confirms that 'work' – be it seen as an obligation, virtue, or otherwise – was a subject of import.

## 6.10 *We Won't Give Up the Bible: Singing about Scripture*

The mandate to instill in children a respect for and understanding of the Bible was important to virtually all Sunday School educators. Experiencing the mounting incursion of higher criticism and pluralism, American Protestantism was threatened by scholarship that brought the authoritative status of its sacred text into question, thus requiring an apologetic of its Scriptures.

Mark A. Noll identified the post-Civil War period as a time when reverence for the Bible was under scrutiny of 'academic attitudes'.<sup>392</sup> In this milieu, a number of organizations emerged whose objective was singularly focused on Bible reading. The

<sup>387</sup> 'Songs for the Children', *The Christian Recorder*, 1868.

<sup>388</sup> Charles Seymour Robinson, *Annotations Upon Popular Hymns* (Cleveland, Ohio: F. M. Barton, 1893) p. 391.

<sup>389</sup> Old, p. 6.

<sup>390</sup> Beard, p. 22.

<sup>391</sup> Hodge, 'Worship in the Sunday School', p. 46.

<sup>392</sup> Mark A. Noll, *Protestants in America*, eds. Jon Butler and Harry S. Stout (Religion in American Life; Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000) p. 85.

International Bible Reading Association, established in 1882, promoted daily Bible reading for Sunday School teachers and students.<sup>393</sup> The American Society of Religious Education was established in 1894 with the task of training Sunday School teachers and improving methods of Bible study.<sup>394</sup> Likewise, American Protestantism took steps to instill in children a high view of Scripture through Sunday School and its music. In songs such as *Skeptic Spare That Book*, argument is in the air.

Skeptic, spare that book, Touch not a single leaf  
Nor on its pages look, With eyes of unbelief  
'Twas my forefather's stay, In the hour of agony  
Skeptic go thy way, And let the Bible be

*We'll Not Give Up the Bible*, printed in over 80 hymnals from 1850 to 1920, suggested that rejection of the Bible was a significant threat.

We'll not give up the Bible, God's holy Book of truth  
The blessed staff of hoary age, The guide of early youth  
The sun that sheds a glorious light, O'er every dreary road  
The voice that speak a Saviour's love, And calls us home to God

It is hard to imagine children singing these songs with a clear understanding of the gravity of the situation; nonetheless, songs that defended the Bible became part of their Sunday School repertoire.

Already in 1860, fifty years before *The Fundamentals* was written in answer of biblical criticism, *The New American Sunday School Hymn Book* was publishing songs that supported the nature and authority of the Bible. Its thematic categories included the comfort and instruction of the Bible, as well as its perfection and prized status. These attributes of the Bible were a favorite theme among hymn writers. Chief among them was an appeal to the Bible as holy. Children learned to praise the Bible for its holiness and divinity. Phrases such as 'Holy Bible, book divine!', 'My Bible, 'tis a book divine', 'Holy Bible, mines of treasures', and 'God's holy Book of truth' were commonly affirmed in children's hymns. Similar to the use of hymns in the temperance movement that doctrinalized abstinence, hymns that under girded biblicism served to doctrinalize biblical infallibility. Inasmuch as children's songs captured theological phrases, the Protestant dogma of biblical inerrancy was versified to serve a creedal function.

Further to doctrinal affirmation of the Bible's authority, children sang songs of heart-felt expression. Emotional attachment was nurtured in songs such as *Holy Bible, Well*

<sup>393</sup> Brown, *Sunday-School Movements in America* p. 166.

<sup>394</sup> *Ibid.* p. 168.

*I Love Thee, O Blessed Bible and Precious Words*. In the latter, children expressed determination to increase both their reading and love of Scripture. Ultimately, hymns reinforced the belief in the Bible and encouraged children to pledge their loyalty to obeying its truth.

### 6.11 *Death of a Scholar: Singing about Dying*

The topic of death was common to Sunday School literature and hymns throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In his book *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920* Paul S. Boyer attested to the widespread use of death stories.

Sunday school literature was drenched with grim reminders of the imminence of death, often including graphic narratives of Sunday school children who met violent or unexpected ends.<sup>395</sup>

Richard Morse Hodge claimed that Sunday School hymns were ‘too engrossed as a rule with the bliss of eternal life’.<sup>396</sup> Frederica Beard cited Mrs. George Archibald’s disapproval of songs that encouraged a dysfunctional desire to die.

As children are not, ordinarily, about to die, shall their spiritual songs be principally about heaven and expressive of an intensive longing to go there? Yet, when we take the pains to notice, we find in Sunday-school hymns a vast amount of rhyme, tune, time, and measure devoted to chanting the desolation of life, the longing for death, and a submissive waiting for release and glory. What could be more unnatural?<sup>397</sup>

Sherwood proposed that death and the promise of heaven were dominant themes of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Sunday School. She supported her observation with examples drawn from *Apples of Gold for the Sunday School* published in 1890.<sup>398</sup> Though Sherwood’s sampling of hymnals was selective, her observation had merit.

*Death of a Scholar* was a dominant hymn between the years 1836-1870 and was printed in the 1860 American Sunday-School Union hymn book.

A mourning class, a vacant seat  
Tell us that one we loved to meet  
Will join our youthful throng no more  
Till all these changing scenes are o’er  
No more that voice we loved to hear  
Shall fill her sister’s listening ear  
No more its tones shall join to swell

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<sup>395</sup> Paul S. Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1978) p. 44.

<sup>396</sup> Hodge, ‘Worship in the Sunday School’, p. 46.

<sup>397</sup> In Beard, p. 22.

<sup>398</sup> Sherwood, p. 37.

The songs that of a Saviour tell

That welcome face, that sparkling eye  
 And sprightly form must buried lie  
 Deep in the cold and silent gloom  
 The rayless night that fills the tomb  
 God tells us by this mortal death  
 How vain and fleeting is our breath  
 And bids our souls prepare to meet  
 The trial of his judgment seat<sup>399</sup>

Similar songs were published under various titles: *On the Death of a Female Scholar*, *Death of a Young Girl*, *Death of an Infant*,<sup>400</sup> and *Death of a Superintendent*.<sup>401</sup>

Songs about heaven tended to focus on the better life free of pain and sorrow. *Beyond the Swelling Flood* promoted the phrase, 'we'll meet to part no more'. *There is a Paradise of Rest*, emphasized the joys and rewards in the 'realms of endless day'. *Just Beyond the Silent River* anticipated the day when loved ones would be reunited, mansions plentiful and, in that land so bright and fair, the hope to 'see and be like Jesus.' *When We Meet Safe at Home* was a celebration of singing in the palace of the Lord and King. Collectively these songs, and many others like them, provided children with a future hope.

## 6.12 *I Want to be an Angel: Songs of Heaven*

If songs of sin and death were alarming for Sunday School scholars, songs of angels may have provided a counterbalance of peace and comfort. While the backdrop of the Christmas story provided a glimpse into the activity of angels, advent songs were only few among many songs that featured the nature and work of angels. *Bright Angels* told of angels that served Paul and Silas, Daniel, Peter and Jesus. The chorus lyrics brought the presence and activity of angels into the present reality of children:

Bright angels, sweet angels  
 Are watching from above  
 Oh, angels, sweet angels  
 Are messengers of love

<sup>399</sup> *The American Sunday School Hymn Book*, p. 226, 227.

<sup>400</sup> J. G. Adams and E.H. Chapin, *Hymns for Christian Devotion Especially Adapted to the Universalist Denomination* (Boston: Abel Tompkins, 1853).

<sup>401</sup> Hobbs, p. 71.

This song, written by Charles H. Gabriel, was given particular attention in *Little Branches* and *Sunshine Songs for the Sunday School*. In a footnote, special performance instructions were provided for the teacher.

*Bright Angels* should be sung by six little girls appropriately dressed, and arranged conspicuously upon the platform. Let six floral wreaths or crowns be prepared, each having one of the letters contained in the word 'Angels' fixed upon it. Immediately after singing her stanza, let the appropriate crown be placed upon each girl's head. All the school should sing in chorus.<sup>402</sup>

*Living in the Sunshine* depicted an obedient child as 'angelic'.

Living in the sunshine, Living in the light  
Not a single shadow, All around is bright  
Doing deeds of kindness, Speaking words of love  
Like the happy angels, In their home above.<sup>403</sup>

In *Faith is the Victory*, a song of spiritual warfare, angels were depicted as ever-present.

Out to the conflict, we go not alone  
Angels of God are close at hand  
For he that endureth the promise secureth  
Faith claims the conq'ring heav'nly band<sup>404</sup>

*The Angel of the Lord* adapted from Psalm 34:7<sup>405</sup> assured children that the Angel of the Lord was ever near 'to those who keep His word with holy fear'.<sup>406</sup> The protective role of angels is evident in other songs, including *Guardian Angels*, *Bear Me Up Angels*, and *The Sure Refuge*. But the most popular 'angel song' was *I Want to be an Angel*.<sup>407</sup>

Miss Sidney P. Gill wrote *I Want to be an Angel* following the death of one of her Sunday School students. Rev. Dr. Armitage of New York gave an account in his lecture, 'Our Female Hymn Writers'.

In the Sunday-school of Dr. Joel Parker's church she taught the infant class. She had been teaching a lesson on angels, when a little child said, 'I want to be an angel.' A few days later, the child died, the hymn was written for that Sunday-school to sing on her death, and it has struck a chord in every child's heart since 1845. It was composed April 19, 1845, on the day of the death of a little girl name Annie Louisa Farrand[.]<sup>408</sup>

<sup>402</sup> Gabriel, *Sunshine Songs for the Sunday School*. Hymn no. 87.

<sup>403</sup> Ibid. Hymn no. 2.

<sup>404</sup> Ibid. Hymn no. 18.

<sup>405</sup> 'The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them.' (NIV)

<sup>406</sup> *The Angel of the Lord*, verse 2, by Mrs. Annie S. Hawkes.

<sup>407</sup> Also titled *Longing After Heaven*.

<sup>408</sup> Hezekiah Butterworth, *The Story of the Hymns; or Hymns That Have a History: An Account of the Origin of Hymns of Personal Religious Experience* (New York: American Tract Society, 1875) p. 150.

But Gill's song drew particularly strong criticism. Addressing the National Convention of the Religious Educational Society, the prominent Chicago educator Francis Wayland Parker (founder of the Chicago Institute) claimed the song to be 'essentially false in doctrine'. The *Galveston Daily News* carried the headline, 'Francis Wayland Parker's Attack Causes a Stir in Religious Circles.'<sup>409</sup> *The Atlantic Constitution* heralded the affair as an attack on the hymn book.<sup>410</sup> Henry King Lewis expressed concern that the song was sometimes used to instill fear, as children were 'occasionally reminded that the devil has *his* angels too'.<sup>411</sup> Another critic, citing Sabine Baring-Gould's<sup>412</sup> *Curious Myths*, claimed it to be a pagan hymn founded on an Aryan myth. The theological argument constructed against the song alleged it to be a significant deviation from normative Judeo-Christian thought.

In Judaic and Christian doctrine the angel creation is distinct from that of human beings, and a Jew or Catholic would as little dream of confusing the distinct conception of angel and soul, as believing in metempsychosis.<sup>413</sup>

Perhaps the writer of this diatribe was not fully aware of the extensive publication that this hymn enjoyed. By 1887, *I Want to be an Angel* had been published by many denominations, including Presbyterian, Moravian, Methodist Episcopal, Dutch Reformed, Evangelical Lutheran, Southern Baptist, Church of God in America, Mennonite, and Roman Catholic!<sup>414</sup>

In an address to the International Convention of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew<sup>415</sup> held in Buffalo, the Right Rev. Dr. Thomas U. Dudley (Bishop of Kentucky) made his opposition plain.

The responsibility of manhood is to accomplish all that is possible to accomplish. I would never tolerate that hymn *I Want to be an Angel* in any Sunday school that I had anything to do with. I don't want to be an angel; I want to be a man.<sup>416</sup>

In a sermon, the Rev. Frank DeWitt Talmage used *I Want to be an Angel* to illustrate a mistaken perspective held by some Christians.

<sup>409</sup> 'Sunday School Songs. Francis Wayland Parker's Attack Causes a Stir in Religious Circles', *Galveston Daily News*, 28 July 1901 p. 11.

<sup>410</sup> 'Attacking the Hymn Book', *The Atlanta Constitution*, 11 July 1901 p. 6.

<sup>411</sup> Lewis, p. 189.

<sup>412</sup> Also the author of *Onward Christian Soldiers*.

<sup>413</sup> 'Religious Readings', *Eau Claire Daily Free Press*, 3 October 1887 p. 4.

<sup>414</sup> *I Want to be an Angel* was printed in over 80 hymnals between the years 1854 and 1923.

<sup>415</sup> Established in 1883, the International Convention of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew was a young men's group affiliated with the Methodist Episcopal Church.

<sup>416</sup> 'Brotherhood of St. Andrew', *New York Times*, 16 October 1897 p. 9.



Some people are spiritually farsighted. They cannot see God's blessings near at hand. They will sing with great gusto, "I want to be an angel and with the angels stand," but they never thank God for the present opportunities of Christian work and for the blessings of earthly Christian fellowship here and now.<sup>417</sup>

Biographer Frederic Cook Morehouse wrote confidently of Dr. John Henry Hobart's rejection of *I Want to be an Angel* on theological grounds. As New York Bishop, Hobart addressed a controversy surrounding the expunging of Christ's descent into Hell from the Apostles' Creed, a theological debate regarding 'the doctrine of the Intermediate State'.

Dr. Hobart was himself a musician, and opposed vigorously the frivolous music which was then too widely sung in the Church. [...] The popular ideas upon this subject [the Intermediate State of Paradise] were very hazy. That misleading phrase, "he has gone to be an angel," or "gone to heaven," with the hymn: *I want to be an angel*, represented the popular belief. Bishop Hobart clearly showed how false these ideas were, and taught the Church's true belief of the Intermediate State of Paradise.<sup>418</sup>

In her work *Religious Instruction by Sunday-School Hymns*, Frederica Beard argued that songs should be 'true stories'<sup>419</sup> and should not be selected as 'a catering to mere likings'.<sup>420</sup> Beard cited *I Want to be an Angel* to illustrate her concern that music, as 'an instrument of power for evangelism and Christian education', should be used with 'the greatest care'.<sup>421</sup>

In the selection of songs we need to remember the child's plane of experience, so that in singing, as in speaking, he may say what is true – true to him. Does a child really mean what he says when he sings, *I want to be an angel*?<sup>422</sup>

In direct reaction to 'the angel hymn', at least two counter-lyrics were composed. Henry King Lewis composed *A Boy's Hymn* as 'recoil from the angel type of hymn'.<sup>423</sup> The poem entitled, *I Would Not Be An Angel*, was published anonymously in the *Christian Recorder* in 1863.

I want to join the ransomed, And with the ransomed stand,  
A crown upon my forehead, A harp within my hand.

<sup>417</sup> Rev. Frank DeWitt Talmage, 'Talmage Sermon', *Indiana Progress*, Wednesday 14 February 1906 p. 8.

<sup>418</sup> Frederic Cook Morehouse, 'John Henry Hobart, Bishop of New York', *Some American Churchmen* <<http://anglicanhistory.org/usa/fcmorehouse1892/03.html>>, accessed 27 November 2007.

<sup>419</sup> Beard, p. 21.

<sup>420</sup> *Ibid.* p. 18.

<sup>421</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>422</sup> *Ibid.* p. 22.

<sup>423</sup> Verse 1. I want to live to be a man, Both good and useful all I can  
To speak the truth, be just and brave, My fellow men to help and save.  
Verse 2. I want to live that I may show, My love to Jesus here below  
In human toil to take my share, And thus for angel's work prepare.

I want to join their chorus, My voice I want to raise,  
And swell the song of victory, To my Redeemer's praise.

- Angels look on in wonder; They cannot join that song,  
But [sic] in silent rapture, While saints the notes prolong.  
Make me a saint in glory; Oh! Let me see thy face,  
Like those who, now before thee, Repeat thy wondrous grace.

The [sic] cast their crowns before thee; They hail thee, Saviour, King,  
And while they thus adore thee, New praises strive to sing.  
And then through endless ages, The blissful rapture grows,  
And thus through endless ages, Thy love unchanging flows.

I would not be an angel - For them no Saviour died;  
No, rather let me glory, In Christ the crucified.  
His love shall draw me nearer, Than angels overcome;  
At his right hand he'll place me, In our eternal home.<sup>424</sup>

Opposition to *I Want to be an Angel* demonstrated the theological distinction between angels and humanity and the priority given to theological debate. The popular angelology conveyed in *I Want to be an Angel* was considered a bona fide threat to established doctrine of angels and humans.

Despite the disapproval by Parker, Dudley, Talmage, Hobart, and many others, the song could not be wrested from its place atop children's favorite hymns. In her autobiography, Women's Christian Temperance Union president Frances Willard described a Sunday School class in which she led the singing, and noted the children's familiarity with the song *I Want to be an Angel*. Despite 'its incongruity', the children's singing shifted Willard's first reaction from laughing, to crying.<sup>425</sup> Louis F. Benson lent the hymn credibility when he weighed in with his 1924 article 'I Want to Be an Angel' published in the *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society*. Benson expressed denominational solidarity with its writer Miss Sidney Gill, a fellow Presbyterian. Benson defended the integrity of the hymn's composition being a memorial to Miss Gill's Sunday School student. Benson took pains to defend the theology of the song.

Miss Gill's verses are pleasant and melodious [...] As to their theology [...] a good deal of wit of cheap character has been expressed upon it, with the view of emphasizing the impracticability of transition from a human to an angelic nature; [...] So far as children are concerned they take their theology from their teachers, and are quite incurably romantic. And if their teachers of to-day should set before them graphic versions of white-robed angels, with

<sup>424</sup> 'I Would Not Be an Angel', *The Christian Recorder*, 12 September 1863.

<sup>425</sup> Frances E. Willard, *Glimpses of Fifty Years: The Autobiography of an American Woman* (Chicago: Woman's Temperance Publication Association, H. J. Smith and Co., 1889) p. 135.

crowns and harps, I am confident that a child would 'want to be an angel' now, as much as ever.<sup>426</sup>

Further, Benson expressed his disagreement with the Presbyterian Board of Publication that had changed the first line to 'I want to be with Jesus'.<sup>427</sup>

Miss Gill's hymn endured well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, being published in *Forty Stories of Famous Gospel Songs* by Ernest K. Emurian as 'the favorite [hymn] of Sunday School children throughout the English speaking world'.<sup>428</sup> Based on missionary records, the song was a favorite hymn in American Protestant missions (page 310).

I want to be an angel, And with the angels stand  
A crown upon my forehead, and a harp within my hand  
There, close beside my Saviour, So glorious and so bright  
I'd wake [sic] the sweetest music, And praise him day and night

I never should be weary, Nor ever shed a tear  
Nor ever know a sorrow, Nor ever feel a fear  
But blessed, pure and holy, I'd dwell in Jesus' sight  
And with ten thousand thousands, Praise Him both day and night.

I know I'm weak and sinful, but Jesus will forgive  
For many little children, Have gone to heaven to live  
Dear Saviour, when I languish, And lay me down to die  
O! send a shining angel To bear me to the sky<sup>429</sup>

### 6.13 *Jesus Loves Me: Songs of a Shepherd*

Children's hymnals were rich in songs that expressed intimacy and tenderness in the reciprocating child's love for Jesus and Jesus' love for the child. *Saviour*, *Hide Me* and *Jesus is Here* presented the ministry of Jesus coming to earth to shield and guide his followers. Jesus' attention was requested in personal salvation and protection, the image of Jesus as shepherd being especially dominant seen in such titles, *Great Shepherd of the Sheep*; *My Shepherd*; *Gentle Jesus*; *Loving Shepherd*, and *Gentle Shepherd*, to name a few. Perhaps no song captured better the shepherd-love of Jesus than *The Ninety and Nine* that narrated the story of Jesus, as recorded in Matthew and Luke, saving a lost lamb. Leaving the rest of the sheep in the shelter of the fold, Jesus traveled the roads 'rough and steep' and the mountains 'wild and bare' to rescue the lamb that was 'helpless and sick.'

<sup>426</sup> Louis F. Benson, 'I Want to Be an Angel', *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society*, 12/2 (April 1924), 101-114 p. 113.

<sup>427</sup> *Ibid.* p. 114.

<sup>428</sup> Emurian, p. 60.

<sup>429</sup> *Hymns and Poetry for the Young, Collected and Arranged for the Evangelical Knowledge Society*, (New York: Protestant Episcopal Society for the Promotion of Biblical Knowledge, 1858) p. 91.

The familiar prayer of children, *Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep*<sup>430</sup> was a theme reflected in the song *Jesus, Tender Shepherd*.

• Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me  
 Bless Thy little lamb tonight  
 Thro the darkness be Thou near me  
 Keep me safe till morning light  
  
 All this day Thy hand has led me  
 And I thank Thee for Thy care  
 Though hast cloth'd me, warm'd and fed me  
 Listen to my evening prayer  
  
 Let my sins be all forgiven  
 Bless the friends I love so well  
 Take me, when I die to heaven  
 Happy there with Thee to dwell

As adults were drawn to Wesley's *Jesus Lover of My Soul*, children were almost equally drawn to *Jesus Loves Me*. By 1930, *Jesus Loves Me* was printed in almost 300 hymn collections, proving it to be one of the most popular songs of the late-19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>431</sup> Numerous examples could be mentioned to demonstrate the widespread impact of this children's hymn. Citing Bachman's translation in 'Amish Hymns as Folk Music', J. William Frey showed that *Jesus Loves Me* was blended with the German version of *Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep*.

Müde bin ich, geh' zu Ruh (Tired am I, now go to rest)  
 Schliesse meine Augen zu; (And close my eyes)  
 Vater lass die Augen dein, (Father let thine eyes)  
 Über meine Bette sein. (Watch over my bed)  
 Ja, Jesus liebt mich, (Yes, Jesus loves me)  
 Ja, Jesus liebt mich, (Yes, Jesus loves me)  
 Ja, Jesus liebt mich, (Yes, Jesus loves me)  
 Die Bibel sagt mir so. (The Bible tells me so)<sup>432</sup>

Bishop Wayman,<sup>433</sup> when preaching at the Round Lake Camp Meeting in 1876, used the lyrics to serve an apocalyptic function. Demonstrating the fulfillment of Isaiah 43:6, Bishop Wayman used as evidence the children's hymn *Jesus Loves Me*.

<sup>430</sup> This prayer, sometimes referred to as a hymn, was probably written in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Its usage in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is profound, with references to it in popular literature virtually innumerable. The *Adam Sentinel* (Gettysburg, PA) published an article in the 5 February 1849 issue claiming 'there are probably no four lines in the English language that are repeated so many times daily'. Though there exist adaptations, the commonly held lyrics are as follows: 'Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep; If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take.'

<sup>431</sup> Susan Warner and Anna Warner included the lyrics of *Jesus Loves Me* in *Say and Seal*. See Susan Warner and Anna Bartlett Warner, *Say and Seal* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Co., 1860) p. 115, 116.

<sup>432</sup> J. William Frey, 'Amish Hymns as Folk Music', in George G. Korson (ed.), *Pennsylvania Songs and Legends* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1960) p. 152.

The Church has moved rapidly; scaling the cloud capped summit of the great Alleghany mountains and crossing the Northern lakes defying the frost of Canada, pushing along the banks of the Western rivers and over the plains, and finally reaching the Pacific Coast inviting all to come to the water of life freely, and now all along the coasts the song is heard upon the Lords [sic] day "Yes Jesus loves me, yes Jesus loves me." Now it can be truthfully said "sons have come from afar and daughters from the ends of the earth."<sup>434</sup>

Finally, Martin Rumscheidt presented Karl Barth's endorsement of *Jesus Loves Me* in the epilogue of Barth's *Fragments Grave and Gray*. Rumscheidt recounted the occasion when a student at Richmond Theological Seminary asked Barth what the most momentous discovery of his long theological career had been. Barth responded with the lyrics, 'Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.'<sup>435</sup> If uttered in genuine testimony, as Rumscheidt presented it, the theological authority of this children's hymn had managed to reach the upper echelon.

## 6.14 Conclusion

Mark Twain's Sunday School superintendent was an almost universal figure. In late-19<sup>th</sup> century America, a superintendent raising a hymn book to command the respect of the students could just as easily have been set in Massachusetts or Maryland as Missouri. But the hymn book deserves greater attention beyond Twain's vignette. As the superintendent was a standardized office of administration, the hymn book was a standardized text of instruction, salvation, and edification. Similar to the preacher and the Bible, the superintendent and the hymn book certainly benefited one another, but it was the hymn book that had an intangible reach of authority that church office could not match.

The American Protestant Sunday School was a dominant institution of spiritual and moral education for children of all social classes and virtually all denominations. Sunday School became a stronghold of religious education with the establishment of The American Sunday School Union (1824), the National Sunday School Convention (1832), and the International Sunday School Convention with the publication of the

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<sup>433</sup> Bishop A. W. Wayman, D. D. (1821-1895) was the seventh bishop of the A.M.E. Church. He served as editor for the *Encyclopedia of African Methodism*.

<sup>434</sup> A. W. Wayman, 'Sermon Preached by Bishop Wayman at the Round Lake Camp Meeting, Wednesday, June 29 1876', *The Christian Recorder*, (1876).

<sup>435</sup> Karl Barth, *Fragments Grave and Gray*, ed. Martin Rumscheidt, trans. Eric Mosbacher (London and Glasgow: Collins, 1971) p. 123, 124. Even if Barth's response was 'tongue in cheek', Martin Rumscheidt recounted the incident (in the epilogue to *Fragments Grave and Gay*) as a testimony to Barth as a 'servant of God's Word'.

*International Uniform Lesson* (1872), which would expand later to become the World's Sunday School Association (1907) and the World Council of Christian Education (1947). Ultimately Sunday School would swell to over twenty million scholars across the United States by 1935. The American Sunday School boasted a unique proficiency by which to train and influence children of all cooperating churches, even the home conceded to its expertise.

With the shift toward Arminianism, conversion of children became an emphasis, and with the influence of Pestalozzi, religious education prioritized age-specific methods. Hymns fit neatly into this shift, becoming a source of emotional and spiritual expression in children's language. But in this paradigm, children's hymns were primarily instructive with an emphasis upon behavior and conduct.

The memorization of hymns (and Bible verses) was at the core of the Sunday School curriculum. Though the practice of hymn memorization went through a period of evaluation in the 1850s, it easily survived charges of tedium and archaism, its effect upon the character of children well attested by teachers and superintendents. As teachers prioritized internalization of hymn meaning, an extensive familiarity of hymns resulted. A greater affront to children's hymnody during this time was the integration of adult hymnody, but a few children's songs were of impact to adults with *The Beautiful Isle of Somewhere*, *I Want to be an Angel*, and *Jesus Loves Me* notable examples. Efforts were made by some editors to include adult hymns but the majority of children's hymnals remained age-specific.

In addition to hymn memorization, the content of hymns came under attack from educators, clergy, and even a United States governor. Sounding an alarm against poor theology in children's hymns, their bursts of criticism were published in sermons, monographs, public speeches, and newspapers. Lewis, a psychologist, charged Episcopalians and Presbyterians of indoctrinating children through 'divine hymns'; Merrill, an ordained minister, demeaned Sunday School hymns as trivial, dangerous and menacing; Woodrow Wilson, while Governor of New Jersey, criticized children's hymns for their departure from biblical teaching; and Sunday School superintendent L. R. Leipold censured popular children's hymns as militaristic, breeding a spirit of war.

Sunday School hymnals and songbooks of the 19<sup>th</sup> century devoted an abundance of space to moral instruction, a specialized genre of hymnody that was not worship *per se*, but songs of conduct. ‘The Prodigal Son’ was a dominant theme, with most versions blending the key points of the parable while universalizing the prodigal identity to all children, including girls. Other songs counseled against sinful behavior and warned children that Satan was a constant adversary. Prohibition was reinforced in hymnals and songbooks with greater measure than any other social issue and children were well versed in anti-drunkard rhetoric. These hymns were used in the campaign against drinking to plant lasting attitudes and convictions. Children were also provided many songs of work ethic, *Work for the Night is Coming* serving as the theme song. One Sunday School lesson advised scholars to adhere to the words as if the Apostle James were singing them.

Amidst the crisis of higher criticism, songs of the Bible were staple to all hymn books. Many of these songs resembled creedal statements, calling children to affirm the Bible as holy, divine, and a trustworthy guide. Other songs were more sentimental, expressing the scholar’s love for the Bible. Death stories were commonly used in Sunday Schools and Mrs. George Archibald argued that songs were too emphatic of heaven and death resulting in a contrived and unhealthy desire to die. Sherwood echoed a similar concern in her historical treatment of Sunday School.

Songs of angels were as prominent as songs of the prodigal. While some songs reinforced biblical stories of angels, others were more speculative in nature. *I Want to be an Angel* was clearly the favorite song of this type, but it was also the most contested. Francis Wayland Parker called the song ‘false theology’, the Right Rev. Dr. Thomas U. Dudley boycotted its usage in his Sunday Schools and, on theological grounds, Dr. John Henry Hobart rejected its teaching as contradictory to Christ’s descent expressed in the Apostles’ Creed. Hobart’s tactic in contrasting this children’s hymn with an early creed of Christendom demonstrates the song’s level of threat, thus his perception of its competing creedal function.

Age-specific hymnody for children was a prominent tool for teaching and expressing Protestant beliefs and values to and through children. The Sunday School hymnal had no equal in its ability to carry moral directives and doctrinal teachings into the hearts and minds of children and serve as a vehicle by which they could express their allegiance. The recruitment of hymns by the temperance movement indicates the high

level of authority endowed the hymnal to shape thinking and behavior. The hymn book was respected in its ability to instill identity, inspire faith, extol virtue, and condemn vice.

Hymns were central to the faith expression of children, demonstrated in the practice of memorizing hymns alongside Bible verses. In the surplus of stories recounting children dying, it was most often their favorite hymns that shaped their last words and defined a lasting memorial for their loved ones. Hence, the hymnal was arguably the most loved treasure of most children.

Hymns were considered an influential source of theology, evidenced in the intense disputes sparked by the popular hymns *Beautiful Isle of Somewhere* and *I Want to be an Angel*. Though *The Beautiful Isle of Somewhere* was deemed 'silly and meaningless' it triggered a list of charges by Governor Wilson, including the allegation that Sunday School hymns had departed from biblical content. Even if Governor Wilson overstated the case, it is apparent that some popular hymns were based more on the personal inspirations and aspirations of hymn writers (including child hymn writers) than on an accepted reading of a biblical text. This confirms that even children could write children's hymns independently of direct biblical inspiration.

In this way, hymns were a distinct source of experiential devotion and did not require the Bible as a precedent theological authority. In other words, the theology of hymnody was not necessarily distilled from the Bible; an operant hermeneutic behind such criticisms that charged *I Want to be an Angel* as contrary to Judeo-Christian thought. This same hymn was used to illustrate deviant theology of the Intermediate State raised by Hobart. While Benson sought to diffuse the theological debate, he did not address directly or technically the theological complaints, other than to dismiss them as 'cheap'. On the other hand, the Presbyterian Church in the United States (Benson's denomination) took measures to address soteriological concerns by editing the most troublesome line of the song; rather than Presbyterian children expressing their desire 'to become angels', they expressed their desire 'to be with Jesus', thereby satisfying the conventional doctrine of salvation. Taken together, these debates demonstrate that hymnic theology was taken seriously.



Subordination to Protestant ethics and theologies deserve mention. Bearing in mind Sherwood's concern, not infrequently hymn lyricists recycled guilt and used fear tactics to instill morals and inspire obedience. While some children's songs did have comforting themes of Jesus and angels, a noticeable few conjured startling personifications of demons and perpetuated a preoccupation with Satan. Still other hymns cast forcibly the dire consequences of the prodigal and the drunkard. Seen from this perspective, it would have been entirely natural for a Sunday School superintendent to wield a hymnal to command the attention of students. Reinforcing Christian values with a tendency toward uncompromising language, the hymnal was a text to be reckoned with. Mark Twain's exclusion of the Bible was no coincidence – the hymnal was the primary book. For children, hymns exerted the greatest doctrinal influence and served as their preferred theological authority.

Applying the definitions of Ritschl and Barth discussed in chapter three, hymns were for children 'regulative theology', used to articulate belief and mission and, used in community via responsive reading, memorization, worship, devotion, deathbed singing, and funeral services, they fulfilled the 'special function' of theology through which children made their 'faith audible'.

## Chapter Seven: Spirituals and Improvised Hymns

In this chapter I will discuss the dynamics of slave religion, the development of spirituals and improvised hymns, and the affiliation of slaves with experiential Protestantism. I will present representative slave song collections and commentaries and explore the theological appropriation of slave songs by various theologians. I will examine spirituals and improvised hymns using a systematic method to show their comprehensive representation of doctrine and authoritative expression of theology. Further, I will discuss spirituals and black liberation theology, especially their appropriation in black theology.

### 7.1 Introduction

The theological authority of black slaves songs was gained largely from the role of the Protestant hymnal in the Southern States. In her essay 'Hymns as a Means of Education and Expression', Mary DeJong draws from the autobiography of Bishop John Heyl Vincent (whose work with the Sunday School Union was discussed in chapter six above) to demonstrate the hymnbook as a 'symbol of authority' among black children.

It was obvious even to children that the roles of preacher and songleader were authoritative in certain situations. Born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, John Heyl Vincent (1832-1920) was sensitive in early boyhood to symbol of authority. Before turning six, he played at preaching to a group of black children. Vincent recalled, "My little hymn book in one hand and a rod in the other, I was fully prepared to keep order and impart instruction"<sup>436</sup>.

This episode from Vincent's autobiography provides a glimpse of what DeJong counts ('in certain situations') as the normative authority of homiletics and hymns in antebellum Alabama. Perhaps in imitation, Vincent's budding attempts at preaching were demonstrative of adult preachers he admired. In any event, Vincent is not holding a Bible as he preaches. Reminiscent of Twain's vignette of rural Missouri, the authority figure is armed with a hymnbook. But Vincent's depiction adds an important feature: The rod. Together the hymnal and rod in a child's hands forcibly bring the picture into poignant focus: Inseparable, the songs of religion and slavery went hand in hand.

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<sup>436</sup> Mary DeJong, 'Hymns as a Means of Education and Expression', (Penn State University, 2003) p. 40.

High illiteracy of slaves,<sup>437</sup> exhausting work schedules, and harsh and isolated living conditions, combined to create an environment adverse to formal catechism.<sup>438</sup> Hence their religious music consisting of spirituals and improvised hymns, a medium requiring neither literacy nor catechetical rudiments, contributed a considerable influence over religious knowledge and expression among slaves young and old. In spiritual experience, songs were central to conversion, communal expression, and solidarity. In Christian education, spirituals and improvised hymns were critical in supplanting biblical stories and teaching doctrine.

Should one have appealed to the slave songs for a Christian creed – despite idiomatic and grammatical peculiarities – the lyrical content would have proved to be surprisingly representative of Protestantism. While Methodist and Baptist influences are apparent, sectarianism that might have diminished the universal nature of the gospel<sup>439</sup> is virtually absent. This includes social, gender and race discrimination, a characteristic that testifies to the profound awareness of the human spirit evident in slave songs. While black theology of the modern period, largely through the work of James H. Cone designated the spirituals as a theological precedent in race-liberation, there is little in the spirituals that can be adapted for such purposes. The theological perspective of the slave songs does not suggest a respecter of persons. As the institution of slavery demeaned the black race, and race theologies catalogued blacks as subhuman and cursed, the writers of slave songs did not respond in kind. The slave songs neither invoked revenge against slave owners nor retaliation against theologies of white primacy. In sum, the spirituals were comprehensive in doctrinal expression and inclusive in their view of the human condition. These two qualities endowed the spirituals with theological authority beyond their catechetical role among slaves. But before exploring the theological authority of spirituals and improvised hymns, a brief treatment of the context is in order. This includes a discussion of slave religion in the Colonial period and its eventual merger with Christianity and affiliation with Protestantism during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>437</sup> Janet Cornelius cited Woodson to show that literacy during Reconstruction was 10%. DuBois, in contrast, estimated 5%. See Janet Duitsman Cornelius, *When I Can Read My Title Clear: Literacy, Slavery, and Religion in the Antebellum South* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1991) p. 9.

<sup>438</sup> Attempts to educate black slaves in America can be traced to the early-18<sup>th</sup> century. In 1706 the Puritan minister Cotton Mather published *The Negro Christianized: An Essay to Excite and Assist that Good Work of Negro-Servants in Christianity*.

<sup>439</sup> The universal nature of the gospel is demonstrated in Paul's letter to the Galatians, i.e. 'There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.' (NRSV)

## 7.2 Slave Songs and Slave Religion

Whereas many Protestant settlers that established or joined the colonies of early America fled from oppression and persecution in their homeland,<sup>440</sup> Africans were exported from the freedom of their homeland to serve as slaves in the American colonies. To one, the voyage across the Atlantic was a journey of hope and freedom; to the other, the ocean crossing was a journey to suffering and slavery. The African slave experience was set in a context of Diaspora, the historical reality of bondage and exile at the core of the black heritage in America. Black slavery was introduced to America at the outset of the Colonial Period.<sup>441</sup> Following the slave codes of the late-17<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>442</sup> black slavery was established legally in most American colonies. Especially dominant in the Southern states, slave labor was essential for the success of the cotton and tobacco industries where African ‘servants’ were kept in a state of illiteracy and servitude. Yet in this oppressive environment in which most slaves were mistreated beyond description, slaves drew strength and faith from song. Writing for *The American Missionary* in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, Mrs. G. W. Moore described how slave songs flourished in an otherwise barren existence.

These slave songs, born of agony, might well be called “The Passion Flowers” of the slave cabin. Thank God that all of my sisters were not brutalized, and even to those who were, God was merciful. Deep down underneath the lacerated and bruised heart, rested the “Shekinah of the Lord,” preventing the wholesale transmission of vice.<sup>443</sup>

W. E. B. Dubois, author of *The Souls of Black Folk*, identified African American spirituals as ‘Sorrow Songs’ and heard in them ‘the voice of exile’.<sup>444</sup> James Weldon Johnson, author of *Let Every Voice Sing*, wrote,

In the spirituals, or slave songs, the Negro has given America not only its only folk songs, but a mass of noble music. [...] *Go down Moses* is considered as one of the strongest themes in the whole musical literature of the world.<sup>445</sup>

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<sup>440</sup> I am not trying to generalize the establishment of America as entirely Protestant. Nor am I suggesting that America was established entirely under Christian missionization. Virginia, for example, was the first colony established and largely for economic purposes.

<sup>441</sup> The Colonial Period begins with the establishment of the Virginia colony established at Jamestown in 1607 to the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

<sup>442</sup> Each state established laws (slave codes) to define the status of slaves and the legal rights of the slave owner.

<sup>443</sup> G. W. Moore, ‘Needs of Colored Women and Girls’, *The American Missionary*, 43/1 (January 1889), 22-25 p. 22.

<sup>444</sup> W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Fawcett Publications, 1961) p. 181, 184.

<sup>445</sup> Cary D. Wintz (ed.), *African American Political Thought, 1890-1930* (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1995) p. 314.

In contrast Marcus Garvey, noted for his acerbic poetry against white religion, also turned his disdain toward the spirituals themselves. Garvey saw the spirituals (almost indistinct from white hymns) as a type of 'Marxian crutch' that permitted slaves a solace during the years of slavery.

More religious by nature than other races, Negroes neglected their political, industrial and financial progress, content to sing "It is well, it is well with my soul." They lulled themselves into tranquil slumber with the opiate of religious expectation, and in their spirituals and melodies chanted of heaven, – "I want to go to heaven when I die to hear Jordan roll."<sup>446</sup>

But while the slave songs were often associated with Christianity (both positively and negatively) and heavily influenced by Christian terminology, African religion and cultural expression was vital to their form and ethos. Representing this hybridity, Albert J. Raboteau called the spirituals 'communal songs'<sup>447</sup> that drew 'from the Bible, Protestant hymns, sermons, and African styles of singing and dancing'.<sup>448</sup>

### 7.3 Utilitarian Nature of Slave Religion

When one considers the central role that American Christianity played in sustaining the slave trade and its exploitation of African slaves, it is surprising that any Americans of African descent came to affiliate with the Christian faith and the institutional Church. Viewed through the lens of Hans A. Baer and Merrill Singer's list of 'five functions' that Christianity performed in the support of slavery (ideological rationale, deculturation process, subduing and pacifying, enhancing profitability, and creating social uniformity),<sup>449</sup> the discontinuity of oppression and conversion of black slaves is greatly reinforced.

Many black slaves identified with Christianity and eventually shared the faith of the slave owners, if only in part or by appearance. While slaves of African descent may

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<sup>446</sup> Robert A. Hill (ed.), *Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers* (V; Berkley: University of California Press, 1987) p. 624. Garvey appears to employ Marxist terminology, i.e. 'Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people'.

<sup>447</sup> Spirituals were written in community. Unlike most hymns, authorship of spirituals was unknown.

<sup>448</sup> Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion. The "Invisible Institution" In the Antebellum South*. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004) p. 243.

<sup>449</sup> Hans A. Baer and Merrill Singer, *African American Religion* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2002) p. 4. Baer and Singer's list: '(1) It provided an ideological rationale for the enslavement of Africans and the social cohesion of white society, (2) It was part of the deculturation process that the slaves were subjected to after arriving in the Americas, (3) It had the effect of subduing and pacifying the slaves, (4) It helped enhance the profitability of the slaves by ensuring their willingness to work hard under adverse conditions and, (5) It functioned to create uniformity among peoples of diverse cultural backgrounds'.

have appropriated white religion to better survive white oppression, this does not preclude that they deemed Christianity the ultimate faith of their communities and Christ the exclusive Savior. An obvious precedent exists in Ancient Israelite religion that, as described in the Exodus narrative, was uncompromised during slavery in Egypt. The story of African slavery, at least during the Colonial period, bears some familiarity to Israelite bondage. If so Africans, transported as slaves to America, could well have sustained a vibrant remnant of African culture and religion.

Several developments may have fostered strategic identification with Christianity by slaves. Chief among these was the opportunity for return to Africa through means provided by the American Colonization Society (ACS). In the early-19<sup>th</sup> century, the ACS 'attempted to select only deeply religious (and thus pacific) Negro emigrants'.<sup>450</sup> Also significant was the fascination with race-specific missions and the exploitation of the Fisk Jubilee Singers by white Christians who anticipated their success in African missions.<sup>451</sup> John J. Sheinbaum reported, 'The positive reception of the Fisk Jubilee Singers [...] was wrapped up in a desire to send missionaries to Africa, with the thought that black Christians would meet more with success than white ones'.<sup>452</sup> Converting 'fellow Africans' to Christianity may have provided Americans of African descent with opportunities of emancipation, participation in missions or a legitimized avenue of religious expression that they may not otherwise have experienced. If Christian identification was used opportunistically in these ways the spirituals, as compositions or performances, may not have necessarily reflected Christian piety.

While Americans of African descent might have associated with Christianity, their allegiance to the Bible and devotion to Christ as exclusive cannot be assumed. According to Charles Long, 'The Christian faith provided a language for the meaning of religion, but not all the religious meanings of the black communities were encompassed by the Christian forms of religion'.<sup>453</sup> Jualynne E. Dodson, contended that black slaves used Christianity as a means toward an end. In her view, black

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<sup>450</sup> Miles Mark Fisher, *Negro Slave Songs in the United States* (New York: The Citadel Press, 1969) p. 54.

<sup>451</sup> In regard to chronology, the Fisk Jubilee Singers were active after the Civil War. Most spirituals were written in the antebellum era.

<sup>452</sup> John J. Sheinbaum, 'Understanding Spirituals Differently at Different Times', *Sweet Chariot* (The Spirituals Project, 2004).

<sup>453</sup> Charles H. Long, *Significations: Signs, Symbols and Images in the Interpretation of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986) p. 7. In Anthony B. Pinn, 'Rethinking the Nature and Task of African American Theology: A Pragmatic Perspective', *American Journal of Theology & Philosophy*, 19/2 (May 1998).

slaves found a way through Christianity 'to express their humanity on their terms'.<sup>454</sup> In his book *Negro Slave Songs in the United States*, Miles Mark Fisher attempted to decode the lyrics of slave songs. Demonstrating the evolution of African American religion and music, Fisher emphasized the superficial usage of Christian terms that, in many cases, served as a Christian face to disguise the traditional beliefs of the African cult. In her work, *America: Religions and Religion*, Catherine L. Albanese generalized the rejection of Christianity by rural slaves,<sup>455</sup> a point of significance herein given the rural context of spirituals. Leading up to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, some key scholars reported that African slaves relinquished traditional African religion and embraced white American Christianity.<sup>456</sup> According to Henry H. Mitchell, this view has largely been abandoned in recent scholarship with a growing consensus that 'slaves retained many African customs even as they converted to Christianity'.<sup>457</sup>

It seems most likely that 'African distinctiveness' changed over time and included regional variations. According to Dubois, the rites of African slaves were given a Christian veneer by missionaries leading to the Christianization of African cultural religion. Drawing heavily from Dubois, Mitchell argued that slave religion integrated Christian beliefs through a gradual process. Speaking broadly of American slavery, Peter J. Paris cited Kwasi Wiredu's concept of 'amalgamation' to explain the conversion of African slaves to Christianity.<sup>458</sup> Albert Raboteau identified this evolution to have occurred after the Colonial period, after obstacles from both sides diminished.<sup>459</sup> George Pullen Jackson claimed that 'the Christianizing of the negro', occurred 'principally in the nineteenth century'.<sup>460</sup>

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<sup>454</sup> Jualynne E. Dodson, 'African Religions Group and Afro-American Religious History Group', *Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion* (Philadelphia, PA, 2006). Dodson.

<sup>455</sup> Catherine L. Albanese, *America: Religions and Religion* (Third edn.; Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1999) p. 197.

<sup>456</sup> Henry H. Mitchell, *Black Church: The Long-Hidden Realities of the First Years* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 2004) p. 1. Mitchell quotes E. Franklin Frazier who, in 1962, wrote that 'the slaves were stripped of their cultural heritage' and Robert E. Park, his predecessor, who believed 'that the Negro, when he landed in the United States, left behind him almost everything but his dark complexion and his tropical temperament.'

<sup>457</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2. Henry H. Mitchell is citing from the work of Albert J. Raboteau.

<sup>458</sup> Peter J. Paris, *The Spirituality of African Peoples: The Search for a Common Moral Discourse* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995) p. 36.

<sup>459</sup> Raboteau, p. 96ff. Throughout the chapter 'Catechesis and Conversion' Raboteau identifies various obstacles to missionization of slaves including, economic profitability was more important to slave owners than religious instruction, owners feared that baptism of slaves would qualify them for emancipation, many believed that slaves were incapable of understanding the gospel, slave owners feared that Christianity would make their slaves 'rebellious' or 'ungovernable'.

<sup>460</sup> George Pullen Jackson, *White and Negro Spirituals: Their Life Span and Kinship* (Locust Valley, New York: J. J. Augustin Publisher, 1943) p. 286.

The period of transition from African religion to Christianity is not without debate and the seesaw dynamics of conversionism are not easy to sort out,<sup>461</sup> but a detailed treatment is beyond the scope of this present study. It is sufficient to recognize that many African slaves were assimilated into Christianity and, by the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Christianity had become the dominant religion as espoused and expressed by the majority of Southern slaves. Most spirituals originated from the plantations and work fields of such slaves.

#### 7.4 Development of Spirituals and Improvised Hymns

Though terminology used by scholars varies, there is general agreement that African American spirituals underwent an evolution of form and content over time. As a result, there are different eras in American history that produced different genres of music. 'Spirituals' and 'Dr. Watts' (hymns of Isaac Watts and other hymn writers that were embellished by slaves) were forms well established before the Civil War. Melva Wilson Costen presented the following evolution: African chants (1619-1750), Spirituals (1750-), Metered Music (1775-), Improvised Hymns (1800-) Traditional Gospel (1919-), Modern Gospel (1960-) and Contemporary (1980-).<sup>462</sup> Wyatt Tee Walker labeled the music that emerged after the Civil War (c. 1885-1925) 'prayer and praise hymns'.<sup>463</sup> These spirituals, allegedly distinct from those written during the antebellum period, were determined by Walker to be 'spin-offs' of the early hymn-book era in Black religious life'.<sup>464</sup> Another paradigm suggested by DuBois is less specific, beginning first with 'African music', secondly, 'Afro-American music' and, third, 'a blend of Negro music'. Modern hymnals continue the categorizations that attempt to describe and define black hymnody. Wendal Whalum's flowchart, published in the *African American Catholic Hymnal* preface, assigned 'spirituals' as the immediate precursor to 'Black use of Dr. Watts-style hymns'.<sup>465</sup> These types of

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<sup>461</sup> Christianization of African slaves was multi-faceted. Some Christian masters resisted conversion, fearing that converted slaves would seek freedom or become 'lazy'. Additionally, converted slaves might become educated and challenge the system of slavery. From another view, slavery was justified on the grounds that Africans would receive the gospel in America and be freed from the oppression of heathenism. Some slaves, on the other hand, had no interest in Christianity and derided it as 'white man's religion' that justified slavery in the name of God. In contrast, many slaves converted to an ideal view of Christianity rather than the distortion of Christianity they witnessed in the corrupt lifestyle of their white Christian masters.

<sup>462</sup> Melva Wilson Costen, *African American Christian Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993) p. 95.

<sup>463</sup> Wyatt Tee Walker, *Spirits That Dwell in Deep Woods: The Prayer and Praise Hymns of the Black Religious Experience* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 1991) p. xviii.

<sup>464</sup> Ibid.

<sup>465</sup> *Lead Me, Guide Me: The African American Catholic Hymnal*, (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2001).



surveys indicate that black religious music changed over time and that both spirituals and 'Dr. Watts' flourished during the 19<sup>th</sup> century era of slave Christianization. Consequently, the lyrics, form, and context require, of musicologists and theologians alike, an appreciation for the distinctive characteristics of the various musical subgenres.

As expressed or lived spirituality, the song lyrics created and sung by the black slaves of the 19<sup>th</sup> century reflected influence of the Christian faith directly. This does not mean that certain Africanisms were entirely expunged from African American spirituality. Nor does it mean that biblical lyrics were intended to convey biblical literalisms, for another aspect of spirituals is their hidden or double meaning. Later when applicable to specific spirituals I will address multiple meanings in lyrics, but for now I will draw attention to the denominational affiliation of Christianized slaves, emphasizing the dominance of the Protestant tradition and the inclination toward Baptists and Methodists.

## 7.5 Slave Religion and Experiential Protestantism

Having established the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia in 1791, Richard Allen is a central figure in African American history. Allen contended 'there was no religious sect or denomination would suit the capacity of the coloured people as the Methodist'.<sup>466</sup> While Allen's comments were probably directed to a northern audience, his observation could be applied to the Southern States as well. But Allen would not have represented a consensus position, for Baptist success in missionary endeavors verified that Baptists proved their 'suitability' with equal persuasion. Raboteau emphasized that Baptists had an edge 'since the congregational independence of the Baptists gave them [black preachers] more leeway to preach than any other denomination'.<sup>467</sup> Considering that spirituals (and 'Dr. Watts') were the product of southern slaves, denominational affiliation of slaves in the Southern United States deserves privileged comment.

Georgia native Joel Chandler Harris, who from his hometown of Eatonton went on to become a journalist in Atlanta, produced a series of books about *Uncle Remus and His Friends*. Known best for the trickster figure of Brer Rabbit, Uncle Remus stories

<sup>466</sup> Edwin Wolf, *Negro History 1553-1903* (Philadelphia: The Winchell Company, 1969) p. 66.

<sup>467</sup> Albert J. Raboteau, *A Fire in the Bones* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995) p. 24.

also recount many episodes in the lives of southerners. In one such episode entitled *Preaching that is Preaching, and Uncle Remus's Comments on It*, Uncle Remus presented a dialogue between Chloe (a cook) and Aunt Mimy. In this vignette, Harris illustrated the competitive marketplace shared by Baptists and Methodists in rural Georgia.

[Chloe] "What church does you b'long ter, Sis Mimy?"

[Aunt Mimy] "Babtis!" exclaimed Aunt Mimy emphatically. "Brer Zeke Simmons, he 'low I'm a fightin' Baptis' ef dey ever bin any. I done got de word; I knows what I'm a-doin'."

[Uncle Remus] "Ah-yi!" exclaimed Uncle Remus with affected enthusiasm, knowing that Chloe was a Methodist.

[Aunt Mimy] "Yes, Lord!" Aunt Mimy went on, closing her eyes in a self-satisfied way. "I bin a-stumblin' 'long a mighty long time. I bin a 'Piscopal Meth'dis', an' I bin a Affikin Meth'dis', an' I bin a Pottistant Meth'dis', an' I bin a Pesberteent. All dat time I wuz uneasy – all dat time I wuz restless in de min'. I laid 'wake nights an' ain't had no appetite. I wuz dat worried dat I could n't set still. One night I wuz layin' in bed, an' it look like eve'thing cle'r'd up. I said out loud, 'I'm gwine ter be a Baptis'. I lay der, I did, an' I felt des a ca'm ez ca'm could be. I say out loud, 'Is it right?' 'Sump'n answer back, 'Rise, sinner, yo' sins is done forgive.'"<sup>468</sup>

The account is an artful view of Aunt Mimy's denominational migration, the choice permitted slaves in denominational affiliation and, of course, the primacy of experiential validation of truth. But this affinity for both Baptists and Methodists extends well beyond rural Georgia.

Though Unitarians were represented in the effort to chronicle slave songs,<sup>469</sup> and Quakers early on were vocal opponents of slavery,<sup>470</sup> it was the Baptist and Methodist denominations that were favored among the black population, both before and after Emancipation. Among the Southern States, slaves were deeply impacted by Protestant denominations, primarily Baptist and Methodist. In Tennessee, slaves attended revivals and church services offered by Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists. By 1839, one quarter of the Baptists in Tennessee were black.<sup>471</sup> Soon after the Civil War, Baptists, Methodists, Congregationalists and Presbyterians established schools,

<sup>468</sup> Joel Chandler Harris, *Uncle Remus and His Friends: Stories, Songs, and Ballads with Sketches of Negro Character* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and company, 1892) p. 273, 274.

<sup>469</sup> Caroline Howard Gilman was married to Unitarian minister Rev. Samuel Gilman. Thomas Wentworth Higginson was a Unitarian minister. The co-authors of *Slave Songs of the United States* all had 'family ties to the Unitarian ministry'. See Ronaldo Radano, 'Denoting Difference: The Writing of the Slave Spirituals', *Critical Inquiry*, 22/3 (Spring 1996), 506-544 p 528.

<sup>470</sup> Raboteau, *Slave Religion. The "Invisible Institution" In the Antebellum South*. p. 111. Raboteau makes note that 'very few American Negroes became members of the Society of Friends' despite the Friends' reputation for condemning slavery.

<sup>471</sup> James R. Aswell and William H. Bunce (eds.), *Tennessee: A Guide to the State* (U.S.A.: American Book-Stratford Press, 1939) p. 115.

including Roger Williams University, Fisk University, Walden University and Knoxville College.<sup>472</sup> The 1895 *Afro-American Encyclopedia* listed 80 such universities and colleges, attributing more than half of them to Congregationalists, Baptists and Methodists. In Mississippi, 'in the Negro as in the White churches, the Methodist and Baptist denominations attracted the greatest number of members'.<sup>473</sup> Even in Louisiana where Catholicism had a strong presence, it was the Baptists who took a leading role in organizing community sing-a-longs that assisted the development of music among slaves.<sup>474</sup>

Providing a portrait of religion in antebellum Georgia and the Carolina Low Country, Erskine Clark demonstrated the controversy of spirituals. Clark indicated that whites generally disapproved of them, as well as one of the leading black Methodist ministers Daniel Payne;<sup>475</sup> Payne's disapproval of spirituals may have been tied to the cultural upheaval of the Nat Turner slave rebellion and the fact that Payne associated the ring shout with 'the Voodoo Dance'.<sup>476</sup> Payne narrates the rebuttal offered by the slaves.

The slaves defended the ring shout by an appeal to conversion, i.e. 'The Spirit of God works upon people in different ways. At camp-meeting there must be a ring here, a ring there, a ring over yonder, or sinners will not get converted'.<sup>477</sup>

Emphasis upon conversion and denominational preference corroborates with Albanese's overview of the African American response to Christianity in which she described the 'nonliterary model of conversion' by Methodists and Baptists to be the most appealing to slaves.<sup>478</sup> Rev. William Henry Milburn, a Northern Methodist preacher who spent six years in Alabama,<sup>479</sup> described the monopoly of Methodists and Baptists.

Few men, therefore, know the negro so well as the Methodist preacher, and no men are to-day exercising so powerful an influence over negro character in the South as the preacher of the Methodist and Baptist denominations. It cannot

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<sup>472</sup> Ibid. p. 108.

<sup>473</sup> Gene Holcomb (ed.), *Mississippi: A Guide to the Magnolia State* (New York: The Viking Press, 1938) p. 116.

<sup>474</sup> *Louisiana: A Guide to the State*, (New York: Hastings House Publishers, 1945) p. 194.

<sup>475</sup> Erskine Jacob, *Wrestlin' Jacob: A Portrait of Religion in Antebellum Georgia and the Carolina Low Country* (Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 2000).

<sup>476</sup> Daniel Alexander Payne, *Recollections of Seventy Years* (New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1968) p. 255.

<sup>477</sup> Ibid. p. 254.

<sup>478</sup> Albanese, p. 197.

<sup>479</sup> Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene D. Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class: History and Faith in the Southern Slaveholder's Worldview* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005) p. 340.

be denied that these are the only bodies of Christians that are doing much in that important and desirable of all mission fields – the slave population of our southern States. Here and there, especially in the neighborhood of cities, you may see a colored Presbyterian or Episcopal church, but from Delaware to Texas, from Florida to Missouri, there is scarce a plantation which is not visited by a Baptist or Methodist missionary, and hardly a negro that does not hear the word of life from their lips.<sup>480</sup>

According to Raboteau, ‘the spread of the Baptists and Methodists during the late-18<sup>th</sup> and early-19<sup>th</sup> centuries institutionalized a conversion-oriented, revival-based piety in the South and shaped the form of Christianity that the slaves increasingly made their own.’<sup>481</sup> Raboteau also informs the marginal Catholic influence reporting that ‘slaves in the British colonies of North America were not likely to be exposed to the “errors of the Romish Church” unless they lived in Maryland, the only colony with a sizable Catholic presence’.<sup>482</sup> Of Louisiana, Albert Raboteau reported that ‘prayer meetings, shouting, and spirituals – the touchstone of black Evangelicalism – were foreign to the experience of black Catholics’.<sup>483</sup> James Weldon Johnson noted ‘where the Negro came under the influence and jurisdiction of the Catholic Church and the Church of England, [...] he never had any place of worship of his own, and, of course, he would never have been allowed to introduce such a practice as the “ring shout”’.<sup>484</sup> In *Masters and Slaves in the House of the Lord: Race and Religion in the American South 1740-1870* John B. Boles indicated that, after the Civil War, ‘most Southern cities had at least one Catholic church’ but Protestant churches were ‘far more dominant in the South than anywhere else in the nation’.<sup>485</sup> Furthermore, Boles reported that the theological basis was consistent between black churches, biracial churches and even the ‘brush arbor’ secretive churches.<sup>486</sup> In all these worship settings, slaves found ‘a theology of hope and self-recognition’.<sup>487</sup> From a

<sup>480</sup> William Henry Milburn, *Ten Years of Preacher-Life* (New York: Derby & Jackson, 1859) p. 338.

<sup>481</sup> Raboteau, *A Fire in the Bones* p. 153.

<sup>482</sup> Raboteau, *Slave Religion. The "Invisible Institution" In the Antebellum South.* p. 112.

<sup>483</sup> Raboteau, *A Fire in the Bones* p. 119.

<sup>484</sup> James Weldon Johnson, *The Book of American Negro Spirituals* (New York: The Viking Press, 1925) p. 34.

<sup>485</sup> John B. Boles (ed.), *Masters and Slaves in the House of the Lord: Race and Religion in the American South 1740-1870* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1988) p. 15.

<sup>486</sup> ‘Brush arbors’ (or ‘hush arbors’) were outside places of worship (in wooded areas) for black slaves. Oftentimes, the slaves would construct a meeting place out of poles and brush. These meetings allowed African slaves to express their worship with heightened expressions of ecstasy such as dancing and trances. Therefore, these meetings were conducted secretly so as to avoid detection.

<sup>487</sup> Boles (ed.), p. 14-17.

denominational perspective, William D. Watley observed African American churches to be '[p]rimarily Baptist and Methodist in theology and liturgy'.<sup>488</sup>

With the increase in literacy and developing knowledge of the Christian Scriptures, O. W. Blacknall argued for a new appreciation of civilization among blacks. In 'The New Departure in Negro Life' Blacknall attested to their denominational affiliation.

The vast majority of the blacks are Baptist. Next in point of numbers come the Methodists. Lastly, though in the minority, stand the Presbyterians and Episcopalians. In fact, the latter admit and deplore their inability to carry out an adequate system of missionary work among the negroes.<sup>489</sup>

Though Blacknall was published in a Boston journal, likely he was referring to the slave population of the South where Baptist churches were dominant, explaining that their attraction to Baptists was the 'uncontrolled fervor of the revival, where hundreds writhing in inward agony literally cast themselves on the dust, [...] each new convert rises in turn [after] his desperate struggle with the devil'.<sup>490</sup> Henry Edward Krehbiel concluded 'the amorous sentiment of many Methodist and Baptist revival hymns [found] its echo in the hymns of the negroes'.<sup>491</sup> Mitchell's tally of black churches in the South collaborates with Blacknall's assertion. Mitchell's chronology, 'Black Church Growth in the North:1801-1840', demonstrated that Methodists were the most dominant (62 churches) followed by Baptists (29 churches).<sup>492</sup> In the South, Baptists (15 churches) took a slight lead over Methodists (11 churches).

In summary, by the early-19<sup>th</sup> century, many slaves had been 'Christianized'. Slaves were attracted to Protestantism and usually identified with either Methodist or Baptist denominations. The spirituals and improvised hymns written in the context of slavery were directly related to Protestantism, echoing the conversionist emphasis in revivalist hymnody. Through improvisation, slave songs borrowed sections of Protestant hymns ('Dr. Watts') and usually added extra phrases. Texts were written or arranged by African slave communities whose religious expression reflected Christian piety.

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<sup>488</sup> William D. Watley, 'Introducing the African American Churches', in James Abbington (ed.), *Readings in African American Church Music and Worship* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2001) p. 29.

<sup>489</sup> O. W. Blacknall, 'The New Departure in Negro Life', *The Atlantic Monthly*, 52/313 (November 1883), 680-686 p. 683.

<sup>490</sup> *Ibid.* p. 684.

<sup>491</sup> Henry Edward Krehbiel, *Afro-American Folk Songs: A Study in Racial and National Music* (New York and London: G. Schirmer, 1914) p. 87.

<sup>492</sup> Presbyterians were represented by two churches, Congregationalists and Episcopalians by one each.

## 7.6 Collections of Slave Songs

References to slave songs can be traced back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century in America. By the early-19<sup>th</sup> century, the genre referred to as ‘plantation songs’ or ‘negro spirituals’ was distinctive in the United States. In ‘Slave Music in the United States before 1860: A Survey of Sources’ (in two parts), author Dena J. Epstein concluded that descriptions of spirituals in United States sources increased since the mid-1700s ‘when Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists began to extend their work in the South’.<sup>493</sup> According to Epstein, Caroline Howard Gilman (1794-1888) compiled a collection of spirituals in 1840, but Gilman’s work is no longer extant. Gale L. Kenny traced Gilman’s writings making no reference to the 1840 collection, though Kenny detailed Gilman’s inclusion of slave song texts in her 1832 book *The Country Visit*.<sup>494</sup> John Lovell Jr. suggested that spirituals, more than 5,000 in number, were collected since the 1840s;<sup>495</sup> Charles White’s *New Book of Plantation Melodies* (1849) would fall into this category. By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, articles and domestic literature routinely included portions of slave songs. In *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852) Deane L. Root tallied a total of fourteen slave hymns.<sup>496</sup>

According to David Stowe, ‘the interest in and study of slave spirituals played a crucial role in the formation of a sensibility of concern’.<sup>497</sup> Thus, the authors of these collections seemed to be genuinely interested in validating the musical and textual integrity of slave songs. T. W. Higginson published an article entitled ‘Negro Spirituals’ in the June 1867 *Atlantic Monthly*.<sup>498</sup> Later in the same year, Allen, Ware and Garrison published an anthology of 136 slave songs entitled *Slave Songs in the United States*<sup>499</sup> and, toward the end of the century, Theodore F. Seward published the 138-song repertoire of the Fisk Jubilee Singers.<sup>500</sup> These collections of spirituals,

<sup>493</sup> Dena J. Epstein, ‘Slave Music in the United States before 1860: A Survey of Sources (Part 2)’, *Music Library Association*, 20/3 (Summer 1963), 377-390 p. 199.

<sup>494</sup> Gale L. Kenny, ‘Mastering Childhood: Paternalism, Slavery and the Southern Domestic in Caroline Howard Gilman’s Antebellum Children’s Literature’, *Southern Quarterly*, (Fall 2006).

<sup>495</sup> John Lovell Jr., ‘Reflections on the Origins of the Negro Spiritual’, *Negro American Literature Forum*, 3/3 (Autumn 1969), 91-97 p. 92.

<sup>496</sup> Deane L. Root, ‘The Music of Uncle Tom’s Cabin’, paper given at Uncle Tom’s Cabin in the Web of Culture, Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, Hartford, CT, 1, 2 June 2007.

<sup>497</sup> David W. Stowe, *How Sweet the Sound: Music in the Lives of Americans* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004) p. 95.

<sup>498</sup> T. W. Higginson, ‘Negro Spirituals’, *The Atlantic Monthly*, 19/116 (June 1867), 685-694 p. 178.

<sup>499</sup> William Francis Allen, Charles Pickard Ware, and Lucy McKim Garrison, *Slave Songs of the United States* (Beford, MA: Applewood Books, 1996).

<sup>500</sup> J. B. T. Marsh, *The Jubilee Singers and Their Songs* (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1892). Theodore F. Seward’s compilation represents the music used by the Fisk Jubilee Singers in the first era of their history (1871-1879).

helpful for lyrical comparison and analysis, were followed by a small burst of works in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including 'Negro Hymnology' by W. A. Barrett published in *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* (1872), C. J. Ryder's 'Theology of Plantation Songs' published in the *American Missionary* (1892),<sup>501</sup> William E. Barton's trilogy, 'Hymns of the Slave and the Freedman',<sup>502</sup> 'Old Plantation Hymns',<sup>503</sup> and 'Recent Negro Melodies',<sup>504</sup> published in the *New England Magazine* in the years 1898 and 1899, and Marion Alexander Haskell's article, 'Negro Spirituals',<sup>505</sup> published in *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* (1899).

While modern writers oftentimes cited 19<sup>th</sup>-century authors, the main incentive in doing so was to issue credit for compiling the oral tradition (of black slave songs) into musical notation. Cone, for instance, credited *Slave Songs of the United States*, co-authored by William Francis Allen, Charles P. Ware and Lucy McKim Garrison, as the 'first systematic collection of slave songs'. Thomas Wentworth Higginson also received due recognition for his article 'Negro Spirituals' and his book *Army Life in a Black Regiment* that featured a chapter on black spirituals.<sup>506</sup>

In addition to these early song compilations, I am interested in exploring several late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century works that discuss the theological content of black slave songs. First, I will introduce the main writers, discussing their credentials and context. This includes T. W. Higginson, C. J. Ryder, William E. Barton, and Henry Hugh Proctor. Second, I will use a systematic theological rubric to organize a doctrinal analysis of spirituals and hymns. From this analysis I will present the theological authority of spirituals and hymns. Finally, I will discuss the use of the spirituals in black theology, especially James H. Cone's interpretation of racial liberation.

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<sup>501</sup> C. J. Ryder, 'Theology of Plantation Songs', *The American Missionary*, Volume 46/Issue 1 (January 1892), 9-17.

<sup>502</sup> William E. Barton, 'Hymns of the Slave and the Freedman', *New England Magazine*, Volume 25/Issue 5 (January 1899), 609-624.

<sup>503</sup> William E. Barton, 'Old Plantation Hymns', *New England Magazine*, Volume 25/Issue 4 (December 1898), 443-456.

<sup>504</sup> William E. Barton, 'Recent Negro Melodies', *New England Magazine*, 25/6 (February 1899), 707-719.

<sup>505</sup> Marion Alexander Haskell, 'Negro Spirituals', *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*, Volume 58 /Issue 4 (August 1899), 576-81.

<sup>506</sup> James H. Cone, *The Spirituals and the Blues* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1991) p. 131.

## 7.7 Thomas Wentworth Higginson

Higginson's observations of slave songs were drawn while serving as the commander of a black regiment during the Civil War. David Stowe regarded Higginson (1823-1911) as a 'protoethnographer'<sup>507</sup> who through his military command documented the songs of his soldiers as a living faith, which he later published for northern audiences. Though his observations were confined to a select group of men, they were singing from a repertoire that has proven to have broad representation across the South. The editors of the 1867 compilation *Slave Songs of the United States*, resulting from the efforts of over forty contributors, credited Higginson 'above all others'.<sup>508</sup> As a Harvard graduate, Unitarian minister, and colonel in the Union army, Higginson was qualified to produce a credible work. Higginson's 1885 *History of the United States* – treating the chronology of aboriginal races of the America Continent to the presidency of Andrew Jackson – reveals a significant commitment to historical writing. David Robinson, author of *The Unitarians and the Universalists*, claimed that Higginson's 'Army Life in a Black Regiment', is highly regarded by numerous modern critics as 'an overlooked masterpiece'.<sup>509</sup> In her article on the musical theology of the spirituals, Yolanda Y. Smith relied exclusively on Higginson's collection of slave songs and from it drew conclusions representative of all spirituals.<sup>510</sup>

## 7.8 Rev. Charles Jackson Ryder

Rev. C. J. Ryder (1848-1917) deserves privileged treatment in this study for three reasons: His theological agenda in documenting slave songs, the inclusion of his theological analysis of slave songs in the 1895 *Afro-American Encyclopedia*,<sup>511</sup> and, his influence upon Henry Hugh Proctor who patterned his theological assessment of spirituals after the work of Ryder.<sup>512</sup> Yet among the few modern works that deal with

<sup>507</sup> Stowe, p. 96.

<sup>508</sup> Allen, Ware, and Garrison, p. xxxvii.

<sup>509</sup> David Robinson, *The Unitarians and the Universalists* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1985) p. 276.

<sup>510</sup> Yolanda Y. Smith, 'He Still Wid Us - Jesus: The Musical Theology of Spirituals', *Christian History and Biography*, 162 (April 1999).

<sup>511</sup> C. J. Ryder, 'Christian Truth in Slave Songs: The Influence of Slavery in the Songs of Nations', in James T. Haley (ed.), *Afro-American Encyclopedia* (Nashville, Tenn.: Haley & Florida, 1895). It is highly significant that Ryder's article was published in the *Afro-American Encyclopedia*. Editor Haley presented the encyclopedia as 'The Thoughts, Doings and Sayings of the Race' and featured 'colored' authors. However, Ryder's work was unique, described as 'a humble effort on the part of the writer to let the Negro speak for himself concerning his religious faith', p. 255.

<sup>512</sup> By current academic standards, Proctor's usage of Ryder might be considered plagiarism. For example, 'These hymns are remarkable not only for what they contain, but also for their omissions.



theology in slave songs, Ryder has been almost entirely ignored; absent, for example, in Howard Thurman, Miles Mark Fisher, and James H. Cone. Even a recent treatment of the theology of spirituals by Yolanda Y. Smith fails to mention Ryder. Smith's work, *Reclaiming the Spirituals*, begins with Proctor.<sup>513</sup> John Lovell Jr.'s seminal work on spirituals, *Black Song: The Forge and Flame*, only mentions Ryder in passing.<sup>514</sup>

Ryder was serving as the District Secretary of the American Missionary Association (AMA)<sup>515</sup> when he wrote 'Theology of Plantation Songs' in 1892. In a desire to missionize 'the uneducated Negroes still unreached in the Southern States'<sup>516</sup> Ryder's work explored the doctrinal orientation of black slaves insofar as it was reflected in their plantation hymns. Ryder's reference to 'our missionary enterprises'<sup>517</sup> identified with the mission of the AMA summed up in Article II of the 1849 Constitution (of the AMA) which states,

The object of this Association shall be to conduct Christian missionary and educational operations, and to diffuse a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures in our own and other countries which are destitute of them, or which present open and urgent fields of effort.<sup>518</sup>

Aligned with abolitionism, the AMA denied membership to slave holders.<sup>519</sup> Following the emancipation of slaves in America, the social crisis caused great concern to the AMA with post-slavery educational needs being foremost. The minutes

First, we have in these plantation songs no mariolatry.' (Ryder p. 15). 'Remarkable as these songs are for what they contain, they are still more remarkable for what they do not contain.[...] these songs are free from Mariolatry.' (Proctor p. 84). [W]e discover the familiar old doctrine of the "perseverance of the saints." Did they hold it? Did they sing it? Listen as they sing of the poor inch worm! [...] Now, I submit that this quaint old plantation song not only teaches the "perseverance of the saints," but aptly illustrates about the rate of progress that most of us make in "inching along like the poor inch worm.'" (Ryder p.12). 'The old doctrine of the perseverance of the saints crops out in their songs in a very unique way. Seeing the inch-worm measuring his way along slowly on the ground inch by inch, some ingenious slave seized upon this symbol of the Christian rate of progress.' (Proctor p. 72).

<sup>513</sup> Yolanda Y. Smith, *Reclaiming the Spirituals* (Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 2004) p. 102.

<sup>514</sup> John Lovell Jr., *Black Song: The Forge and the Flame* (New York: Paragon House Publishers, 1986) p. 474. While Lovell's book deserves recognition as a seminal, it has serious deficits. Chief among these is the absence of citations.

<sup>515</sup> Ryder also served as Field Superintendent and was eventually promoted to the position of Corresponding Secretary for the AMA. According to Article VI, *Constitution of the American Missionary Association*, 'The officers of the Society shall be a President, Vice-Presidents, a Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretaries, Treasurer, two Auditors, and an Executive Committee of not less than twelve, of which the Corresponding Secretaries shall be advisory, and the Treasurer ex-officio members.'

<sup>516</sup> Ryder, 'Theology of Plantation Songs', p. 9.

<sup>517</sup> Ibid. p. 10.

<sup>518</sup> 'Constitution of the American Missionary Association', *The American Missionary*, 33/5 (May 1849), 157 p. 157.

<sup>519</sup> Ibid. Article III, 'Any person of evangelical sentiments, who professes faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is not a slaveholder, or in the practice of other immoralities, [...] may become a member of the Society'.

of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary Meeting held in 1878 registered the plight of the 'Freedmen' and 'Freedwomen' indicating that 'the root of ignorance and immorality' must be addressed, and the AMA undertook the task to provide education and church extension to reverse these conditions.<sup>520</sup> This led to the recommendation of 'the planting of Congregational churches among the blacks',<sup>521</sup> and the conclusion that the AMA must 'advance its activities in the direction of saving souls of the South and organize churches'.<sup>522</sup> In a resolution adopted at the meeting, the Association 'approv[ed] the plan [...] to make a careful examination of the field at the South, and infuse new activity in its church work, organizing churches, where the way is open, on the principles of the Congregational order'.<sup>523</sup> Subsequent to this resolution, Ryder asked,

Must we uproot all their present beliefs and plant those entirely new? Or, is it necessary rather only to graft this wild olive branch on the Congregational tree and confidently look for good fruit?<sup>524</sup>

Ryder went on to note,

It is not only a very interesting question in ethnology and race history, but also of great importance in our missionary enterprises to know just what these humble people learned of God's truth in the schoolhouse of slavery, having little human instruction, but communing with God's spirit.<sup>525</sup>

Evidenced in the lyrics of their spirituals, Ryder believed that black slaves had already acquired knowledge of God. Further, Ryder postured himself against the notion that blacks were lacking moral sensibilities, writing, 'It is not true that they entirely neglect ethics in their religious conception',<sup>526</sup> demonstrating through the lyrics of a spiritual that slaves denounced lying and mistreatment of neighbors.

C. J. Ryder's theological analysis of slave songs is an important acknowledgment of the theological authority of the spirituals. Of missiological import, Ryder raised the

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<sup>520</sup> M. E. Strieby, 'Minutes of the Thirty-Second Anniversary', *The American Missionary*, 32/121878), 356-371.

<sup>521</sup> *Ibid.* p. 366.

<sup>522</sup> *Ibid.* Why is Ryder is interested in beginning a mission to Southern blacks so many years after emancipation? The missionization of blacks after the period of Reconstruction is better understood from the work of Samuel Barrows who traveled extensively throughout the Southern States to assess the social progress of blacks following the Civil War. Barrows concluded that 'the Negro and his descendants remain in pretty much in the places where they lived when the war closed'. Barrows indicated three scenarios: 'Three courses were open to him as a free man: first, to rent his own labor; secondly, to rent and work the land of his former master; thirdly, to buy and work a farm for himself.' See Samuel June Barrows, 'What the Southern Negro Is Doing for Himself', *The Atlantic Monthly*, 67/404 (June 1891), 805-815 p. 805.

<sup>523</sup> Strieby, p. 366, 367.

<sup>524</sup> Ryder, 'Theology of Plantation Songs', p. 9.

<sup>525</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10.

<sup>526</sup> *Ibid.* p. 13.

question, 'Do these plantation hymns give evidence that the great fundamental doctrines of evangelical Christianity were held by these humble people in their days of slavery?'<sup>527</sup> The notion that hymns were central expressions of doctrine was not Ryder's innovation. In 1857 the Rev. John Dixon Long,<sup>528</sup> an ordained minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church Philadelphia (and active abolitionist) wrote,

The doctrines of the M. E. Church are more clearly and beautifully expressed in her standard Hymn-Book than in the Discipline, or in Wesley's "Sermons," or in Watson's "Institutes." The Hymn-Book contains both our creed and our liturgy. We teach the people to sing our theology. To its frequent use in the church and at social meetings may be attributed the harmony of doctrine throughout the borders of our church. The Hymn-Book is the colored people's only catechism. Many of them could state the cardinal doctrines of the Gospel in the language of song.<sup>529</sup>

But unlike Dixon, Ryder emphasized theological content of spirituals. Due to Ryder's role as the District Secretary of the American Missionary Association, his interpretation of slave songs may reveal a strategic posture. Serving in a leadership position advocating equality of citizenship for the black population of his generation, it would have been helpful for him to present the religious beliefs of black slaves as authentic and orthodox for his Christian audience. As the AMA reserved membership to those with 'evangelical sentiments', Ryder was probably obliged to demonstrate that the plantation songs endorsed doctrines important to the AMA.

By evangelical sentiments, we understand, among others, a belief in the guilty and lost condition of all men without a Saviour; the Supreme Deity, Incarnation and Atoning Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the only Saviour of the world; the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, repentance, faith and holy obedience in order to salvation; the immortality of the soul; and the retribution of the judgment in the eternal punishment of the wicked, and salvation of the righteous.<sup>530</sup>

For Ryder, the spirituals were evidence of genuine Christianity. Ryder believed that spirituals, in containing the 'fundamental truths of Christianity', were a comprehensive source of doctrine. His attempt to show that 'evangelical sentiments' were clearly expressed in the spirituals verifies that the American Missionary

<sup>527</sup> Ibid. p. 9.

<sup>528</sup> Rev. John Dixon Long's native state was Maryland. Long observed the institution of slavery in the states of Delaware and Maryland. In these states, according to Long, slavery was practiced in 'it mildest form'. After the publication of *Pictures of Slavery*, Long was forced out of Maryland. See Hinton Rowan Helper, *Compendium of the Impending Crisis of the South* (New York: A. B. Burdick, Publisher, 1860) p. 163, 164.

<sup>529</sup> John Dixon Long, *Pictures of Slavery in Church and State; Including Personal Reminiscences, Biographical Sketches, Anecdotes, Etc. Etc. With an Appendix, Containing the Views of John Wesley and Richard Watson on Slavery* (Philadelphia: Published by the Author, 1857) p. 288.

<sup>530</sup> 'Constitution of the American Missionary Association', p. 157.

Association deemed sacred songs to be valid carriers of doctrine. Ryder did not need to convince his audience that songs were authoritative mediums of theology. His task was to show that the authoritative medium of song lyrics, and in this case slave song lyric, was congruent with evangelical expression of Christian doctrine.

As Ryder's article was written during the fundamentalist-liberal controversy, it is interesting to review his results knowing that some twenty years after his work, conservative Protestant absolutes would be articulated in 'The Five Fundamentals'. This 'pentadigm', formulated between the years 1910-1915, would become an authoritative statement of evangelical Protestant theology issued by Presbyterians to combat growing liberalism associated with higher criticism and modern science.<sup>531</sup> The 'Five Fundamentals' affirmed as essential doctrines were: the Virgin Birth, the Deity of Christ, the Miracles of Christ, the Inerrancy of the Christian Scriptures, the Substitutionary Atonement, and the Physical Resurrection of Christ. Earlier conferences, such as the Conference of Believers in the Pre-Millennial Advent of Jesus Christ (1878) had affirmed the authority of the Bible, the visible bodily return of Christ, the imminence of the Second Coming and, while affirming of the Church's duty to fulfill the Great Commission, denied the biblical necessity of a world-wide conversion prior to the return of Christ.<sup>532</sup> Chronologically, Ryder's analysis of the theology in plantation songs lies between these two doctrinal movements.

## 7.9 Rev. William Eleazer Barton

Barton (1861-1930) received his Doctorate in Divinity from Oberlin Theological Seminary, after which he served in numerous Congregational churches before teaching at Vanderbilt University. An accomplished writer, Barton was especially noted for his work on Abraham Lincoln; these works have established Barton as a competent researcher and prominent writer of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>533</sup> After living in

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<sup>531</sup> G. M. Marsden and B. J. Longfield, 'Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy', in D. G. Hart (ed.), *Dictionary of the Presbyterian & Reformed Tradition in America* (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P & R Publishing, 2005) p. 103.

<sup>532</sup> Samuel Harris, 'The Millenarian Conference', *The New Englander and Yale Review*, 38/148 (January 1879), 114-148. Premillennialism held that the Second Coming of Christ would precede the Millennium. Postmillennialism idealized the worldwide proclamation of the gospel before the Millennium, after which the Second Coming would occur. This will be discussed in the context of missions in chapter ten.

<sup>533</sup> Barton's works on Lincoln include, *Abraham Lincoln and His Books* (1920), *The Creed of Abraham Lincoln* (1920), *The Greatness of Abraham Lincoln* (1922), *The Life of Abraham Lincoln* (1935).

the South for seven years (1880-1887)<sup>534</sup> Barton was deeply convicted by the need to preserve the spirituals, largely for their value as a source of religious expression.

- These songs are such excellent exponents of “heart religion” that they are certain to disappear before the swift coming “book religion,” save as they are carefully recorded and preserved. I exhort all teachers, pastors and others who are able to secure these songs to do so, with the music wherever possible, and to see that they are suitably preserved in print.<sup>535</sup>

Emphasizing the doctrinal content of slave songs Barton wrote, ‘The underlying theology has always seemed to me interesting’.<sup>536</sup>

## 7.10 Henry Hugh Proctor

Henry Hugh Proctor (1868-1933) graduated from Fisk University in 1891, Yale Divinity School in 1894, and received the Doctor of Divinity from Clark University in 1904. Proctor was ordained in the Congregational Church and served as pastor of the First Congregational Church, Atlanta from 1894-1920 and later the Nazarene Congregational Church in Brooklyn. Proctor was often engaged as an international speaker in the area of ‘race conditions’.<sup>537</sup> Proctor’s work is helpful in corroborating Ryder’s theological analysis of slave songs. According to Yolanda Smith, Proctor was ‘one of the first credentialed black theologians to assess the spirituals’.<sup>538</sup>

## 7.11 Theological Interest and Impact of Spirituals

Writers such as Ryder, Proctor and Barton approached slave songs with the general understanding that the spirituals were authentic expressions of Christian faith. As with other compilers, they considered the spirituals to be valuable for their inspirational impact beyond a slave audience, even upon white audiences and readers. Granted, some writers complained that slave songs were ‘weird’<sup>539</sup> or had ‘grotesque theology’,<sup>540</sup> but others defended spirituals with the highest of accolades. Higginson was deeply impacted by the lyric ‘I’ll lie in my grave and stretch out my arms’ in *I Know Moon-rise*, writing, ‘Never, it seems to me, since man first lived and suffered,

<sup>534</sup> Barton, ‘Old Plantation Hymns’, p. 443.

<sup>535</sup> Barton, ‘Recent Negro Melodies’, p. 719.

<sup>536</sup> Barton, ‘Hymns of the Slave and the Freedman’, p. 611.

<sup>537</sup> A. B. Caldwell (ed.), *History of the American Negro and His Institutions* (Atlanta, Georgia: A. B. Caldwell Publishing Co., 1917) p. 136.

<sup>538</sup> Smith, *Reclaiming the Spirituals* p. 102.

<sup>539</sup> C. C. Creegan, ‘Our Young Ladies’, *The Home Missionary*, 60/1 (May 1887), 14-15 p. 15.

<sup>540</sup> ‘Editor’s Drawer’, *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*, 49/294 (November 1874), 899-904 p. 901.

was his infinite longing for peace uttered more plaintively than in that line.<sup>541</sup> Barton was also deeply impacted by spirituals and testified, ‘among eschatological songs, I do not remember any that affected me as *Who’s Dat Yandah?*’<sup>542</sup> Elaborating, Barton described his experience in detail, ‘This song is so painfully realistic in its tone in picturing as to cause an involuntary turning of the head in expectation of some majestic Presence.’ After hearing the Fisk Jubilee Singers sing *Motherless Child* Barton wrote,

The swell on these words is indescribable. Its effect is almost physical. From the utter dejection of the first part it rises with a sustained, clear faith. It expresses more than the sorrows of slavery; it has also the deep religious nature of the slave, and the consolation afforded him in faith and prayer.<sup>543</sup>

Mark Twain also witnessed the impact of the Jubilee Singers. In a personal letter Twain recounted his experience.

The Jubilees sang a lot of pieces. Arduous and painstaking cultivation has not diminished or artificialized their music, but on the contrary – to my surprise – has mightily reinforced its eloquence and beauty. Away back in the beginning, to my mind, their music made all other vocal music cheap, and that early notion is emphasized now. It is utterly beautiful to me and it moves me infinitely more than any other music can.<sup>544</sup>

Proctor emphasized the emotional impression of spirituals and appealed to a mosaic of voices for testimony.

But there is more heart than art in these songs. The noble Christian sentiment in them has filled more hearts than Longfellow’s with “strange emotion.” A little child listening to the Jubilee Singers burst into tears. When they sang before the Queen of England she broke down and wept[.]<sup>545</sup>

Henry Ward Beecher, who hosted the first public performance of the Fisk Jubilee Singers in the United States, described the impression upon his congregation.

Well, they appeared in double rank, stretching clear across the platform in the lecture room, and there were about 1,100 people there and in the parlours that open into it, and they began to sing. It was as still as death. They sang two pieces. Tears were trickling down a great many eyes. They sang three pieces, and they burst out into a perfect enthusiasm of applause; and when they had sung four and five pieces my people rose up in mass and said, “these folk must sing in the church.”<sup>546</sup>

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<sup>541</sup> Higginson, p. 689.

<sup>542</sup> Barton, ‘Recent Negro Melodies’, p. 719.

<sup>543</sup> Barton, ‘Hymns of the Slave and the Freedman’, p. 610.

<sup>544</sup> Mark Twain, *The Selected Letters of Mark Twain* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1982) p. 246.

<sup>545</sup> Henry Hugh Proctor, *Between Black and White: Autobiographical Sketches* (Boston, Chicago: The Pilgrim Press, 1925) p. 59.

<sup>546</sup> Henry Ward Beecher, *A Summer in England with Henry Ward Beecher* (New York: Fords, Howard, & Hulbert, 1887) p. 124, 125.

William Henry Milburn, a Northern Methodist preacher who spent six years in Alabama,<sup>547</sup> witnessed the singing of slaves. In *Ten Years of Preacher-life* Milburn described the emotional impact of slave singing.

Music seems their native element. I do not remember to have seen a negro that was not a sweet singer. Nothing can be finer than to hear a congregation of two or three thousand of them; as at a camp-meeting, with one heart and voice they pour forth in plaintive or triumphant strains of their own composition, hymns of praise to God. [...] Tears would come to the eyes as I listened to the plaintive sweetness of the music set to these simple words, "There's a rest for the weary, there's a rest for the weary, there's a rest for the weary, where they rest forevermore."<sup>548</sup>

These accounts demonstrate the impact of slave songs, both written and performed, among white readers and audiences. Similar to hymns, spirituals became recognized for their devotional value. Various writers recognized their doctrinal congruence with Protestantism at large.

## 7.12 Theology and Theological Authority of Spirituals

While most observers shared an interest in preserving spirituals, numerous writers were alert to their doctrinal value. W. A. Barrett identified their functional canonicity.

It must be distinctly understood that these verses, which to the better informed mind appear ridiculous and irreverent, are not so to the poor people who sing them, but are earnest truth, and convey to the minds of the singers often the most acceptable form of doctrine, and reminiscences of Scripture history[.]<sup>549</sup>

Higginson, Barton, Ryder and Proctor sought to provide theological commentary, their publications appraising the theology in spirituals (and improvised hymns) demonstrate that spirituals gained the attention of credentialed theologians. For the most part, the theology of spirituals was assessed through the lens of systematic theology.

Both Ryder and Proctor organized the doctrinal content of slave songs systematically. Ryder structured 'The Theology of Plantation Songs' in the following order:

1. God's sovereignty
2. Christ's divinity
3. The Holy Spirit
4. Atonement, Conversion and Regeneration

<sup>547</sup> Fox-Genovese and Genovese, p. 340.

<sup>548</sup> Milburn, p. 340, 341.

<sup>549</sup> W. A. Barrett, 'Negro Hymnology', *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, 15/354 (August 1 1872), 559-561 p. 559.

5. Man's Lost and Ruined Condition
6. Future Punishment of Sin and the Rewards of Faith and Obedience
7. Marian Piety ('Praises of the Virgin')
8. The Absence of Vindictive Bitterness

Proctor structured 'The Theology of Southern Slave Songs' in the following order:

1. Their Belief as to God
2. Their Belief as to Christ
3. Their Belief as to the Holy Spirit
4. Their Belief as to Angels
5. Their Belief as to the Christian Life
6. Their Belief as to Satan
7. Their Belief as to the Future

Both Ryder and Proctor were convinced of the doctrinal orthodoxy of slave songs.

We find, then, even in the crude language of these plantation songs, evidence that among these uneducated millions of Negroes there is a sound and wholesome belief in the great fundamental truths of Christianity. First - that God governs the world. Second - that Christ is divine. Third - the fact, the necessity, and the efficacy of the atonement. Fourth - Man's lost and ruined condition. Fifth - the need and possibility of conversion and regeneration. Sixth - progress in the Christian life. Seventh - future punishment of sin and the rewards of faith and obedience. We mark, also, the absence of the mischievous doctrines of the Romish Church, and also all vindictive bitterness.<sup>550</sup>

Such a tenacious grasp of the fundamental and essential truths of Christianity by these unlettered slaves in the midst of social confusion and moral error is indicative of the original qualities of mind and heart of the Negro people, and is calculated to inspire with renewed hope those who have so earnestly wrought and confidently longed for the evangelization of the black man both in America and Africa.<sup>551</sup>

Proctor's distinction between the Bible and theology resembles Ritschl's description of regulative theology as outside the Bible.<sup>552</sup>

The Bible itself is not a theological treatise. The writers of that sacred Book would not be considered theologians in the commonly accepted sense. The Bible is a collection of deliverances, addresses, sermons, discourses, songs, letters and narratives. From these the student constructs a theology of the Books of the Bible - Biblical Theology. Not dissimilar in kind, however

<sup>550</sup> Ryder, 'Theology of Plantation Songs', p. 12.

<sup>551</sup> Proctor, p. 87.

<sup>552</sup> According to Ritschl (page 32ff.), the Bible is not a collection of theological statements. As such, regulative theological statements, though derived from the Bible, are 'outside the Bible'.



unlike in importance, is the task assumed in my attempt to formulate a system of theologico-religious conceptions from the songs of the Southern slaves.<sup>553</sup>

Ryder's and Proctor's works represented the first bona fide attempts to categorize the theology of spirituals. Carrying on from their work, I will provide a comprehensive overview of the theology reflected in black spirituals and hymnody by applying the systematic categories of Theology, Christology, Pneumatology, Anthropology, Bibliology, Harmatology, Soteriology, Eschatology, Angelology, Demonology and Ecclesiology, as well as Doxology and Marian Piety. Though these latter two categories fall outside of standard systematic theology and are more closely aligned with liturgical theology, they contribute to our understanding of the religious expression in spirituals and the faith perspectives that are embedded in their texts. Ultimately, I wish to show that the theological authority of the spirituals is proportional to both the theological content of the spirituals and their catechetical role.

To assess the theology in spirituals and improvised hymns, I have consulted the lyric collections of T. W. Higginson, C. J. Ryder, Marion Alexander Haskell, William E. Barton, Henry Hugh Proctor, and Wyatt Tee Walker. Taken together, the writings of these six authors provide a representative sample of over 180 spirituals.<sup>554</sup> In addition I have used Theodore F. Seward's compilation of the 138-song repertoire of the Fisk Jubilee Singers,<sup>555</sup> and the anthology of 136 slave songs published by Allen, Ware and Garrison. With the exception of Walker,<sup>556</sup> the corpus focuses on songs written during slavery.

The retrospective analysis of literature of any kind is challenging. In many cases, observers can impose their current perspective on texts from an earlier period. Arguably, this is the case here in examining spirituals for the distribution of systematic theological categories. The spirituals, plainly, were not written under the didactic task of safeguarding doctrine in song or compartmentalizing lyrics to ensure a creedal comprehensiveness. That said, they are texts rich in religious expressions common to biblical Christianity. The lens of systematic theology yields a picture that shows they contain most of the core beliefs of Christianity.

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<sup>553</sup> Proctor, p. 60.

<sup>554</sup> Proctor's collection usually includes excerpts rather than the full text of the spiritual, though in some cases he provides the full text.

<sup>555</sup> Theodore F. Seward's compilation represents the music used by the Fisk Jubilee Singers in the first era of their history (1871-1879).

<sup>556</sup> Walker assigned the 'prayer and praise hymns' to the late-19<sup>th</sup> century.

### 7.13 Theology: *His Name it is Jehovah*<sup>557</sup>

C. J. Ryder felt that the view of God's sovereignty in the spirituals he examined was compatible with orthodox Christianity. Ryder writes,

These songs teach, beyond doubt, that the slaves held to the truth of divine sovereignty. We repeat in our churches the beautiful language of the Apostles' Creed: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth." So do these humble Negroes.<sup>558</sup>

Ryder draws his evidence from the songs *Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel?* and *Keep Me From Sinking Down*.

Didn't my Lord deliver Daniel  
D'liver Daniel, d'liver Daniel  
Didn't my Lord deliver Daniel  
And why not every man?<sup>559</sup>

I bless the Lord I'm gwine to die  
Keep me from sinking down  
I'm gwine judgment by and by  
Keep me from sinking down  
Oh Lord, Oh my Lord! Oh, my good Lord!  
Keep me from sinking down<sup>560</sup>

While the first song presents the belief that the Lord is capable of delivering every 'man' as he had done for Daniel (from the lions), Jonah (from the whale), and the Hebrew children (from the fiery furnace), there is no direct or indirect tribute to the Lord as divine or as Creator. The second song that Ryder used to illustrate the slave's view of God demonstrates a high level of dependence on the Lord, but there is no indication of the Lord's divinity such as that stated in the Apostles' Creed. Ryder derived God's sovereignty over creation from the lyrics, but the implication that the writers intended to convey such a theological view of God seems far from being certain. Ryder did bring some balance to his argument later when he provided a disclaimer admitting that 'the divinity of Christ [is] crudely stated, imperfectly discerned, but tenaciously maintained'.<sup>561</sup>

Though Proctor claimed that an important element in the spirituals is the acknowledgment of God as 'Father', he did not offer any textual support. Instead, Proctor emphasized God's attributes. In regard to God's omnipotence and

<sup>557</sup> Marsh, p. 213.

<sup>558</sup> Ryder, 'Theology of Plantation Songs', p. 10.

<sup>559</sup> Ibid.

<sup>560</sup> Ibid.

<sup>561</sup> Ibid. p. 11.

omnipresence Proctor argued, 'They believed strongly that God had all power and perfect knowledge.'<sup>562</sup> Proctor quoted the lyrics 'No man works like him' and 'He sees all you do, He hears all you say' as demonstration.

Miles Mark Fisher indicated that the black view of deity varied. Perhaps in an effort to address the deity correctly so that his prayer to return to Africa might be answered, a slave from the Port Royal Islands employed the name 'Jehovah'.

Jehovah, Hallelujah  
De Lord is perwide (repeat)<sup>563</sup>

While the term 'Jehovah' is used sparingly, The Jubilee Singers sang a song titled *His Name it is Jehovah*.

His name it is Jehovah  
For he hears his people pray<sup>564</sup>

Ryder's comparison of the spirituals with the Apostles' Creed required a belief in God as 'the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth'. In contrast, James H. Cone contended the spirituals made 'no theological distinction [...] between the Son and the Father', arguing 'The death and resurrection of Jesus are particular focal points of the spirituals.'<sup>565</sup> While both authors can be validated in part, both are best modified. Confirming Ryder's observation, the spirituals make references to God as 'Father'. *I Can't Stay Behind* features the title 'Father' in the fifth verse, 'My Fader call and I must go'.<sup>566</sup> *Trouble of the World* expresses what appears to be a salvific aspiration, 'I want to be my Fader's chil'en, Roll, Jordan, Roll'.<sup>567</sup> *My Father, How Long?* conveys hope during and beyond the suffering of this world.<sup>568</sup> However, to consider these lyrics as interchangeable with the sense of God as the 'Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth' is going too far. But Cone's contention<sup>569</sup> is also overstated. While most spirituals focus on Jesus as Lord, the Father is recognized

<sup>562</sup> Proctor, p. 62.

<sup>563</sup> Fisher, p. 60, 61. Fisher suggested that slaves inserted names and titles of God from the Christian faith to gain voyage back to Africa with the American Colonization Society.

<sup>564</sup> Marsh, p. 213.

<sup>565</sup> James H. Cone, 'Black Spirituals: A Theological Interpretation', *Theology Today*, 29/1 (April 1972), 54-69 p. 62.

<sup>566</sup> Allen, Ware, and Garrison, p. 6. This usage of 'Father' might be kinship, but in kinship applications, spirituals tend to cycle through family relationships, e.g. 'sister', 'brother', and 'mother'. Allen, Ware and Garrison indicated that the lyrics would have inserted the word 'mother' in place of 'father' for repeat verses.

<sup>567</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10.

<sup>568</sup> *Ibid.* p. 93.

<sup>569</sup> Cone, 'Black Spirituals: A Theological Interpretation', p. 62. Cone writes, 'It is significant that theology proper blends imperceptibility into Christology in the spirituals. No theological distinction is made between the Son and the Father.' This statement bears ramifications in Trinitarian theology and deserves further comment.

as unique. *Every Hour in the Day* presents 'the Father' as theologically distinct from Jesus.

One cold freezing morning  
I lay dis body down  
I will pick up my cross an' follow my Lord  
All 'round my Fader's throne<sup>570</sup>

The song lyrics of *Come Along, Moses* make a statement on the character of God that is not Christ-centric.

We have a just God to plead-a our cause  
We have a just God to plead-a our cause  
We are the people of God<sup>571</sup>

Even if the spirituals were lacking in clarity or eloquence, Ryder's contention that content comparisons could be made with the Apostle's Creed is striking. His claim that the declaration of God's sovereignty in the spirituals was comparable to the Apostle's Creed set the tone for Ryder's goal: To demonstrate theological parity between historical Christian creeds and the slave songs of antebellum America.

#### 7.14 Christology: *Ride On, King Jesus*<sup>572</sup>

The person of Jesus is prominent in slave songs. The meaning behind the name and person of Jesus, though, may represent a range of possibilities. According to Fisher, Jesus was added out of a sense of desperation to the 'already full pantheon of worthies'<sup>573</sup> exemplified in the portrayal of South Carolina as the place of Jesus' birth. Fisher believed this legend was used to facilitate urgency for hushed voices to avoid getting caught in secret meetings at which slaves were engaged in African traditional religion. Being quiet, so as not to disturb the 'baby Jesus', was a type of Christian euphemism used to cover their real activities.<sup>574</sup> According to Fisher, if Jesus was mentioned in a spiritual, it almost always carried a double meaning; sometimes a cynical one.<sup>575</sup> He demonstrated his point with the song *For Jesus Come and Lock De Door*.

Bow low, Mary, bow low, Martha  
For Jesus come and lock de door  
And carry de keys away

<sup>570</sup> Marsh, p. 58.

<sup>571</sup> Ibid. p. 104.

<sup>572</sup> Ibid. p. 202.

<sup>573</sup> Fisher, p. 59.

<sup>574</sup> Ibid. p. 74.

<sup>575</sup> Ibid. p. 166.

Sail, sa[i]l, over yonder  
 And view de promised land,  
 For Jesus come and lock de door  
 And carry de keys away<sup>576</sup>

Fisher relied heavily on Higginson, but sometimes parted ways with him over interpretation. For Fisher, the black regiment wasn't singing about Heaven; they were singing about Africa. Mistreatment of blacks was attributed to Jesus,<sup>577</sup> now embedded in the religion of the white Christian. In Fisher's words, 'Black people sang cynically that Jesus had indeed come, but He had locked up racial attitudes and presumably had put the keys in His pockets afterwards.'<sup>578</sup>

Other songs used by Fisher attest to the evolutionary nature of black religious music. In a post-Civil War song *O No Man, No Man, No Man Can Hinder Me*, Fisher showed the shift toward a view more compatible with Christianity. In this song, 'Jesus was superior to Satan and that with Him people could do most anything.'<sup>579</sup>

1. Walk in, kind Savior, No man can hinder me!
2. See what wonder Jesus done, O no man can hinder me!
3. Jesus made de dumb to speak.
4. Jesus make de cripple walk.
5. Jesus give de blind his sight.
6. Jesus do most anyting.
7. Rise, poor Lajarush, from de *tomb* [grave].
8. Satan ride an iron-gray horse.
9. King Jesus ride a milk-white horse.<sup>580</sup>

John Wesley Work III questioned Fisher's thesis openly in his address to the International Hymnological Conference 10-11 September 1961 entitled, 'The Negro Spiritual'. Work III suggested that any double meanings that may have existed were eliminated after the Civil War.<sup>581</sup>

Walker believed that post-war hymns of African Americans demonstrated a developed Christology. Yet Rev. Dr. Jeremiah A. Wright Jr., author of the

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<sup>576</sup> Ibid.

<sup>577</sup> Ibid.

<sup>578</sup> Ibid.

<sup>579</sup> Ibid. p. 173.

<sup>580</sup> Allen, Ware, and Garrison, p. 10. In Fisher, p 173. *The Jubilee Singers* performed the song according to the more common title *Ride on, King Jesus*.

<sup>581</sup> John Wesley Work III, 'The Negro Spiritual', in James Abington (ed.), *Readings in African American Church Music and Worship* (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2002), 15-26 p. 18.

introduction to the second volume of Walker's *Spirits that Dwell in Deep Woods*, indicated that, 'The religion of the slave and religion of the slave holder are by definition two different religions; and the gods that they serve are by extension two different gods'. Walker himself did not discuss the different ideologies inherent to the 'two religions'. Walker's work reflected the view that African Americans were superior ambassadors of Christianity compared to the hypocrisy of white Christianity. A stand-alone statement by Walker suggests this.

Once again we are startled by the spiritual sensitivity of these rural Black Americans who developed so deep an understanding of the dynamics of the Christian faith in their attempts to cope with the rigor of white racist America.<sup>582</sup>

This suggests a 'restorationist tendency'<sup>583</sup> in Walker, one that is bolstered by his penchant for comparing the theology of later spirituals ('prayer and praise hymns') to the circumstances of the early church. In this paradigm, the lyrics of spirituals express the true teachings of Jesus and attribute the restoration of Jesus' teachings to Americans of African descent. If this is his tacit conclusion, its counterpart could be stated thusly: The white church, at least in the South, was not true to the teachings of Jesus. If spirituals functioned, at least in part, as a doctrinal expression of a restored or purified Christianity, their theological authority would be greatly enhanced in an American Protestant culture fascinated with restorationism.

Walker noted that the 'praise and prayer hymns' are Christ-centric and Ryder found evidence that Christ's deity is expressed, but both of these observations may be lacking in evidence. While there is a reasonable amount of Christological content in the spirituals, the portrayal of Jesus' divine nature is limited.

A very rare reference to Jesus as the Son of God is found in the lyrics provided by Barton in *Old Plantation Hymns*.

This world is not my home  
This world is not my home  
This world's a howling wilderness  
This world is not my home

Did Christ o'er sinners weep?  
And shall our cheeks be dry?  
Let floods of penitential grief  
Burst forth from ev'ry eye.

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<sup>582</sup> Walker, p. 92.

<sup>583</sup> Restorationist in terms of restoring the early church.

The Son of God in tears  
 The wondering angels see  
 Be thou astonished, O my soul  
 He shed those drops for thee.<sup>584</sup>

The above spiritual, *This World is Not My Home*, fits into the category of 'Dr. Watts' as an adapted version of Benjamin Beddome's hymn *Did Christ O'er Sinners Weep*.<sup>585</sup> It was re-titled either by the slaves or by Barton, and includes the insertion of a chorus (by slaves) into the hymn stanzas. This song lyric has a blended style of poetry that contrasts the repetitive phrase 'this world is not my home' with the quatrain structure from English hymnody, and demonstrates the method of blending slave songs with English Protestant hymns.

*The Old Ark* (from the Jubilee Singers' repertoire) is an example of a spiritual with high Christology, including a reference to Jesus as the 'Son of God'.

In a my soul was a little white stone  
 On that stone was a newly written  
 None could read it but those received  
 I received it and I could read it  
 Just let me tell you what the stone did say  
 Redeemed, redeemed a been Son of God  
 Been washed in the blood of the Lamb<sup>586</sup>

This song may be one of very few of the spirituals (not including adaptations of English hymns) that address Jesus as 'Son of God'.

That African Americans embraced the person of Jesus in a manner acceptable to American Protestantism is evident. Helpful toward this cause was the song *Lily of the Valley* that made the use of floral imagery from the Song of Songs (Song of Solomon). A number of hymns popular in 19<sup>th</sup> century American Protestantism referred to Jesus as the 'Lily of the Valley'.<sup>587</sup> Spirituals also made use of sentimentalized language for Jesus, but unlike other songs of the period that applied

<sup>584</sup> Barton, 'Old Plantation Hymns', p. 449.

<sup>585</sup> Benjamin Beddome. 1717-1795.

<sup>586</sup> Marsh, p. 310.

<sup>587</sup> Bishop Reginald Heber's *By Cool Siloam's Shady Rill*. 'By cool Siloam's shady rill, How sweet the lily grows!' One of the most popular hymns in American Protestantism was Julia Ward Howe's *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. 'In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea'.

floral imagery from an experiential perspective,<sup>588</sup> the spiritual sung by the Jubilee Singers included a doxological theme.<sup>589</sup>

[verse 1] King Jesus in the chariot rides, Oh! My Lord  
With four white horses side by side, Oh! My Lord

[refrain] He's the lily of the valley, Oh my Lord  
He's the lily of the valley, Oh my Lord<sup>590</sup>

Reflecting an essential alignment with evangelical Protestantism, the spirituals clearly uphold the belief in the resurrection of Jesus. 'Twas a beautiful Sunday mornin' when he rose from the dead',<sup>591</sup> affirms the resurrection. Though non-creedal in structure, the expression carries the meaning adequately. Other songs that attest to the belief in resurrection include *The Resurrection Morn*<sup>592</sup> and *Who is on the Lord's Side?*<sup>593</sup>

Walker argued that the prayer and praise hymns are Christ-centric and reflect a developed Christology. There are few direct Christological statements in Walker's collection. Of those statements, the most elevated Christology is found in the song *Jesus Is a Rock in a Weary Land*.

Jesus is a Rock in a weary land,  
A weary land, a weary land;  
Jesus is a Rock in a weary land,  
A Shelter in the time of storm.<sup>594</sup>

Yet high Christology is evident in song collections from an earlier period. For instance, *King Emmanuel* or *Little Children, Then Won't You Be Glad!* published in the 1867 collection of Allen, Ware and Garrison.

O my King Emmanuel, my Emmanuel above  
Sing glory to my King Emmanuel<sup>595</sup>  
King Jesus, he was so strong, my Lord  
That he jarred down the walls of hell<sup>596</sup>

<sup>588</sup> *Lily of the Valley* by Charles W. Fry (1881), *Jesus Only* by Hattie M. Convey (1894), *Stand By Me* by Charles A. Tindley (1905) and *Valley Lilies* by Flora Kirkland (c. 1906).

<sup>589</sup> Other verses are less doxological, e.g. 'These shoes I wear are gospel shoes, Oh! my Lord. And you can wear them if you choose, Oh! my Lord.'

<sup>590</sup> Marsh, p. 179.

<sup>591</sup> *Ibid.* p. 51.

<sup>592</sup> Allen, Ware, and Garrison, p. 54.

<sup>593</sup> *Ibid.* p. 56.

<sup>594</sup> Walker.

<sup>595</sup> Allen, Ware, and Garrison, p. 26.

<sup>596</sup> *Ibid.* p. 87.



The Jubilee Singers performed numerous songs expressive of high Christology. *Hallelujah to the Lamb*<sup>597</sup> would certainly rank with the highest of Christological songs in Christendom, then and now.

Both the divinity and humanity of Christ were evident in the spirituals. Providing a Christological commentary that might have appealed especially to his fellow theologians, Proctor suggested the spirituals reflected Christ's 'double nature'.

Thus they bore testimony to his divinity by their belief in his supernatural power, resurrection, royalty, regnancy and atoning work. But to them he was also human. He was "a man of sorrows." He could sympathize with those "acquainted with grief."<sup>598</sup>

In sum, spirituals aligned with orthodox Christology and Protestant crucicentrism. Though the spirituals may not have expressed doctrine in a typical creedal construction, Jesus is affirmed as human and divine.

### 7.15 Pneumatology: *If you want the Holy Ghost*<sup>599</sup>

The depiction of the Holy Ghost is limited in spirituals. Of plantation songs Ryder says, 'There is little in their songs concerning the Holy Spirit.'<sup>600</sup> This is reflected in the spirituals recorded by Higginson, Barton, and Haskell, as well as the hymns compiled by Walker. Though few songs feature the nature of the Holy Spirit, there are a number of spirituals that provide a glimpse of the Spirit's activity.

*March On* moves from the scene of the Exodus to Pentecost. Both events are set in the context of the 'marchers' gaining the victory.

When Peter was preaching at Pentecost  
You shall gain the victory  
He was endowed with the Holy Ghost  
You shall gain the day  
March on, and you shall gain the victory  
March on, and you shall gain the day<sup>601</sup>

Similarly, the apocalyptic view gained from the Book of Revelation depicts the Holy Ghost's role in the final victory of God in human history. Though the more typical term 'Judgment Day' is not used in the song *Mighty Day*, it is surely implied.

O wasn't that a mighty day? (repeat)

<sup>597</sup> 'Judgment will find you so'. In Marsh, *The Jubilee Singers and Their Songs*, p. 196.

<sup>598</sup> Proctor, p. 63, 64.

<sup>599</sup> Walker, p. 107.

<sup>600</sup> Ryder, 'Theology of Plantation Songs', p. 11.

<sup>601</sup> Marsh, p. 200.

Yes, the book of Revolution's [sic] to be bro't forth on that day,  
 And ev'ry leaf unfolded, the book of seven seals.  
 As I went down into Egypt, I camped upon the ground;  
 At the sounding of the trumpet, the Holy Ghost came down.<sup>602</sup>

In such spirituals, the work of the Holy Ghost need not be set in a careful chronological context. On the contrary, the experiences of John and Daniel are both used to express the power of the Holy Ghost as demonstrated in *Sabbath Has No End* and *My Lord Delivered Daniel*.

I'm a goin' in Zion, I believe. (repeated)  
 And Sabbath has no end.

When John first came out of Egypt,  
 He camp'd upon the ground,  
 He sang one of Zion's praises,  
 And the Holy Ghost came down.<sup>603</sup>

De richest man dat ever I saw  
 Was de one dat beg de most  
 His soul was filled wid Jesus  
 An' wid de Holy Ghost, Yes it was!<sup>604</sup>

Though the spirituals emphasize the work of the Spirit in the Exodus, Pentecost, and the Day of Judgment, the personal regenerative work of the Holy Ghost is included. (Obviously this was essential to Ryder who listed 'the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit' among the 'evangelical sentiments' of the AMA.) The spiritual *Something on the Inside Working on the Outside* provides a clear testimony of the Spirit's ministry in the inner being.

Holy Ghost on the inside, working on the outside;  
 I feel a change in my life (repeated)  
 I FEEL A CHANGE IN MY LIFE!<sup>605</sup>

*A great Camp-meeting in the Promised Land* shows that the ministry of the Holy Spirit was expected and welcomed at revival meetings.

Oh, feel the Spirit a-moving  
 Don't you get weary  
 Feel the Spirit a-moving  
 Don't you get weary

This spiritual has a parallel verse 'For Jesus is a-coming, Don't you get weary', suggesting that the Spirit's work is of equal value and power to that of Jesus. This

<sup>602</sup> Barton, 'Hymns of the Slave and the Freedman', p. 612.

<sup>603</sup> Barton, 'Recent Negro Melodies', p. 711.

<sup>604</sup> Marsh, p. 309.

<sup>605</sup> Walker, p. 159.

view is further supported in the much-loved Afro-Baptist spiritual<sup>606</sup> *The Old Ship of Zion*<sup>607</sup> in which Jesus is depicted as the ‘Captain’ and the Holy Ghost as the ‘Pilot’.<sup>608</sup> Of slaves in Alabama, Rev. William Henry Wilburn claimed this to be ‘their greatest favorite’.<sup>609</sup> In ‘The Romance of the Negro’, Edward A. Pollard described ‘the old ship of Zion’ as their ‘favorite religious phantasm’.<sup>610</sup>

Seafaring metaphors are plentiful in English and American Protestant hymnody and references to Jesus as ‘Captain’ and ‘Pilot’ are not uncommon, sometimes included in the same hymn (such as ‘Jesus my pilot, my captain’ in Eliza E. Hewitt’s *Saved from the Wreck*, and ‘Wonderful Jesus I need thee [...] Pilot me over I pray’ in Manie P. Ferguson’s *Christ in the Storm*). The theme of Jesus as ‘Captain’<sup>611</sup> was popular in American Protestant hymnody. In ‘Nautical Themes in Evangelical Hymnody’, Richard J. Mouw focused on the person of Jesus in hymn texts. Mouw used Edward Hopper’s 1871 hymn *Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me* as illustration.<sup>612</sup> Answering ‘the plea of a reliable pilot/navigator’, white hymnists defaulted to Jesus.<sup>613</sup>

Slave songs shared the interest in nautical themes, a fact that may have furthered the endearment of spirituals, but slave songs also emphasized the pneumatological element. Whereas white versions of *The Old Ship of Zion* (and other nautical hymns)

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<sup>606</sup> Walter E. Pitts, Jr. titled a book after this spiritual. He elaborated on the meaning for Afro-Baptists, ‘it [the old ship of Zion] symbolizes the church that has provided both a shelter against the storm of racial oppression and a vessel for sailing through it. See Walter E. Pitts Jr., *The Old Ship of Zion: The Afro-Baptist Ritual in the African Diaspora* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) p. 175. In an earlier work, Pitts emphasized the success of Afro-Baptists in ‘cultural retention’ and, that ‘under the guise of Protestant Christianity, [were] able to retain some semblance of African cult initiation and trance worship.’ See Walter E. Pitts Jr., “‘If You Caint Get the Boat, Take a Log’”: Cultural Reinterpretation in the Afro-Baptist Ritual’, *American Ethnologist*, 16/2 (May 1989), 279-293 p. 279.

<sup>607</sup> Allen, Ware, and Garrison encountered two versions of this spiritual. In 19<sup>th</sup> century American Protestant hymnals, there are at least six ‘white hymn’ versions dating to 1843, e.g. *O What Ship is this Comes Sailing By?* (1843) *Come, Tell of Your Vessel* (1845), *What Ship is This That Will Take Us All?* (1854) *Can You Tell Me What Ship?* (1857), *What Ship is this that is Sailing?* (1887), and *I Was Drifting Away* (1889).

<sup>608</sup> Allen, Ware, and Garrison, p. 103.

<sup>609</sup> Rev. William Henry Wilburn witnessed slaves in Alabama sing this spiritual and wrote in his autobiography, ‘But the “Old Ship of Zion” is their greatest favorite [...] The unction which with the words, “King Jesus,” are pronounced thrill you like an electric shock – for it is as a monarch, they most love to think of Him. Great tears are rolling down every sable cheek, while every eye is lit with joy, and you feel the sincerity of their rapturous shouts, “Oh, glory, hallelujah!”’ See Milburn, p. 342.

<sup>610</sup> Edward A. Pollard, ‘The Romance of the Negro’, *The Galaxy*, 12/4 (October 1871), 470-478 p. 478.

<sup>611</sup> Jesus as ‘Captain’ was emphasized in at least two ways: 1. The captain of a ship and, 2. the captain of an army. In this section I am interested in the former only.

<sup>612</sup> Richard J. Mouw, “‘Some Poor Sailor, Tempest Tossed’”: Nautical Rescue Themes in Evangelical Hymnody’, in Richard J. Mouw and Mark A. Noll (eds.), *Wonderful Words of Life: Hymns in American Protestant History and Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004) p. 235.

<sup>613</sup> *Ibid.*

were crucicentric, slave songs gave almost equal recognition to the Holy Spirit. In this parity, slaves seem to have noticed a functional equality between King Jesus and the Holy Ghost that whites had neglected in light of pronounced crucicentrism.

Proctor's emphasis of the pneumatological in the spirituals was two-fold. First, Proctor situated the doctrinal orthodoxy of the spirituals in accordance with historical Christianity. To Proctor, the spirituals affirmed Trinitarian theology.

They believed in God the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost. The mysterious connection between these they did not try to find out. They were not troubled with Sabellian, Unitarian, or Trinitarian theories. But they believed in the Spirit as emanating from the Godhead.<sup>614</sup>

In addition, Proctor emphasized the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion. Proctor, though a Congregational minister, reported openly of the revivalist emphasis in the spirituals. At the same time, Proctor did not affiliate the 'reception of the Holy Ghost' with a crisis experience subsequent to salvation. Rather, Proctor highlighted the belief attested in spirituals that 'he [the Holy Ghost] was received in answer to prayer in conversion'.<sup>615</sup>

Slave songs recognized the power of the Holy Spirit prior to the pneumatological emphasis associated with Pentecostalism following the Azusa Street Revival. It is beyond my scope to examine causal factors between pneumatological slave songs and Pentecostalism but, chronologically, the 'Spirit emphasis' in slave songs preceded White Pentecostalism (led by Charles F. Parham). Walter J. Hollenweger argued for the black influence in Pentecostalism under W. J. Seymour.

While black music has gained recognition as a contribution by Negroes to universal culture, the black influence on the Pentecostal movement, which today has about thirty million adherents, has been forgotten despite the fact that in their books the Pentecostals mention the one-eyed black evangelist, W. J. Seymour, as one of their pioneers.<sup>616</sup>

Certainly the pneumatological emphasis in slave songs was unique from white Protestant hymnody that emphasized (almost exclusively) Revelation 3:20 – 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock' – prescribing the door of the heart as the point of entrance for Jesus (discussed in chapter nine). The connection between the highly experiential character of black religious expression and pre-Pentecostalism is clear,

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<sup>614</sup> Proctor, p. 65.

<sup>615</sup> Ibid. p. 67.

<sup>616</sup> Walter J. Hollenweger, 'Pentecostalism and Black Power', *Theology Today*, 30/3 (October 1973), 228-238 p. 232.

including ecstatic worship, Spirit-filling (or possession) and trance-like states. Spirituals served as carriers of the pneumatological emphasis that reached back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century revivals and assisted in articulating and perpetuating the charismatic emphases. Henry H. Mitchell described the pneumatological emphasis among slaves.

Thus what DuBois called the “extraordinary growth” of the Christian church among enslaved Africans was greatly enhanced when the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, broke out of the mold of the literate, formal structured Anglican liturgy and “got loose” in the radically new “dispensation” of the Great Awakenings.<sup>617</sup>

Describing the secret worship meetings of the slaves, Costen presented the view that the work of the Spirit was normative.

The momentum of the total service was precipitated by Spirit-filled encounters with God – both corporate and personal – combined with spiritual and emotional needs of the gathered community.<sup>618</sup>

The Holy Ghost’s ministry was essential to the black religious experience. The power and presence that the Spirit bestowed was not simply the stuff of ancient legends. As Moses, Peter, and John all experienced the Spirit’s endowment, so could everyone.

In *Reclaiming the Spirituals*, Yolanda Y. Smith indicated four primary pneumatological themes that are represented in the spirituals.

First, the slaves believed that the Holy Spirit was present and actively involved in their lives. [...] Second, the slaves believed that the Holy Spirit was central to their faith conversion. [...] The third theme that emerges regarding the Holy Spirit is the slaves’ belief that the Spirit initiated and empowered worship. [...] Fourth, the spirituals reveal that the Holy Spirit provided the slaves with comfort, wisdom, discernment, and strength to endure the hardships of bondage.<sup>619</sup>

After assessing the theology of the spirituals, Smith privileged the pneumatological influence of the spirituals. According to Smith, ‘the spirituals can aid the church towards a “Spirit-centered” education’. According to Smith, the work of the Holy Spirit was profound before Emancipation.

Although the slave owners distorted the Word of God, the Spirit of God allowed the slaves to see beyond the hypocrisy of the slave owners and to discern the true essence of God’s message of love and salvation.<sup>620</sup>

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<sup>617</sup> Mitchell, p. 37.

<sup>618</sup> Costen, *African American Christian Worship* p. 40.

<sup>619</sup> Smith, *Reclaiming the Spirituals* p. 104-106.

<sup>620</sup> Ibid. p. 106.

Smith witnessed to a remarkable quality of slave songs and slave religion in general: The work of the Holy Spirit was ultimate to the experiential reality of slave religion and, despite white hypocrisy, forged in the hearts of slaves a faith true to biblical Christianity. The impact of this dynamic surpassed curiosity, for as Proctor noted, the revivalist thrust of slave songs was in harmony with the Protestant emphasis upon conversion. Such an emphasis carried the impact of spirituals to the heart of American Protestantism, a doctrinal emphasis that will be explored in chapter nine.

### 7.16 Anthropology: *All God's children got wings*<sup>621</sup>

Spiritual acuity into human nature was impacted by the Wesleyan doctrine of Christian perfection (entire sanctification) and the precipitating emphasis upon the tripartite view of human beings. This doctrine endorsed the trichotomous view of human beings (body, soul and spirit) over against the dichotomous view (body and soul) that argued the soul and spirit to be synonymous. The tripartite emphasis by Methodists was not uncommon in early-19<sup>th</sup> century homiletical sources. Rev. Hugh McNeale's 1842 sermon 'Divinity' published in the *British North American Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* was typical of the antebellum period.

The body, with all its members must be crucified; the animal soul, with all its earthly affections and base lusts, must be denied and subjected; the immortal spirit must be freed from those evil dispositions which ally it to the fallen angels; pride, envy, malice, revenge, covetousness, self-will, discontent, unbelief, will become the just objects of abhorrence, as holiness, a sanctified nature, and the life of God, flourish in the soul.<sup>622</sup>

The Rev. John Bickford Heard related the doctrine of entire sanctification to anthropology in *The Tripartite Nature of Man: Spirit, Soul and Body* and favored the moderate view of the 'second act of grace' as progressive (not instantaneous).

The order, moreover, in which the apostle mentions spirit, soul, and body, seems to point to the work being a progressive, as well as an entire work. The Divine Spirit enters and dwells in our spirits first. From thence he gets the mastery over the desires of the mind, and lastly over the desires of the flesh. We have reached the state of entire sanctification, the perfection (though never sinless) which is attainable on this side of the grave[.]<sup>623</sup>

<sup>621</sup> Costen, *African American Christian Worship* p. 45.

<sup>622</sup> Hugh McNeale, 'Divinity', *British North American Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 2 (1842), 89-97 p. 92.

<sup>623</sup> John Bickford Heard, *The Tripartite Nature of Man: Spirit, Soul and Body* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1868) p. 76.

Elaborating Heard's thesis, the *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* clarified the Methodist view of human nature and the doctrine of entire sanctification.

- As Wesleyan Methodists we do not (in this following our Founder) use the term "sinless perfection." But there may be "entire sanctification," – which is the term we use; that is, entire sanctification of body, soul and spirit to God, – even while there is infirmity and imperfection (not wilful sin) in the life.<sup>624</sup>

The Wesleyan typology of human beings is observable in some spirituals. *Lord Have Mercy* describes the human being in trichotomous terms, suggesting that 'soul' and 'spirit' are distinct.

Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy,  
On my soul.  
Lord I need thee, Lord I need thee, Lord I need thee,  
Save me Lord.  
Lord please answer, Lord please answer, Lord please answer,  
One more time.

Heal my body, Heal my body, Heal my body,  
Make me whole.  
Cleanse my spirit, Cleanse my spirit, Cleanse my spirit,  
Make me pure.  
Send your power, Send your power, Send your power,  
Right now Lord.<sup>625</sup>

Such a categorical petition of God that articulated the discrete needs of the body, soul and spirit appears to reflect the tripartite view of Methodism.

In contrast, *I Know Moon-rise*, as recorded by Higginson, portrays the human being as a functional dichotomy (body and soul).

I know moon-rise, I know star-rise,  
lay dis body down.  
I walk in de moonlight, I walk in de starlight,  
to lay dis body down.  
I'll walk in de graveyard, I'll walk through de graveyard,  
To lay dis body down.  
I'll lie in de grave and stretch out my arms;  
Lay dis body down.  
I go to de judgment in de evenin' of de day,  
When I lay dis body down;  
And my soul and your soul will meet in de day  
When I lay dis body down.<sup>626</sup>

<sup>624</sup> 'The Tripartite Nature of Man, Spirit, Soul and Body, Applied to Illustrate and Explain the Doctrines of Original Sin, the New Birth, the Disembodied State, and the Spiritual Body.' *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine, for 1869: Being a Continuation of the Arminian or Methodist Magazine first published by John Wesley*, 15 (1869), 263-265 p. 264.

<sup>625</sup> Walker, p. 125.

<sup>626</sup> Higginson, p. 689.

Similarly, Barton's version of *Who's Dat Yandah?* portrays the soul as immortal. This seems a valid interpretation in light of the implication that without a prayer of repentance offered prior to the Lord's return, the soul will be lost. The song serves as a warning to be ready for the Lord's coming.

Sinnah, sinnah, you'd bettah pray,  
Looks like-a my Lord comin' in de sky!  
Or you' soul be los' at de jedgment day,  
Looks lik-a my Lord comin' in de sky!<sup>627</sup>

Considering the biblical view of anthropology, Ryder claimed, 'If we turn from theology proper to anthropology, we find here the great fundamental truths entering into their religious conceptions.'<sup>628</sup> In *Christian Truth in Slave Songs*, Ryder included a spiritual to demonstrate the belief in Original Sin.

Old Satan thinks he'll get us all  
Yes, my Lord  
Because in Adam we did fall  
Yes, my Lord<sup>629</sup>

Supporting Ryder's view, *Hard Trials* provides a succinct declaration pertaining to the Fall (of human beings).

Old Satan tempted Eve  
And Eve, she tempted Adam  
And that's why the sinner has to pray so hard  
To get his sins forgiven<sup>630</sup>

This lyric cuts directly to the heart of the Fall narrative as understood by the 'evangelical sentiment': The moral failure of Adam and Eve led to the carnal condition of all humankind which, in turn, led to the need for atonement. Claiming apocalyptic victory over the human condition, slaves employed the symbol of crown. The eschatological hope for a 'crown' is common to the New Testament, (such as 'crown of righteousness'<sup>631</sup> or 'crown of glory').<sup>632</sup> Most likely the 'crown of life'<sup>633</sup> is intended in the song *Oh Holy Lord*.

Oh! Rise up children, get your crown  
Done with sin and sorrow  
And by your Saviour's side sit down

<sup>627</sup> Barton, 'Recent Negro Melodies', p. 719.

<sup>628</sup> Ryder, 'Theology of Plantation Songs', p. 11.

<sup>629</sup> Ryder, 'Christian Truth in Slave Songs: The Influence of Slavery in the Songs of Nations', p. 257.

<sup>630</sup> Marsh, p. 241.

<sup>631</sup> 2 Timothy 4:8.

<sup>632</sup> 1 Peter 5:4.

<sup>633</sup> Revelation 2:10.



Done with sin and sorrow.<sup>634</sup>

This text does not focus on suffering exclusively, but expresses the end of both sin and suffering. This emphasis is much in line with the New Testament, Revelation in particular. Amidst the human trial of slavery and oppression, the greater trial is in the spiritual realm. The greater freedom is life that endures the mortal existence. Lyrics from *Goodbye Brothers*, 'We'll part in the body, we'll meet in the spirit',<sup>635</sup> may have been intended for fellow slaves, but its universal capacity is also appreciable.

### 7.17 Bibliology: *It is the guide for Christians*<sup>636</sup>

In American Protestantism some hymn texts promoted biblical authority. Priscilla J. Owens' *Give Me the Bible* was printed in 15 hymnals in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Phoebe Palmer's *Blessed Bible How I Love It* was printed in 56 hymnals between 1860 and 1895, and *Holy Bible, Book Divine* by John Burton Sr. was published in over 250 hymnals during the years 1813-1899, traveling as far a field as the *Christian Science Hymnal* in 1898. Yet, other than references to the books of Genesis, Matthew, and Revelation, the spirituals did not acclaim the Bible.

Judging from Ryder's role as the District Superintendent of the American Missionary Association (AMA) he served in a leadership position advocating equality of citizenship for the black population of his generation. It would have been helpful to his cause, therefore, to present the Christian view of black slaves as authentic and orthodox. The fact that Ryder didn't force the plantation songs to conform to evangelical biblicism is significant. Ryder did not impose a reverence for the Bible, despite the favor that such a message might have received from the AMA.

In contrast, Barton looked for references to the Bible, suggestive of Bible-centredness or biblicism. He attested to having heard about 'the freedman's joy' that began with the narration, 'Holy Bible! Holy Bible! Holy Bible! Book Divine! Book Divine!'<sup>637</sup> Barton conceded that he had never heard the lines sung as a verse; they appeared to Barton an addition by a 'reading preacher'.<sup>638</sup> Nonetheless, Barton tried to build a bridge between slave songs and biblical authority.

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<sup>634</sup> Marsh, p. 191.

<sup>635</sup> Ibid. p. 249.

<sup>636</sup> Ibid. p. 178.

<sup>637</sup> Barton, 'Hymns of the Slave and the Freedman', p. 617.

<sup>638</sup> Ibid.

Of the numerous writers that associated the spiritual lyrics with biblical texts, Wyatt Tee Walker represents the most enthusiastic. Upon analyzing twenty-four hymns written from black religious experience Walker reported, 'There are no hymns which are not *Bible-Based*.'<sup>639</sup> In *Spirits that Dwell in Deep Woods* Walker provided an analysis of post-Civil War African American music. Walker examined the background of twenty-four songs and provided commentary on their biblical basis, theological mooring, lyric and form analysis, and contemporary significance. That his work is monumental and pioneering is assured by Dr. James Abbingtion who attested to the foundational role of Walker's earlier work, *Somebody's Calling My Name: Black Sacred Music and Social Change* with *Spirits that Dwell in Deep Woods* being a much-needed sequel.<sup>640</sup>

But Walker's analysis comes across as contrived. One case in point is Walker's biblical analysis of *Another Day's Journey and I'm So Glad*.

Another day's journey and I'm so glad (repeat)  
And the world can't do me no harm

Beat the devil running and I'm so glad (repeat)  
And the world can't do me no harm

Got good religion and I'm so glad (repeat)  
And the world can't do me no harm

Feel the fire burning and I'm so glad (repeat)  
And the world can't do me no harm

I'm on my way to heaven and I'm so glad (repeat)  
And the world can't do me no harm<sup>641</sup>

In Walker's estimation, 'The seed thought of this *Prayer and Praise Hymn* can be traced directly to the Sermon on the Mount.'<sup>642</sup> 'The specific teaching on which this hymn rests', Walker argued, is found in Matthew 6:28 where 'the Crucified Carpenter reminds us that God takes care of birds and surely we are more precious than *the fowls of the air*.'<sup>643</sup>

While this hymn might reflect biblical influences, Walker's view that the Sermon on the Mount is the direct source is unconvincing. While Jesus did indeed send his

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<sup>639</sup> Walker, p. xix.

<sup>640</sup> Ibid. p. ix.

<sup>641</sup> Ibid. p. 3.

<sup>642</sup> Ibid. p. 4.

<sup>643</sup> Ibid. p. 4, 5.

disciples out on a journey without provisions (Matthew 10:5-10), warned them about the Devil (Matthew 13:38, 39), prayed for protection from the 'evil one' (Matthew 6:13; John 17:15) and offered to provide a place in his Father's house (John 14:2), the lyrics of *Another Day's Journey* bear little resemblance to the Sermon on the Mount. The message of the hymn is gladness and, while 'the journey', the 'devil's pursuits' or 'burning fire' are mentioned, the songwriter's goal is to convey confidence that the world cannot harm him at a level that, by inference, is beyond the physical dimension. While there exist many biblical stories and teachings that may have influenced the lyricist, it is hard to argue that it is the sermon of the 'Crucified Carpenter'. Ultimately Walker concluded that *Another Day's Journey* expresses 'a valuable guide for Christian discipleship.'<sup>644</sup> If the song promotes Christian discipleship (as Walker suggested) it seems unusual that the song contains no reference to either disciples or 'The Discipler'.

Another of Walker's assessments that demonstrated his eagerness to suit the songs of black religious experience to biblical moorings is *I'm Glad I Got That Old Time Religion*, a 'prayer and praise hymn' Walker believed is rooted in the older spiritual *Gimme That Old Time Religion*.

I'm glad I got that old time religion (repeat)  
 I'm glad, I'm glad, I'm glad  
 On Monday, I got that old time religion (repeat)  
 I'm glad, I'm glad, I'm glad<sup>645</sup>

Using an earlier version of the song, Walker claimed that the first version makes a specific reference to Paul and Silas.<sup>646</sup> Walker featured the song *I Know I Got Religion, Yes, Yes!* in which the imprisonment of Paul and Silas is narrated. Even if this song is in some way related to *I'm Glad I Got That Old Time Religion*, this does not require the song to be Bible-based. But Walker was convinced of its biblical basis and theological moorings in Christianity.

"Old time religion" is by it [sic] own account, Bible-based, explicitly as well as implicitly. The Bible is, if it is anything at all, the best record of God's interaction with humankind.<sup>647</sup>

It seems that Walker's homiletical agenda was foremost, with his devotional inspirations often serving as the foundation for determining biblical content in the

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<sup>644</sup> Ibid. p. 5.

<sup>645</sup> Ibid. p. 89, 90. On Tuesday, etc., On Wednesday, etc.

<sup>646</sup> The exclusion of Paul and Silas by the composers of the 'prayer and praise hymns' (songs from a later period) suggests a waning biblical influence.

<sup>647</sup> Walker.

spirituals. Walker's tedious appeal to biblical content was an attempt (on his part) to establish Scriptural inspiration behind the spirituals thus making a case for their spiritual value and theological authority.

Though a statement of any kind on the nature and purpose of the Bible is almost entirely vacant from the spirituals as well as the 'prayer and praise hymns', one exception worth noting can be found in the song *Been a Listening* as performed by the Jubilee Singers and transcribed for the first time by Professor Theodore F. Seward.<sup>648</sup> There is a reference to the Bible in general and Matthew's gospel in particular.

Some say that John the Baptist, was nothing but a Jew  
But the Holy Bible tells us he was a preacher too  
Go read the third of Matthew, and read the chapter through  
It is the guide for Christians, and tells them what to do.<sup>649</sup>

Such lyrics, though indicative of the authority attributed to the 'Holy Bible', are still overshadowed by comparative white hymns that were focused almost entirely on the nature, purpose, and value of the Bible as 'God's Word'. The spirituals consulted for this present study do not identify or extol the Bible as 'God's Word'. Yet the writers of slave song collections often emphasized the tendency (or the necessity in the case of Walker) of the spirituals to include biblical content. This suggests that the theological authority of spirituals was measured, at least in part, by biblical influence and congruity.

### 7.18 Harmatology: *O sinners, less go down*<sup>650</sup>

'Sinner' is a common designation in the spirituals. While the concepts of depravity or carnality may be suggested, the main thrust appeals to the struggle of sin. Punishment for sin is absolute.

A doctrine of sin can be derived from songs that discuss behavior, some providing a type of apophatic or negative theological approach to harmatology. As apophatic theology defines and describes God based on what God is not (God is not created, God is not finite, God is not unjust), the human condition is illuminated by the heavenly perspective identifying the absence of carnality. For example, the song *I Want to Go Home* emphasizes a series of 'negative' statements, such as 'no hard

<sup>648</sup> Ibid. p. 38.

<sup>649</sup> Ibid., p. 178.

<sup>650</sup> Barton, 'Old Plantation Hymns', p. 444.

trials', 'no tribulation' and 'no sun to burn you', thus emphasizing the apocalyptic counterpart of human existence. There is a similar motif in Revelation, such as the end of death, the absence of tears, and the termination of pain and sorrow. Yet the negation in spirituals includes the human condition, 'There's no temptations in the heavens'<sup>651</sup> implies the reality that temptations exist on earth. Similarly, 'There's no backsliding in heaven, my Lord'<sup>652</sup> implies the reality that there is backsliding on earth. Collectively these lyrics depict humanity's propensity toward temptation and backsliding; humans will sin, receive forgiveness, then sin again.

In earthly existence, the continuing role of Satan as an obstacle to obedience is emphasized in many spirituals. In *The Heavenly Road* and *The General Roll* we see the typical description of Satan as adversary.

O, Satan is a mighty busy ole man,  
And roll rocks in my way<sup>653</sup>  
Old Satan told me not to pray...  
He wants my soul on Judgment Day<sup>654</sup>

While Barton determined that Satan was depicted in the spirituals as a 'decided convenience' whom the sinner holds responsible for human troubles and failures, *Almost Over* portrays the ability to discern the difference between the struggle with Satan and the struggle with sin (or carnality).

Wrestle with Satan and wrestle with sin  
Stepped over hell and back agin<sup>655</sup>

Though it would be overstating the case to say that the spirituals teach the difference between natural depravity and propensity toward sin as distinct from the temptations presented by Satan, an understanding of the difference is apparent. While human nature tends toward sin, each individual can be 'born again', illustrated in *You Must Be Pure and Holy*.

When I was wicked an' a-prone to sin  
My Lord, bretheren, ah my Lord  
I thought that I couldn't be born agin  
My Lord, my bretheren, ah my Lord<sup>656</sup>

This is the language of conversionism that (once again) may illustrate the pneumatological emphasis (in this case the Spirit's role in rebirth). It may also

<sup>651</sup> Marsh, p. 230.

<sup>652</sup> Ibid. p. 183.

<sup>653</sup> Higginson, p. 691.

<sup>654</sup> Marsh, p. 206.

<sup>655</sup> Allen, Ware, and Garrison, p. 74.

<sup>656</sup> Ibid. p. 107.

suggest a dichotomy between Arminianist (Methodist) and Calvinist (Baptist) influences; the penitent was at one time instructed that rebirth (salvation) was unattainable.

The spirituals do not shy away from denouncing sinful living and labeling people as 'sinners'. They are equally bold in providing 'sinners' the hope they need to experience forgiveness and know that their souls can be set free.<sup>657</sup> This view appears contrary to the Calvinist doctrine of total depravity. Human beings are equally in need of grace, equally culpable, and salvation is equally available.

### 7.19 Soteriology: *I'll shout salvation when I die*<sup>658</sup>

The songs of the black religious experience narrate the story of hope for liberty. Freedom is deeply embedded in the spirituals but is expressed in a type of soteriological language that, at times, makes it hard to separate (in hermeneutical analysis) *the desire for emancipation* from *the hope for eternal life*. Salvation was also associated with the return to Africa or crossing to the North.

In seeking to provide his own reflections on the religious thought of select spirituals, Howard Thurman treated 'freedom from slavery' and 'freedom from life' as equal interests for slaves in antebellum America.

Freedom from slavery and freedom from life were often synonymous in the thought of those early singers. With actual freedom no closer, the years slipping away with steady rhythmic beat, death seemed the only hope.<sup>659</sup>

Common to Protestantism, salvation was also related to the experience of spiritual conversion culminating in eternal life with God, particularly after the Civil War (see John Wesley Work III page 134). *Something Happened When He Saved Me* posits the salvation experience in the heart and its emotional expression in the soul.

Something happened when he saved me,  
It happened in my heart,  
It made my soul rejoice;  
Something happened when he saved me,  
Something happened in my heart.<sup>660</sup>

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<sup>657</sup> Marsh, p. 206.

<sup>658</sup> Higginson, p. 691. Lyric excerpt from *Good News*.

<sup>659</sup> Howard Thurman, *Deep River: Reflections on the Religious Insight of Certain of the Negro Spirituals* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955) p. 29.

<sup>660</sup> Walker, p. 149.

Redemption, understood in terms of Christ's death and the doctrine of substitutionary atonement, is prominently voiced in the spirituals.<sup>661</sup> Atonement language, typically set in testimonial spirituals, is common in the songs of the Jubilee Singers.

O redeemed, redeemed  
I'm wash'd in the blood of the Lamb<sup>662</sup>

I've been redeem'd, I've been redeem'd  
Been wash'd in the blood of the Lamb<sup>663</sup>

I have Jesus in-a my soul  
And-a hallelujah to that Lamb<sup>664</sup>

The Atonement is further understood in contrast to the sacrificial system of Judaism as featured in the improvised hymn ('Dr. Watts'), *Sabbath Has No End*.

Not all the blood of beasts,  
On Jewish altars slain  
Could give a guilty conscience peace,  
Or wash away the stain.<sup>665</sup>

This lyric is borrowed from Watts' hymn, *Not all the Blood of Beasts*. As such, the evident reference to Hebrews 9:14 relates to Watts' knowledge of the New Testament text and requires no biblical knowledge by the author(s) of the spiritual. Further, as the writer to the Hebrews did not use the term 'Jewish', this too is traceable to Watts. The temporal-eternal comparison by the authors of Hebrews is at least two-fold: 1. The Aaronic priesthood (temporal mediation) compared with the Melchizedek priesthood (eternal mediation), and, 2. The blood of animals (temporal propitiation) compared with the blood of Christ (eternal propitiation). While both the author of Hebrews and Isaac Watts contrasted the sacrifice of Christ with the Israelite sacrificial system, Watts' hymn text simplified the contrast employing the term 'Jewish'. At least on the surface, Watts' simplification can create a sense of anti-Jewish sentiment.

Anti-Jewish language, a strain in Christian literature since the Patristic era, is evident in English hymnody.<sup>666</sup> Some improvised hymns by slaves aligned with the crucicentric salvation language of Protestantism (particularly from Watts) thereby aligning with the language of anti-Jewishness. Having associated with White

<sup>661</sup> Meanwhile, Higginson's collection provides an exception, i.e. in *Negro Spirituals* Higginson did not make a single reference to the blood or death of Christ, possibly due to his Unitarian affiliation.

<sup>662</sup> Marsh, p. 162. *O Redeemed*.

<sup>663</sup> Ibid. p. 226. *I've Been Redeemed*.

<sup>664</sup> Ibid. p. 298. *Chilly Waters*.

<sup>665</sup> Barton, 'Recent Negro Melodies', p. 712.

<sup>666</sup> For example: *Father, Forgive the Savior Said; Come Sound His Praise Abroad; Go Preach My Gospel; and Why Did the Jews Proclaim Their Rage?*

Protestantism in its vilification of Jews (for their alleged role in the crucifixion) and the denunciation of the Jewish sacrificial system (juxtaposed to the efficacy of substitutionary atonement), salvation was proclaimed in song to be in Christ alone – a soteriological perspective authentic to Christianity and categorically distinct from traditional African religions and spirituality.

Portraying the death and resurrection of Christ, the Jews were cast in the role of ‘Christ-killers’, an accusation longstanding in Christendom. Several spirituals (as opposed to ‘Dr. Watts’) are forthright in this regard.

The Jews killed poor Jesus (repeat)  
And laid him in the tomb<sup>667</sup>

Jews crucified Him and nail’d Him to the tree (repeat)  
And the Lord shall bear His children home<sup>668</sup>

O, Mary was a woman, and he [sic] had a one Son,  
Says, look at de people dat is born of God  
And de Jews and de Romans had him hung,  
Says, look at de people dat is born of God  
Cry holy, holy!<sup>669</sup>

The Jews and Romans in one band  
Tell me where to find Him  
They crucified the Son of Man  
Tell me where to find Him

They led him up to Pilate’s bar  
Tell me where to find Him  
But the Jews could not condemn Him there  
Tell me where to find Him<sup>670</sup>

The Jews killed poor Jesus, an’ laid him in a tomb  
He ’rose, he ’rose, an’ went to heaven in a cloud<sup>671</sup>

The anti-Jewishness suggests identification with Christian soteriology and Protestant crucicentrism. Further, indictment of the Jews in the crucifixion of Jesus indicates that salvation could mean something other than freedom from slavery (considering the hermeneutical rubric that evaluates double meaning in slave songs), and endows the

<sup>667</sup> Marsh, p. 194. *He Arose*. As the spirituals in the Jubilee Singers’ repertoire were a representative collection, the anti-Jewish spirituals published in the Jubilee Singers’ collection suggests that anti-Jewishness was also representative.

<sup>668</sup> Ibid. p. 242, 243.

<sup>669</sup> Higginson, p. 688. *Cry Holy*.

<sup>670</sup> Marsh, p. 291. *They Led My Lord Away*.

<sup>671</sup> Proctor, p. 63.



spirituals with a measure of Christian anti-Semitism.<sup>672</sup> If the anti-Jewish strain in spirituals was derived from Protestant hymnody,<sup>673</sup> the anti-Jewish tropes were used with new emphases in African American spirituals. The phrases, 'Jews crucified Him and nail'd Him to the tree' and 'The Jews killed poor Jesus and laid him in the tomb' put the entire onus of Jesus' crucifixion on Jews and emphasized Jesus' misery at the hands of the Jews.

Few scholars have addressed the issue of anti-Jewishness or anti-Semitism in spirituals. William T. Dargan recognized anti-Semitism in the 'Dr. Watts' repertoire used in 'black singing', but even Dargan's treatment is minimal (a short footnote) and sheds little light on the issue of anti-Semitism among black slaves. Dargan attributed the anti-Semitism of Watts' versification of Psalm 118<sup>674</sup> directly (and only) to Watts, and described Watts' anti-Semitism as a reflection of the 'image of the English as the "chosen people"'.<sup>675</sup> If Dargan is correct, such English hymns may imply displacement theology, casting Christianity as 'the new Israel' or 'the spiritual Israel' having inherited the calling and ministry of the 'chosen people'. Spirituals and improvised hymns do not necessarily reflect this type of supersessionism or displacement theology, but they certainly promote anti-Semitism.

Further, the apparent response of black slaves to Jews (though the response was hardly monolithic) is paradoxical and complex, having characteristics of anti-Semitism and philo-Semitism. This is similar to Christianity in general, in which Israelite patriarchs are idolized as heroes of the faith while Jews are, at times (though not by all Christians), demonized as 'Christ-killers'.

Fisher took a very different approach in emphasizing the 'dominant role of Moses' in spirituals.<sup>676</sup> For Fisher this suggested 'Jewish theology' in the spirituals, a motive he used to reinforce his argument that Christianity was largely absent from antebellum slave songs. Fisher's observation may temper the discussion surrounding anti-Jewish spirituals and improvised hymns. Perhaps the soteriological view of slaves was

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<sup>672</sup> I use anti-Jewishness synonymously with anti-Semitism, defined as hatred or hostility toward Jews. Anti-Semitism is a modern designation, coined in 1879 by Wilhelm Marr. The spirituals under investigation here were written prior to 1879.

<sup>673</sup> If Costen and Whalum are accurate in their chronology, it may be the case that anti-Jewish spirituals existed before improvised hymnody derived from Watts.

<sup>674</sup> 'See what a living stone the builders did refuse; Yet God hath built his church thereon, in spite of envious Jews'.

<sup>675</sup> William T. Dargan, *Lining out the Word: Dr. Watts Hymn Singing in the Music of Black Americans* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006) p. 271.

<sup>676</sup> Fisher, p. 179.

influenced by the figure of Moses more so than any other biblical hero and that references to the Jews were merely imitative of English Protestant hymns and detached from theological polemics. Unfortunately, Fisher did not acknowledge the anti-Jewish sentiment in spirituals.

In 'Blacks and Jews: The Strained Alliance', Peter I. Rose acknowledged the 'open-evidence of black anti-Semitism and Jewish racism.'<sup>677</sup> Rose recognized further the paradoxical relationship between blacks and Jews, evidenced by anti-Semitism on the one hand and their 'affinity with the children of Israel' on the other, and argued that the latter was evidenced 'nowhere clearer than in the Negro spirituals and in Gospel music.'<sup>678</sup> Rose also argued that anti-Semitism among blacks was not due to their Christian faith, but 'the economic nexus'.<sup>679</sup> But Rose's argument has a chronological discrepancy: He situated the economic conditions for anti-Semitism in the early-20<sup>th</sup> century, but was seemingly unaware of anti-Jewish spirituals that were written a century earlier.<sup>680</sup> While his analysis of economic conditions in the 20<sup>th</sup> century may be valid, his denial of the religious sentiment behind black anti-Semitism is refutable.

Leonard Dinnerstein recognized the eruption of black anti-Semitism in the 1930s, but traced the earliest expression to African American spirituals such as *The Jews killed poor Jesus, Were you there when the Jews crucified my Lord*, and *De Jews done killed poor Jesus*.<sup>681</sup> As well, Dinnerstein demonstrated the hatred for Jews in other African American song texts.

Virgin Mary had one son  
the cruel Jews had him hung<sup>682</sup>

Bloody Christ killer  
Never trust a Jew  
Bloody Christ killer  
What won't a Jew do?<sup>683</sup>

<sup>677</sup> Peter I. Rose, 'Blacks and Jews: A Strained Alliance', *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 454/1 (March 1981), 55-69 p. 55.

<sup>678</sup> Ibid. p. 57.

<sup>679</sup> Ibid. p. 58.

<sup>680</sup> Jewish settlement in the South can be traced to the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. In 1749 the second synagogue in the United States was established in Charleston and, by 1800, had the largest membership. Various anti-Jewish laws were passed in the southern states. For example, denial of the Trinity was punishable by imprisonment in Virginia. See Leonard Dinnerstein and Mary Dale Palsson (eds.), *Jews in the South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973) p. 4, 5, 15.

<sup>681</sup> Leonard Dinnerstein, *Uneasy at Home: Antisemitism and the American Jewish Experience* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987) p. 220.

<sup>682</sup> Ibid.

<sup>683</sup> Ibid.

Robert Michael holds a view similar to Dinnerstein, arguing that black anti-Semitism is detectable in spirituals.

Dating back to the period of slavery, catechisms taught Black folks reflected the same attitude toward Jews as the white catechisms. "Q. The wicked Jews grew angry with our Savior and what did they do to him" A. The crucified him." Slaves sang songs like "Were you there when the Jews crucified my Lord?"<sup>684</sup>

Michael further suggested that anti-Semitism gave black slaves the opportunity to feel 'superior to Jews'.<sup>685</sup>

Overall, there is an analog in liberation theology.<sup>686</sup> First, black slaves displayed the signs of an oppressed people wanting to close the gap between eschatological hope and civil emancipation. Secondly, the thematization of slavery and the distancing from power figures by those suffering oppression manifests in a necessary segregation from the perceived oppressors in the trial and crucifixion of Jesus. In the biblical Passion narratives, black slaves viewed the Jews as oppressors and Jesus as the victim, identifying with both Jesus and Simon the Cyrene (discussed in section 7.26). Even though most black slaves would not have read the New Testament nor have had direct contact with Jews, their understanding of both (as communicated to them through White Protestantism), in all likelihood, cast the Jews as the villains of the Passion. Therefore, black slaves were compelled to reject the oppressors, in this case the Jews (and, though to a much lesser extent, the Romans). In their self-identification of victim, they necessarily rejected identification with those who victimized Jesus.<sup>687</sup> Thus, 'the Jew' occupied a specific place in the hermeneutic of the black slave community in which the spiritual became the theological narrative.

Though writing from a very different socio-theological perspective, slaves of the antebellum period emulated White Protestant anti-Semitism (at least in part) and produced spirituals and improvised hymns derisive of Jews. This points to theological solidarity against a common antagonist. Some of these anti-Jewish spirituals were published in the Jubilee collection performed in the northern states and England

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<sup>684</sup> Robert Michael, *A Concise History of American Antisemitism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005) p. 200.

<sup>685</sup> Ibid.

<sup>686</sup> I am grateful to my supervisor Al McFadyen for his careful consideration of this issue. He assisted me in working out a way to interpret anti-Jewish spirituals, providing the phrases 'thematization of slavery' and 'self-identification of victim'.

<sup>687</sup> Even though white slave masters victimized black slaves, the injustices committed against black slaves by white masters were not voiced in the spirituals as indictment against an oppressor.

during the period of Reconstruction. As this collection of songs was selected with the goal of gaining financial support for Fisk University, it is reasonable to assume that anti-Jewish spirituals were strategic for this same purpose.

Ryder, writing within the social context of the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, did not mention anti-Semitism or emphasize the comparison between Christianity and the Israelite sacrificial system. Instead, Ryder emphasized blood atonement, promoting the view that the doctrine of atonement 'was a truth most precious' to the slaves and that their songs were 'full of this truth'.<sup>688</sup> Using a song he believed to be representative from their plantation melodies, Ryder cited an excerpt from *I've Been Redeemed*. The Jubilee Singers had also used this song in an arrangement that included lyrics from William Cowper's hymn *There is a Fountain*.<sup>689</sup> In citing this type of improvised hymn Ryder would have used lyrics both familiar and favorable to his Congregational audience.

Ryder's method was not limited to his own interpretation. Understanding that plantation lyrics sometimes carried meanings distinctive to the experience of slavery, Ryder cited Frederick Douglas for insight into the meaning of the phrase 'run to Jesus'.<sup>690</sup> Rather than a literal pursuit of Christ, the phrase suggested to Douglas 'the thought of escaping from slavery'.<sup>691</sup> But Ryder insisted that such lyrics more deeply expressed the doctrine of conversion. Reflecting his Congregational interests and Calvinist constituency, Ryder suggested that plantation songs were loyal to 'the familiar old doctrine of the "perseverance of the saints"'.<sup>692</sup> The song he used to illustrate this Calvinist doctrine likened the Christian to an 'inch worm' who, in making little progress on his own, was required to wait for Jesus.

Keep inching along, keep inching along  
 Jesus will come by and by  
 Keep inching along like the poor inch worm  
 Jesus will come by and by<sup>693</sup>

Also a Congregationalist, Proctor used the same spiritual to argue the influence of Calvinism.

The old doctrine of the perseverance of the saints crops out in their songs in a very unique way. Seeing the inch-worm measuring his way along slowly on

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<sup>688</sup> Ryder, 'Theology of Plantation Songs', p. 11.

<sup>689</sup> Marsh, p. 227.

<sup>690</sup> Ryder, 'Theology of Plantation Songs', p. 12.

<sup>691</sup> Ibid.

<sup>692</sup> Ibid.

<sup>693</sup> Ibid.

the ground inch by inch, some ingenious slave seized upon this symbol of the Christian rate of progress.<sup>694</sup>

Barton, emphasized the related concept of sanctification.

One day I'se walkin' along  
The Lord done sanctified me;  
One day I'se walkin' along  
He sanctified my soul<sup>695</sup>

Barton insisted that sanctification is 'not related to antecedent experience'. This seems to have been Barton's way of denouncing any association between the slave understanding of sanctification and the teachings of 'Christian perfection' common to Methodism. Another verse from the same spiritual appears to speak of salvation and sanctification synonymously, diminishing the argument that slave spirituals promoted sanctification as a second crisis experience.

I'se lost and now I'm found  
The Lord done sanctified me;  
My soul is heaven bound  
He sanctified my soul<sup>696</sup>

Alternatively, Fisher recognized the influence of the holiness movement.

The holiness movement among Negroes received great emphasis during post-Turner days. When, in 1837, some slaves gave up dancing and secular singing, they taunted their mistresses with "You no holy. We be holy. You in no state o' salvation."<sup>697</sup>

Slave songs gained confidence in theological expression, moving from testimony to prescription.

O sinner, believe  
Christ you will receive  
For all things are ready,  
And you stand in need<sup>698</sup>

Spirituals and improvised hymns gained equity among Protestants by subscribing to experiential conversion and upholding the crucicentric doctrine of substitutionary atonement. The strain of anti-Jewish rhetoric bolstered the belief in Christ's exclusivity and supports a literalist interpretation of soteriological spirituals. For those spirituals and improvised hymns written after Watts, solidarity with Watts was

<sup>694</sup> Proctor, p. 72.

<sup>695</sup> *Done Been Sanctified* In Barton, 'Hymns of the Slave and the Freedman', p. 623.

<sup>696</sup> *Done Been Sanctified* In Ibid.

<sup>697</sup> Fisher, p. 104, 105.

<sup>698</sup> Marsh, p. 247.

probably a contributing factor. In any event, the soteriological alignment with Protestantism is evident on several levels.

## 7.20 Eschatology: *Long white robe and starry crown*<sup>699</sup>

A future hope is well represented in black religious expression. In Proctor's estimation, 'the hope of immortality is prominent in these songs'.<sup>700</sup> For John Lovell Jr., spirituals emphasized 'the many realisms and romanticisms connected with the word "Heav'n."'<sup>701</sup>

Several key terms are employed in spirituals to articulate eschatological hope. The concept and place of 'Heaven' is used often.

O, my mudder is gone! My mudder is gone!  
My mudder is gone into heaven, my Lord!  
I can't stay behind!<sup>702</sup>

Lord, I want to go to heaven when I die,  
Good news, O, good news!<sup>703</sup>

Heaven is a high an' a lofty place,  
Heaven bells ringin' in my soul;  
But you con't git dar ef you ain't got grace,  
Heaven bells ringin' in my soul.<sup>704</sup>

'The Promised Land' expressed the concept of a place beyond the present reality of suffering. The songs *Big Camp Meeting in the Promised Land* and *Judgment Day is Rolling Round* align with Cone's view that the slave's unyielding sense of dignity was expressed in the language of futuristic hope.

You kin hinder me here, but you can't do it there,  
Big camp meeting in de promised land!  
For He sits in de heavens and He answers prayer,  
Big camp meeting in de promised land!<sup>705</sup>

I've got a good old mother in the heaven, my Lord  
How I long to go there too...  
There's a big camp meeting in the heaven, my Lord  
How I long to go there too...<sup>706</sup>

<sup>699</sup> Walker, p. 71. *I wanna' be ready*, otherwise titled *Walk in Jerusalem just like John*.

<sup>700</sup> Proctor, p. 84.

<sup>701</sup> Lovell Jr., 'Reflections on the Origins of the Negro Spiritual', p. 95.

<sup>702</sup> Higginson, p. 686. *Room in There*.

<sup>703</sup> Ibid. p. 691. *Good News*.

<sup>704</sup> Barton, 'Old Plantation Hymns', p. 450. *Heaven Bells Ringin' in My Soul*.

<sup>705</sup> Barton, 'Hymns of the Slave and the Freedman', p. 621.

<sup>706</sup> Marsh, p. 183.

'The year of Jubilee' expressed a time when suffering would end. Mr. George L. White, treasurer for the Fisk University, named the University's singers The Jubilee Singers, as this phrase had long been 'the favorite figure of speech into which the slaves put their prayers and hopes for emancipation.'<sup>707</sup> *My Way's Cloudy* demonstrates the eschatological usage of this term.

I'll tell you now as I told you before, send them angels down  
 To the promised land I'm bound to go, send them angels down  
 This is the year of Jubilee, send them angels down  
 The Lord has come and set me free, send them angels down<sup>708</sup>

A central eschatological message dominant in slave songs is 'Judgment Day'. Unlike the millenarian emphasis that was common in evangelical Protestantism of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the eschatology evident in spirituals is almost exclusively focused on the Day of Judgment. There is little mention of the millennial reign of Christ in African American spirituals. The lyrics of spirituals emphasize the eternal kingdom of God and the finality of justice as opposed to a reign of peace.

In that dreadful Judgement day  
 I'll take wings and fly away<sup>709</sup>  
 And de moon will turn to blood (repeat)  
 In dat day – O yoy<sup>710</sup> my soul!  
 And de moon will turn to blood in dat day  
 And you'll see the stars a-fallin' ...  
 And de world will be on fire...  
 And you'll hear the saints a-singin...<sup>711</sup>

Yet, there are exceptions to consider, especially the song *Mighty Day* that describes the destruction of Satan's Kingdom in millennialist language.<sup>712</sup>

And then I seen old Satan,  
 And they bound him with a chain,  
 And they put him in the fi-ar,  
 And I seen the smoke arising.  
 They bound him in the fi-ar,  
 Where he wanted to take my soul.  
 Old Satan gnashed his teeth and howled,  
 And missed po' sinner man's soul.<sup>713</sup>

<sup>707</sup> Ibid. p. 26.

<sup>708</sup> Ibid. p. 201.

<sup>709</sup> Ibid. p. 170.

<sup>710</sup> 'A sort of prolonged wail'. See Allen, Ware, and Garrison, p. 53.

<sup>711</sup> Ibid.

<sup>712</sup> Other apocalyptic spirituals with a millennialist theme. See *Satan We're Gonna' Tear Your Kingdom Down* In Walker, p. 141. See *Satan's Camp Afire* In Marsh, p. 27.

<sup>713</sup> Barton, 'Hymns of the Slave and the Freedman', p. 612.

Finally, there is an individual expression of eschatological hope in spirituals. Each one who arrives in 'Glory' will be fitted with a white robe, gold slippers, and a starry crown. The eschatological spiritual *Deep River* illustrates how the act of heavenly worship is personalized.

Oh, don't you want to go to that Gospel feast  
That promised land where all is peace?  
I'll go into heaven and take my seat  
Cast my crown at Jesus' feet<sup>714</sup>

If one agrees with Fisher that the eschatology of the black slave 'affirms their humanity', perhaps slaves expressed their dignity by anticipating their place in Heaven where they cast their crowns at Jesus' feet. According to John's vision of the throne (Revelation 4), even now the 'twenty-four elders' lay their crowns at the feet of the Lamb. The spirituals portray the slave as one day joining in that identical act of ultimate devotion. Similar to the early Christians, their offering of worship was symbolized in a crown earned through persecution and tribulation. Unlike the early Christians, slaves in America shouldered the humiliation of suffering and slavery at the hands of both church and state.

According to Cone, who focused his efforts on the meaning of suffering and eschatology, 'The idea of heaven provided ways for black people to affirm their humanity when other people were attempting to define them as non-persons.'<sup>715</sup> Cone agreed with Fisher's view that heaven refers to both 'a transcendent reality beyond time and space' as well as a designation for 'earthly places',<sup>716</sup> though Fisher contended 'slaves ordinarily believed that Africa was heaven'.<sup>717</sup> Canaan, Jordan, the Promised Land, and Zion may represent various literal and symbolic places, but by and large, spirituals projected a better place and existence beyond the here and now.

While various authors have argued the absence of vindictiveness in the spirituals (see section 7.12), there is the dynamic of 'otherworldly reckoning' instilled in the lyrics of judgment. Veiled in references to cosmological justice and judgment, the slave's sense of retribution is evident, albeit far from the type of vengeance expressed by Israelites after the Babylonian Exile, such as Psalm 137.<sup>718</sup> This type of vengeance is

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<sup>714</sup> Marsh, p. 230.

<sup>715</sup> Cone, 'Black Spirituals: A Theological Interpretation', p. 68.

<sup>716</sup> Ibid. p. 67.

<sup>717</sup> Fisher, p. 146. Fisher also suggested that heaven might refer to escape to the North.

<sup>718</sup> 'O Daughter of Babylon, doomed to destruction, happy is he who repays you for what you have done to us - he who seizes your infants and dashes them against the rocks.' Psalm 137:8, 9 (NIV).



not present in spirituals; instead, 'eschatological exclusion' is employed, such as 'But everybody talking 'bout Heaven ain't going there'.<sup>719</sup> If justice is poetic, the lyrics of the spirituals convey a poignant verdict – not everyone will have a starry crown!

Barton contrasted the eschatological emphasis in spirituals with its de-emphasis in Congregational homiletics.

In much of our modern preaching the emphasis has shifted from the life to come to that which now is; and sometimes good advice about diet and hygiene, and of righteousness as tending to longevity hold the place once given to immortality. It is not so in plantation theology. The thought of heaven is constantly to the fore.<sup>720</sup>

While it would be unwise to read too much into Barton's comment he has, at least in this instance, contrasted a white didactic source (sermons) with a black didactic source (spirituals). Even if Barton's comparison doesn't yield functional equivalence between the two (though it might), Barton favored the message of the spirituals in this instance to the fare of Congregational preaching.

The spirituals projected the emphasis on Heaven that aligned with the shift in Protestant hymnody for, according to Walter Rauschenbusch, 'hymns expressing the yearning of the soul for the blessed life in the world to come are beyond computation'.<sup>721</sup> This emphasis demonstrated the commonality in direction shared by spirituals and 19<sup>th</sup> century American Protestant hymnody.

### **7.21 Angelology: *The Angels Changed My Name*<sup>722</sup>**

The nature and work of angels is prominent in spirituals. References to angels included their 'historic' roles ascribed from biblical narratives as well as interest in the 'ongoing' roles of angels in the lives of God's children. Songs dedicated to the work of angels are prevalent in the Jubilee Singers' 138-song repertoire.<sup>723</sup> Proctor was especially impressed with angelology in spirituals.

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<sup>719</sup> Thurman, p. 44. This admonition is remarkably similar to Jesus' warning: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." Matthew 7:21 (NIV).

<sup>720</sup> Barton, 'Old Plantation Hymns', p. 450.

<sup>721</sup> Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1908) p. 163.

<sup>722</sup> *The Angels Changed My Name*. In Marsh, p. 261.

<sup>723</sup> This repertoire represents that of the first *Jubilee Singers* that toured on behalf of Fisk University from 1871-1878. Of the 138 songs, 9 titles are focused on the person of Jesus, compared to 6 songs focused on angels. Angels are featured in the texts of 12 songs and Jesus is featured in the texts of 23 songs.

Perhaps the most beautiful of all their doctrines was that of angels. Angels were God's messengers. They stood for all that was beautiful and lovely.<sup>724</sup>

In an 'historic role', recorded in the gospel narrative of Matthew, an angel of the Lord rolled back the stone that covered the tomb of Jesus. Both the spirituals *He Arose* and *He Rose from the Dead* celebrate the role of the angel as described in the resurrection narrative of the Christian Scriptures.

Then down came an angel (repeat)  
And rolled away the stone<sup>725</sup>

Down came an angel, and rolled the stone away  
And the Lord shall bear his children home.<sup>726</sup>

Higginson's regiment sang several songs that feature angels. *Good News* testifies to the historic role that the angels played as messengers of God's plan of salvation.

O, good news! O, good news!  
De angels brought de tidings down,  
Just comin' from de trone.<sup>727</sup>

In *Keep Me From Sinking Down*, angels are represented as a source of hope and help to the believer.

I look up yonder, and what do I see  
Keep me from sinking down  
I see the angel beckoning to me  
Keep me from sinking down<sup>728</sup>

In a similar plight described in *My Way's Cloudy*, 'the brethren' call out for the angels to be sent down. Through 'fire', the anger of Satan, the journey toward the Promised Land and, ultimately, in the year of Jubilee, the angels are perceived as active participants in the work of the Lord.

O brethren, my way, my way's cloudy  
Go send them angels down  
O brethren, my way, my way's cloudy  
Go send them angels down<sup>729</sup>

Ultimately, angels are believed to escort the soul in the final journey. The well-known spiritual *Swing Low Sweet Chariot* (used by Wacker as representative of African American spirituals (page 63 above) depicts a band of angels performing this sacred task.

<sup>724</sup> Proctor, p. 67.

<sup>725</sup> Marsh, p. 195.

<sup>726</sup> Ibid. p. 243.

<sup>727</sup> Higginson, p. 691.

<sup>728</sup> Marsh, p. 179.

<sup>729</sup> Ibid. p. 201.

I looked over Jordan and what did I see  
 A band of angels coming after me  
 Coming for to carry me home

Several song titles feature the nature and activity of angels. *Come Down Angels* invites angels to 'trouble the water', a possible reference to the healing waters at the pool of Bethesda.<sup>730</sup> *Angels Waiting at the Door*<sup>731</sup> is a song of comfort at a time of bereavement. At the loss of their 'sister,' the singers are consoled by the thought of angels ushering her home and presenting her with a crown.<sup>732</sup> The ministry of angels providing comfort at the time of death is reminiscent of Miss Sidney Gill's hymn *I Want to be an Angel* (page 96 above).

Also addressed to 'the brethren', *Listen to the Angels* reports the joyful news the angels shout when the sinner's soul is rescued from 'hell's dark door'.<sup>733</sup> *The Angels Changed My Name*, another song of celebration, credits the angels with the singer's new identity in Heaven.

Done changed my name for the coming day  
 I know the angels done changed my name  
 Done changed my name for the coming day  
 Thank God, the angels done changed my name<sup>734</sup>

The angel Gabriel receives pride of place in the spirituals. He is almost always depicted blowing the trumpet.

Gabriel's trumpet shall blow, blow,  
 Gabriel's trumpet shall blow, O blow,  
 Gabriel's trumpet shall blow, Blow, my Lord,  
 Gabriel's trumpet shall blow.<sup>735</sup>

O, blow your trumpet, Gabriel,  
 Blow your trumpet louder;  
 And I want dat trumpet to blow me home  
 To my new Jerusalem.<sup>736</sup>

When Gabriel makes his trumpet sound,  
 De saints shall rise and bust de ground.<sup>737</sup>

<sup>730</sup> John 5:1ff

<sup>731</sup> Marsh, p. 223.

<sup>732</sup> Barton, 'Old Plantation Hymns', p. 446. *Soon in de Morning* carries a similar message of hope in the line, 'O yondah stands de two tall angels, I'm goin' to live with God'.

<sup>733</sup> Marsh, p. 259.

<sup>734</sup> Ibid. p. 261.

<sup>735</sup> *Blow Your Trumpet, Gabriel* In Barton, 'Recent Negro Melodies', p. 707.

<sup>736</sup> Higginson, p. 690.

<sup>737</sup> *These Bones Gwineter Rise Again* In Barton, 'Hymns of the Slave and the Freedman', p. 624.

Two other spirituals, *Join the Angel Band* and *Archangel Open the Door*, refer to the 'archangel'. *Archangel Open the Door* gives a picture of the Archangel as an usher at the door of Heaven.

I'm gwine to my heaven  
I'm gwine home  
Archangel open de door<sup>738</sup>

## 7.22 Demonology: *Satan, We're Gonna' Tear Your Kingdom Down*<sup>739</sup>

Demonology, in many respects a counterpart of Angelology, is well established in systematic theology. Satan serves as symbolic of evil or, in a literalist view, is understood to exist as a personal Devil. Though the books of Zechariah and Job portray Satan as an adversary (and the narrative of The Fall in Genesis portrays the 'serpent' as a tempter) it is the Christian Scriptures that provide the most comprehensive portrait of Satan. Satan tempts Jesus, 'enters' Judas, masquerades as an 'angel of light', seeks to destroy as a 'roaring lion', and is identified as 'the Devil' in John's Apocalypse.

The African American corpus of spirituals and hymns refers often to the person of Satan. Lawrence W. Levine concluded that, 'Their songs of the Devil pictured a harsh but almost semicomical figure (often, one suspects, a surrogate for the white man), over whom they triumphed with reassuring regularity.'<sup>740</sup> Walker suggested that 'Satan is often depicted as a trickster figure'.<sup>741</sup> Fisher contributed a less trivial view, 'that African devil worship was taught in secret meetings and was associated with serpent symbolism'.<sup>742</sup> Barton believed that Satan was a character of 'convenience'.

There seems to be an inherent tendency to insincerity in negro demonology. Satan is a decided convenience. It is always possible to load upon him what else might be a weight upon the conscience. That Satan holds the sinner responsible for this has its compensation again in the fact that Satan himself is to be dethroned.<sup>743</sup>

In the spiritual that Barton used to illustrate his point, Satan is described as 'a liar and a conjurer' and as 'a snake in the grass' that will 'get you at last'.<sup>744</sup> In her work on

<sup>738</sup> Allen, Ware, and Garrison, p. 32.

<sup>739</sup> *Satan, We're Gonna' Tear Your Kingdom Down*. In Walker, p. 141.

<sup>740</sup> Lawrence W. Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007) p. 40.

<sup>741</sup> Lauri Ramey, 'The Theology of the Lyric Tradition in African American Spirituals', *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 70/2 (June 2002), 346-363 p. 352.

<sup>742</sup> Fisher, p. 46.

<sup>743</sup> Barton, 'Old Plantation Hymns', p. 451.

<sup>744</sup> *Ibid.*

the theology of the lyric tradition in African American spirituals, Lauri Ramey noted the common references to the Devil and asserted that the spirituals 'draw on African tropes and symbology'.<sup>745</sup> As such, the person of the Devil is not exclusive to the biblical view, but includes depictions compatible with Traditional African religion. Fisher demonstrated the diverse meanings in references to Satan. The spectrum includes the hindering work of Satan and an inherited belief in Satan from the Americas, compared to the 'African devil worship [...] taught in secret meetings'.<sup>746</sup>

Sydney Grew located the person of the Devil in spirituals amidst a larger context and described the role of spirituals in expressing the religious pilgrimage of the singer.

He himself is the person seeking salvation, afraid of damnation, assured of safety, happy in his Saviour, insolent to overcome his enemy, the Old Devil, proud of his recognition by King Jesus, filled with grief over his hard lot in the world, and so forth.<sup>747</sup>

Ryder issues a brief statement on demonology, 'The personality of Satan they never doubted, and his ability to tempt human souls is illustrated in many of their hymns.'<sup>748</sup>

Proctor asserted that slaves believed in 'a personal devil'.<sup>749</sup>

Many songs serve to show the nature of the references to 'Satan' and 'The Devil'.

Beat the devil running and I'm so glad! (repeat)  
And the world can't do me no harm.<sup>750</sup>

Old Satan tho't he had me fast.  
And I will serve that living God!  
But thank the Lord, I'm free at last,  
And I will serve that living God!  
Old Satan wears de hypocrite's shoe,  
And I will serve that living God!  
And if you don't mind he'll slip it onto you,  
And I will serve that living God!<sup>751</sup>

Satan, we're gonna' tear your kingdom down (repeat)  
You been building up your kingdom  
All over this world,  
Satan, we're gonna' tear your kingdom down.<sup>752</sup>

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<sup>745</sup> Ramey, p. 352.

<sup>746</sup> Fisher, p. 46.

<sup>747</sup> Sydney Grew, 'Random Notes on the Spiritual', *Music & Letters*, 16/2 (April 1935), 96-109 p. 103.

<sup>748</sup> Ryder, 'Theology of Plantation Songs', p. 12.

<sup>749</sup> Proctor, p. 77.

<sup>750</sup> *Another Day's Journey and I'm So Glad*. In Walker, p. 3.

<sup>751</sup> Barton, 'Old Plantation Hymns', p. 453.

<sup>752</sup> *Satan We're Gonna' Tear Your Kingdom Down*. In Walker, p. 143.

Together Angelology and Demonology are essential in the worldview of the Christian. As Christian hymns reflected a preoccupation with angels and Satan, references to angels and Satan in the spirituals contributed to a comprehensive representation of Christian cosmology and theology, a feature that greatly added to their recognition as a source of Christian theology.

### 7.23 Ecclesiology: *De church mos' ober, Bell da ring*<sup>753</sup>

The Protestant hymns *The Church's One Foundation*, *The Little Brown Church in the Vale* or *Onward Christian Soldiers* that afford such ecclesiological embellishments as 'the Church shall never perish',<sup>754</sup> 'the Church of God is one',<sup>755</sup> or 'like a mighty army moves the church of God',<sup>756</sup> are not replicated in slave songs. Timothy Dwight's view of the church and kingdom of God as synonymous terms is foreign to slave ecclesiology. In fact, spirituals rarely use the word 'church'; instead, they employ numerous expressions and terms that indicate an appreciation for a community of believers.

According to Henry H. Mitchell, the familial language used in spirituals demonstrates the foundation of the religious community,<sup>757</sup> the songs of black religious experiences appealing to family titles.<sup>758</sup>

The titles "Brother" and "Sister" (in Christ) are common in churches of all ethnic groups, but the African sense of congregation as virtual blood kin is a survival of African villages and towns. [...] Formal titles like "Mr." and "Mrs." were unknown in traditional communities.<sup>759</sup>

This type of expression is seen in many songs, such as *You Better Min'*.

Sister, you better min' how you talk,  
You better min' what you talkin' about,  
You got to give an account in the judgment,  
You better min'.

Brother, you better min' how you pray,  
You better min' what you prayin' about.  
You got to give an account in the judgment,

<sup>753</sup> Allen, Ware, and Garrison, p. 34.

<sup>754</sup> *The Church's One Foundation* by Samuel John Stone (1839-1900).

<sup>755</sup> *The Church of God is One* by Daniel Webster Whittle (1840-1901).

<sup>756</sup> *Onward Christian Soldiers* by Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924).

<sup>757</sup> The lyrics of Higginson's regiment make no mention of meetings, though this could be due the unique context of the Civil War. As the soldiers were detached from their familial communities, they may have sung songs that focused on their immediate situational needs, rather than the religious expression of their households and home communities.

<sup>758</sup> The title of 'father' is less common. *Anchor in the Lord* provides an exception. See Marsh, p. 255.

<sup>759</sup> Mitchell, p. 14, 15.

You better min'. <sup>760</sup>

A spiritual community is evident in songs such as this and speaks especially to matters of holiness and accountability. A type of 'ecclesial responsibility' in familial relationships is the standard of integrity for church leaders. Almost exclusively, 'deacons' and 'preachers' are featured.

Preacher, you better min' how you preach,  
 You better min' what you preachin' about,  
 You got to give an account in the judgment,  
 You better min'. <sup>761</sup>

The typical manner in which deacons and preachers are mentioned in songs is illustrated in *Soon in De Morning* recorded by Barton.

I'm goin' up home soon in de morning,  
 Goin' up home soon in de morning  
 I'm goin' up home soon in de morning,  
 I'm goin' to live with God.  
 I dunno what the deacons want to stay here for!  
 Stay here for! Stay here for!

I dunno what the deacons want to stay here for!  
 I'm goin' to live with God!

I dunno what the preacher wants to stay here for!  
 I'm goin' to live with God! <sup>762</sup>

The reference to deacons and preachers in spirituals and hymns demonstrates a sense of ecclesiastical authority – though this may be unsuitable terminology. Perhaps the term 'spiritual authority' is a better fit to describe the role of deacons and preachers in the black religious communities. Viewed from a traditional African perspective, it is possible that deacons and preachers served in an elder role typical of nomadic tribal cultures. Mitchell's work is again helpful as he identified the role of deacons and pastors serving a 'ceremonial function still alive and well in African culture'. <sup>763</sup> In addition to the preacher, *New Burying Ground* also identifies the 'meeting' where a sermon will be presented.

I went to meeting on a certain day,  
 Went fo' to hear what de preacher say.  
 Bout de time dat I got in,  
 Spoke one word condemned my sin.  
 Went back home an' counted de cost.

<sup>760</sup> Walker, p. 183, 184.

<sup>761</sup> Ibid. p. 184.

<sup>762</sup> Ibid.

<sup>763</sup> Mitchell, p. 15.

Of regular occurrence in the spirituals is the reference to 'meetings'. Used with an ecclesiological meaning, 'meetings' is applied with four usages: 1. outdoor gatherings, 2. camp meetings, 3. association with Methodists and Baptists (an explanation of denominational affiliation 7.5 above), and, 4. the hope of eternal worship in the presence of God.

Lyrics from *Bell Da Ring*, recorded in *Slaves Songs of the United States*, indicate that 'the meeting' and 'the church service' could be used synonymously.

I want to go to meeting, Bell da ring (repeat)

I can't get to meetin', Bell da ring (repeat)

De church mos' ober, Bell da ring (repeat)<sup>765</sup>

The song *Go in the Wilderness* demonstrates accountability in the black religious community. The lyrics prescribe the wilderness to all who want to 'find Jesus'. The message of the song is directed to 'weeping Mary', 'half-done Christians', 'backsliders', and the 'Baptist member'.<sup>766</sup> The spiritual *O Daniel* suggests that church membership wasn't taken lightly, and that there were high expectations of members.

You call yourself a church member  
You hold your head so high  
You praise God with your glitt'ring tongue  
But you leave your heart behind<sup>767</sup>

When spirituals mentioned denominational accountability, it was typically among Methodists and Baptists and expressed a commitment to unity.

Them Methodists and Baptists can't agree,  
And we'll all arise and go.  
An' stop you [sic] long [sic] tongue from telling lies,  
And we'll all arise and go.<sup>768</sup>

*Hard Trials* suggested Methodists and Baptists shared equal preference among blacks.

Oh Methodist, Methodist is my name  
Methodist till I die  
I'll be baptized on the Methodist side  
And a Methodist will I die

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<sup>764</sup> Barton, 'Recent Negro Melodies', p. 709.

<sup>765</sup> Allen, Ware, and Garrison, p. 34.

<sup>766</sup> Ibid. p. 14.

<sup>767</sup> Ibid. p. 94.

<sup>768</sup> Barton, 'Old Plantation Hymns', p. 454.



Oh, a Baptist, Baptist is my name  
 Baptist till I die  
 I'll be baptized on the Baptist side  
 And a Baptist will I die.<sup>769</sup>

The spirituals indicate the likelihood that baptism was administered through denominational churches and that slaves identified with a denomination through baptism. Perhaps this was a type of church membership. This could also relate to the dispute over mode of baptism. Recalling the dialogue between Chloe and Aunt Mimy, Chloe emphasized her affiliation with Methodists.

'Well,' said Chloe after awhile, 'I tell you how I is – I'm a born Meth'dis'. Dem what wants ter be babtize kin go git babtize, an' dem what wants ter be sprinkled can git sprinkled. I'm a sprinkler myse'f; and I ain't los' no sleep on de 'count uv it, an' I ain't gwine ter lose none. I'm des a plain Meth'dis'. Dem what got so many sins on um dat dey hatter git soused under de water, had better go plunge right in, an' dey oughtn' ter lose no time needer.'<sup>770</sup>

In contrast, a vignette in Blacknall indicated that baptism could be emphasized (at the expense of the Episcopalians).

But de Bible is plain as A, B, C, whar it says yer is got ter 'pent and be baptized, er yer'll be damned. Ise erfear'd, fact I know, er's not done nuther. It's dat Pisterpalium church what's der matter long yer.<sup>771</sup>

John Wesley Work Jr. referred to the doctrinal discord among slaves as 'denominational strife', using a spiritual that sided with the Baptist conviction.

'Twas at the river Jordan  
 Baptism was begun  
 John baptized a multitude  
 But he sprinkled nary a-one<sup>772</sup>

But the emphasis upon immersion and affiliation with Baptists was not only one-way; Baptists seem to have reciprocated. According to Barton, Baptists used the plantation hymn *Down by the River* at baptism ceremonies.

[refrain] Yes, we'll gain this world, down by the river  
 We'll gain this world, down by the riverside

<sup>769</sup> Marsh, p. 241.

<sup>770</sup> Harris, *Uncle Remus and His Friends: Stories, Songs, and Ballads with Sketches of Negro Character* p. 274.

<sup>771</sup> Blacknall, p. 684.

<sup>772</sup> John Wesley Work Jr., *American Negro Songs* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1940) p. 24. Paul A. Carter indicated that the mode of baptism was argued in white hymnody. A Methodist hymn derided Baptists, 'We've searched the law of heaven, Throughout the Sacred code; Of Baptism there by dipping We've never heard a word'. Baptists responded, 'Not at the River Jordan, But in the flowing stream, Stood John the Baptist preacher When he baptized him'. Citing John C. Calhoun (1782-1850), In Paul A. Carter, *Revolt against Destiny: An Intellectual History of the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989) p. 64.

[verse 1] And if those mourners would believe, down by the river  
The gift of life they would receive, down by the river

[verse 2] When I was a mourner, just like you  
I mourned and mourned till I got through<sup>773</sup>

The use of this spiritual is especially noteworthy given that baptism was practiced as an ordinance within Baptist churches, typically featuring each baptismal candidate's conversion testimony and acceptance into the religious community. Used at such a significant religious ceremony, the spiritual must have been trusted for its theological content. Certainly it functioned, in this instance, as an authoritative expression of faith. Though it is difficult to determine if Baron is referring to a white, black or bi-racial congregation, Barton witnessed the use of a plantation hymn (spiritual) outside of the plantation by a dominant Protestant denomination.

The paramount image of the meeting is presented in eschatological terms. 'There's a big camp meeting in the heaven, my Lord', as part of a verse in the song *Judgment Day is Rolling Around* and shows the anticipation of singing and worshipping in eternity. Another spiritual that emphasizes this hope is titled, *A Great Camp-meeting in the Promised Land*.<sup>774</sup> Considering these spirituals to be genuine expressions of the 'otherworldly', slaves held a vibrant faith in an eternal camp meeting that would replace all the temporal versions of camp meetings. At the 'Great Camp-meeting', Methodists and Baptists will be unified.

The Baptists they go by water  
The Methodists they go by lan'  
But when they get to heaven  
They'll shake each other's han'<sup>775</sup>

In *Sabbath Has No End*, the concept of an eternal meeting is strongly suggested by the association with Zion and the perpetual nature of the Sabbath.

Mighty meeting in Zion, I believe  
Mighty meeting in Zion, I believe  
Mighty meeting in Zion, I believe  
And Sabbath has no end.<sup>776</sup>

In contrast to the positive view of the Protestant church, one spiritual highlighted by Harriet Ann Jacobs in *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* attests to the divide between slaves and slave masters.

<sup>773</sup> Barton, 'Old Plantation Hymns', p. 453.

<sup>774</sup> Marsh, p. 280.

<sup>775</sup> Work Jr., p. 24.

<sup>776</sup> Barton, 'Recent Negro Melodies', p. 711.

Ole Satan's church is here below  
 Up to God's free church I hope to go  
 Cry Amen, cry Amen, cry Amen to God!

Jacobs situated this spiritual during the hour of singing and shouting that sustained slaves 'through the dreary week, toiling without wages, under constant dread of the lash'.<sup>777</sup> She also situated the lyrics following the rampage of her Episcopalian slave master, 'What right have you, who are my negro, to talk to me about what you would like, and what you wouldn't like? I am your master, and you shall obey me.'<sup>778</sup> In response Jacobs wrote, 'No wonder the slaves sing, "Ole Satan's church is here below, Up to God's free church I hope to go."' <sup>779</sup>

Though the ecclesial term 'church' was not common among spirituals, the language of local and regional meetings, and corporate worship, were usually compatible with American Protestantism. The indictment of the 'church below' (in Jacobs) witnesses to the reality of the abusive and corrupt master culture; yet Jacobs also used the word 'church' to describe the meeting of slaves gathered to sing and shout. The sense of accountability of leaders, especially applied to the church offices of deacon and preacher, was also normative in view of ecclesiastical authority. Further, the language of church membership and affiliation with Methodists and Baptists provided evidence of denominational participation among slave populations. Unlike white hymnody that held a universal view of the Church and tended toward the synonymy of Church and Kingdom, spirituals focused on the church gathered.

#### **7.24 Doxology: *Glory, Glory! Hallelujah!*<sup>780</sup>**

Lauri Ramey noted that 'most of the spirituals, unlike their contemporaneous counterparts in white Protestant hymns, are not hymns of praise to God, but, rather, celebrate the actions of God and the prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures.'<sup>781</sup> Ramey's doxological distinction might be best summed up as follows: White Protestant hymnody often focuses on 'the person of God' whereas the spirituals often focus on 'the actions of God'. Distinction between 'person' and 'action' is certainly valid, yet

<sup>777</sup> Harriet Ann Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, ed. L. Maria Child (Boston: Published for the Author, 1861) p. 109.

<sup>778</sup> *Ibid.* p. 116.

<sup>779</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>780</sup> *Glory, Glory! Hallelujah!* In Walker, p. 27.

<sup>781</sup> Ramey, p. 360.

in terms of doxology, both are rightly called songs of praise. Nonetheless, Ramey's distinction deserves further consideration.

While Ramey's observation of the spirituals is partly valid, her summary of white Protestant hymnody is questionable. In the case of spirituals, lyrics commonly emphasized God's actions in deliverance and apocalyptic justice, though not at the exclusion of praising the person and nature of God. In the case of white Protestant hymnody, lyrics commonly emphasized personal testimony, devotion, and service, though not at the exclusion of praise to God. Especially since the influence of Watts and Wesley,<sup>782</sup> white Protestant hymnody increasingly expressed experience, emotion, and egocentrism.<sup>783</sup> In line with the characteristics of evangelical Protestantism (biblicism, conversionism, crucicentrism, and activism),<sup>784</sup> songs of testimony, evangelism, conversion, and service were far more plentiful than songs of praise.<sup>785</sup> Granted, 'praise hymns' are represented in the corpus of American Protestant hymns but they are not dominant to warrant the distinction Ramey suggests. While Ramey is correct in identifying that most spirituals were not praise-oriented toward the person of God, she is incorrect in asserting that white hymnody was.

Though few spirituals articulate 'praise' to God and God's attributes (hence the difficulty earlier of finding worship texts addressed to 'the Father, Almighty') they do indeed contain doxological content. 'Hallelujah', a word often associated with praise lyrics, is used in a number of spirituals, *A Little More Faith in Jesus* and *Lobe an' Serve de Lord* providing examples.

Oh! Hallelujah to the Lamb

<sup>782</sup> As seen above in Marini's list, Watts and Wesley were disproportionately represented in American Protestant hymnals.

<sup>783</sup> Lyrics written with self and individual experience as central. This is to be distinguished from anthropocentrism, a perspective that places humankind at the centre and value of existence (in place of God).

<sup>784</sup> The characteristics of evangelical Protestantism. See David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London & Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989) p. 4. Noll applies Bebbington's four essential distinctives directly to American Protestantism. See Mark A. Noll, *America's God. From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002) p. 5.

<sup>785</sup> For instance, in Marini's list, egocentric lyrics are dominant, e.g. *Jesus Lover of My Soul, Alas and Did My Saviour Bleed?, Am I a Soldier of the Cross?, Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah, On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand, When I Can Read My Title Clear, Amazing Grace, Just as I Am, Jesus My All to Heaven is Gone*, etc. As Madeleine Forell Marshall and Janet Todd note, Watts's hymns used 'the common psyche' and human perceptions as a 'starting point' and Wesley's hymns, 'fundamentally egotistical', encouraged singers to 'reproduce emotion, teaching them to feel God.' See Madeleine Forell Marshall and Janet Todd, *English Congregational Hymns in the Eighteenth Century* (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1892) p. 59, 153, 156.

A little more faith in Jesus  
 The Lord is on the giving hand  
 A little more faith in Jesus<sup>786</sup>

Oh, hallelujah to the Lamb  
 "Lobe an' serbe the Lord"  
 I shouted Hallelujah! Hallelujah!  
 I praised my Jesus, Hallelujah!<sup>787</sup>

The use of the word 'praise' is used occasionally, demonstrated in the phrases 'I love to praise my Hebbenly King',<sup>788</sup> 'I praised my Jesus! Hallelujah',<sup>789</sup> and 'My brudders do sing de praises of de Lord'.<sup>790</sup>

Declarations of praise are addressed to Jesus as the Lamb in the spirituals *The Winter Soon Be Over* and *New Burying Ground*.

Sing glory, glory, glory to the Lamb,  
 I have held his bleeding hand.<sup>791</sup>

Gwine to glory an' a-honor!  
 Praise Jesus!  
 Gwine to glory an a-honor!  
 Praise the Lamb!<sup>792</sup>

The doxological usage of music is well represented in spirituals. The focus on heavenly worship and glorification of Jesus as the Lamb of God demonstrates a knowledge and preference for Revelation as a source of lyrical inspiration.

### 7.25 Mariology: *Hail Mary*<sup>793</sup>

While Mary Magdalene and Mary the sister of Lazarus are sometimes mentioned in spirituals, direct references to Mary the mother of Jesus are less common. As such, *Hail Mary* stands out in Higginson's work, though its inclusion in the 1867 collection of slave songs qualifies it as a representative spiritual. Marian piety seems to be expressed in the lyrics of *Hail Mary*.<sup>794</sup>

One more valiant soldier here (repeat)  
 To help me bear de cross.

<sup>786</sup> Marsh, p. 212.

<sup>787</sup> Ibid. p. 306.

<sup>788</sup> *Hear de Angels singin'* Ibid. p. 307.

<sup>789</sup> *Lobe an' serbe de Lord* Ibid. p. 306.

<sup>790</sup> *My Father, How Long?* In Allen, Ware, and Garrison, p. 93.

<sup>791</sup> Barton, 'Old Plantation Hymns', p. 454.

<sup>792</sup> Barton, 'Recent Negro Melodies', p. 709.

<sup>793</sup> Higginson, p. 686.

<sup>794</sup> Ibid.

O hail, Mary, hail!  
 Hail, Mary, hail!  
 To help me bear de cross.

As several of his men were from St. Augustine, Higginson determined the reference to Mary 'might denote a Roman Catholic origin'.<sup>795</sup> The appeal to Mary for assistance or as intercessor is consistent with Roman Catholic piety. Perhaps due to the circumstance of war, Higginson guessed that the lyrics were probably adapted from 'soul' to 'soldier'.

In contrast to Higginson's experience, Ryder drew attention to the absence of Marian piety. Whereas Higginson's Unitarian affiliation may have afforded a more tolerant view, Ryder's account demonstrates the anti-Catholicism prevalent among many American Protestant groups.

One other thought before I close; these hymns are remarkable not only for what they contain, but also for their omissions. First, we have in these plantation songs no Mariolatry. Many Negroes belonged to Catholic masters. In Louisiana, about New Orleans, I have attended many meetings held by these Negroes. I have never heard, nor have I found anywhere in these plantation melodies, any which sung the praises of the Virgin.<sup>796</sup>

Proctor followed suit with Ryder claiming, 'these songs are free from Mariolatry'.<sup>797</sup>

Ryder and Proctor both argued against Roman Catholic influences, indicating that 'Catholic spirituals', though few, were a threat to Protestants who believed that spirituals served to authenticate Protestant orientation. In Ryder's case, spirituals verified the efficacy of Protestant missions among Southern blacks. The Protestant perspective could be stated in various ways:

1. If the spirituals did not have lyrics of honor to Mary – even the spirituals of slaves under Roman Catholic tutelage – it follows that slaves did not honor Mary.
2. If the essential truths of Christianity are proclaimed comprehensively in the spirituals derived from both Protestant and Catholic slaves, and the veneration of Mary is absent, her veneration is not an essential truth.
3. If Catholic slaves did not offer praise to Mary in the spirituals, Protestants could trust the spirituals broadly as a reliable source of theological truth.

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<sup>795</sup> Ibid.

<sup>796</sup> Ryder, 'Theology of Plantation Songs', p. 15.

<sup>797</sup> Proctor, p. 84.

The exclusion of Marian piety from the spirituals was used by Ryder and Proctor as a theological weapon, and indicates that the spirituals contributed to theological argument. Given that Ryder and Proctor wielded the spirituals in this way is a testimony to the perceived theological gravity of spirituals by white audiences.

## 7.26 Spirituals and Black Liberation Theology

Apart from the theological significance of slave songs for 19<sup>th</sup> century theologians and writers, modern theologians have appealed to the theological authority of slave songs to bolster modern theological arguments. Though these arguments are from a recent period, their race-liberation hermeneutic of the spirituals draws from the representative voice of the spirituals before Emancipation. As a guiding question, 'Is race liberation the collective message of the slave songs?'

Mentioned above, various scholars interpreted racial outbursts in the spirituals. Fisher argued that black slaves 'sang cynically' about Jesus, 'taunted their mistresses', and that spirituals about Heaven were judgment texts against white slave owners. Levine interpreted songs about the Devil as 'a surrogate for the white man'. Walter E. Pitts believed that the *Old Ship of Zion* was 'a shelter against racial oppression'.

But few modern theologians have been as influential as James H. Cone. A pioneer in 'black theology', Cone consulted the theology of the spirituals as a type of liberation theology that provided precedent for black theology and black power. In this section I will engage Cone's use of spirituals in his rubric of black theology and argue that Cone's interpretation of slave songs as black liberation theology underestimated the non-sectarian quality of spirituals through which they gained universal recognition and functionality as theologically authoritative sources. In the discussion, I will also draw from Albert J. Raboteau, Rosemary Radford Ruether, Charles Long, and various other writers who have contributed to the understanding of liberation theology and/or African American spirituals.

Cone contended that 'the complex thought of the slave songs has so far escaped analysis' and that 'further theological interpretation is needed to uncover this thought'. Cone perceived the literature to be scant and theological interest low.

Large amounts of scholarship have been devoted to the music and poetry of the black spiritual but little has been written about its theology. Apparently

most scholars assume that the value of the black spiritual lies in its artistic expression and not its theological content, which could be taken to mean that blacks can “sing and dance good” but cannot think.<sup>798</sup>

In *The Spirituals and the Blues* Cone traced the first theological analysis of spirituals back to *The Negro's God* by Benjamin Mays.

Despite the profundity of Thurman's essay on the essentially religious character of the spirituals, he did not attempt the full scope of theological analysis. Ironically it was the sociologist Benjamin Mays who became the first (and virtually the only) scholar to analyze the slave songs under theological categories.<sup>799</sup>

From the outset, Cone's approach is puzzling. Why did Cone bypass Ryder, Barton and Proctor? Perhaps he was not aware of works prior to Mays' 1938 publication; yet Ryder's inclusion as a white contributor in the 1895 *Afro-American Encyclopedia* – an encyclopedia that featured ‘the thoughts, doing and saying of the [black] race’ – couldn't have been much more prominent. Perhaps Cone narrowed his research to monographs; yet he recognized Thurman's ‘essay’. Perhaps Cone did not consider Ryder, Barton, or Proctor to be proper theological sources, but this wouldn't make sense since he approved of sociologist Benjamin Mays. Whatever Cone's reason for excluding their voices, his work failed to incorporate theological treatment of the spirituals by qualified writers familiar with the South during or soon after the period of Reconstruction.

Cone was a pioneer in black theology and his 1969 work *Black Theology and Black Power* became a major work in liberation theology and Black Nationalism. Cone argued that the spirituals were songs of ‘black liberation’ in the tradition of ‘black theology’ and ‘black power’. In *Black Spirituals: A Theological Interpretation*, Cone stated this point unequivocally.

Contrary to popular opinion, the spirituals are not evidence that black people reconciled themselves with human slavery. On the contrary, they are black freedom songs which emphasize black liberation as consistent with divine revelation. For this reason it is most appropriate for black people to sing them in this ‘new’ age of Black Power. And if some people still regard the spirituals as inconsistent with Black Power and Black Theology, that is because they have been misguided and the songs misinterpreted.<sup>800</sup>

<sup>798</sup> Cone, ‘Black Spirituals: A Theological Interpretation’, p. 54.

<sup>799</sup> Cone, *The Spirituals and the Blues* p. 17.

<sup>800</sup> Cone, ‘Black Spirituals: A Theological Interpretation’, p. 60. In a recent discussion with Dr. Cone, I learned that his censure was delivered in an intra-community conflict over the nature of spirituals. Dr. Cone identified ‘the misguided’ as black power advocates who, during the Civil Rights Movement, deemed the spirituals ‘otherworldly’, thus conflicting with Cone's appropriation of spirituals for race liberation.



But Cone's argument reads a bit like an 'Affirmation of the Consequent', namely: If one believes that black slaves did not reconcile themselves with the institution of slavery, one will also believe that the spirituals were songs of black liberation consistent with 'black power' and 'black theology'. Yet one can believe that black slaves did not reconcile themselves with the institution of slavery while rejecting Cone's assertion that the spirituals were consistent with 'black power' and 'black theology'. It may be that the theological rubric of the spirituals is not 'black theology' and 'black power', and therefore inconsistent with Cone's race-liberation exegesis. Indeed, Cone did not provide a single instance of 'blackness' or race distinction in the spirituals. Further, Cone negated the notion that the spirituals 'assum[ed] a universal stance common to "all" men'.<sup>801</sup> If Cone were correct, the theological authority of the spirituals would have been significantly different; certainly white theologians such as Ryder would have been hard pressed to distill inclusive teachings from them if they expressed race-liberation exclusivity.

Cone's interpretation is not persuasive, having little support from the spirituals themselves.<sup>802</sup> If Cone's interpretation were valid, one would expect to find racial distinction between 'black' and 'white' in slave song lyrics.<sup>803</sup> Instead, spirituals celebrate the family, community, morality, holiness, salvation, deliverance and hope. This is the substance of human dignity and wholeness, shared in common with all races. The spirituals do not exhibit 'black theology' that Cone claimed as a platform and, despite Cone's view that the spirituals were not universal, universality is, in fact, one of their central characteristics.

Cone's work evoked critique from Charles Long. Along with *God is Red* by Vine Deloria Jr., Long identified Cone's *Black Theology and Black Power* and *Black Theology of Liberation* as 'theologies of the opaque' and 'ethnic resurgence theologies' that 'portray the godhead in their own image'.<sup>804</sup> Long considered such theological posturing to be accusatory, suggesting that it resembled 'the polemics and

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<sup>801</sup> Ibid. p. 64.

<sup>802</sup> The only textual evidence Cone provides is the phrase, 'Singin' wid a sword in ma han'. Cone suggests that the sword 'may be the symbol of the need of black slaves to strike a blow for freedom'.

<sup>803</sup> Work III, p. 17. Work includes the title of the song *My Lord's Goin' to Move This Wicked Race*. Unsure of its reference Work writes, '[T]o whom was he referring? Was this "wicked race" generic or was it the group of plantation owners?' Work doesn't associate this spiritual with racial antagonism, a point of significance given Work's publication during the Civil Rights Movement.

<sup>804</sup> Long, *Significations: Signs, Symbols and Images in the Interpretation of Religion* p. 193, 194.

rhetoric of the Lutheran Reformation'.<sup>805</sup> In this battlefield of theology, Long discredited opaque theologies as undeserving contenders.

If God is red, if black is beautiful, then this modality of the godhead has always been the case [...] There is a theology of accusation which is to the fore in the theologies opaque. But it is precisely at this point that these theologies should not move forward to possess the theological battlefield wrested from their foes. It is at this point that theologies opaque must become deconstructive theologies – that is to say, theologies that undertake the destruction of theology as a powerful mode of discourse.<sup>806</sup>

In some ways Long was echoing earlier criticism of Cone by Rosemary Radford Ruether. In her book *Liberation Theology: Human Hope Confronts Christian History and American Power*, Ruether addressed the shortcomings in Cone's view.

Cone does occasionally suggest that the new humanity of blackness is a metaphor for a universal humanity available to all men. But his free use of language about killing the oppressor, rather than loving him gives the overwhelming impression that theological categories have been wedded to racial identities in such a way that denies the humanity, as well as the false power, of white people. He fails to clarify the limits of his contextual identification of whiteness with the demonic. He fails to distinguish between whiteness as an inauthentic power possessing white society and whiteness as the 'nature' of white people.<sup>807</sup>

For Ruether, Cone represented 'a black intelligentsia' that was detached from the living context of the black community. According to Ruether, black preaching (not 'a black intelligentsia') 'stood in a living relation to black culture and, from its milieu, preached universal brotherhood'.<sup>808</sup> In the words of Gayraud S. Wilmore, black theology, (in the context of the social rights movement) 'is essentially a black theology of schoolmen, an academic, intellectual enterprise – a polemic against the predominantly white, Anglo-Saxon interpretation of the Christian faith that failed to perceive what God was about in our struggle for liberation and justice'.<sup>809</sup> In the context of antebellum America, Wilmore believed that a black theology existed as a 'folk theology' with the basic tenet 'the last will be first and the first will be last'. By the time of the Civil War, this theology could be summarized thus: 'God is a God of truth and justice. He will vindicate the sufferings of the black people'.<sup>810</sup> Wilmore applied this theology directly to spirituals.

<sup>805</sup> Ibid. p. 194.

<sup>806</sup> Ibid. p. 195.

<sup>807</sup> Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Liberation Theology: Human Hope Confronts Christian History and American Power* (New York: Paulist Press, 1972) p. 137.

<sup>808</sup> Ibid. p. 138.

<sup>809</sup> Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Pragmatic Spirituality: The Christian Faith through an Africentric Lens* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2004) p. 158.

<sup>810</sup> Ibid.

For many slaves who sang “Where You There When They Crucified My Lord?” Jesus was like a first-century nigger, spat upon, beaten, lynched on a tree, who understood what they were going through because he had been there first. Yes, they were there, preternaturally, when they crucified the Lord! It was no accident to them that Simon, the Cyrenian (after whom, incidentally, several black Episcopal churches were named), was forced to carry the cross for Jesus on that first Good Friday. Simon was, after all, an African, and his identity with Jesus on the road to Calvary was a prefigurement of the fact that black people were forever to be bound to the Savior in his suffering and struggle, and by his glorious resurrection they were assured of also being bound to his triumph over the powers of sin, oppression, and death.<sup>811</sup>

Opaque theologies existed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Mormon prophet Joseph Smith provides perhaps the most compelling example. Smith’s scriptures reported that the Lamanites, once ‘white and delightful’, were cursed with dark skin because of their unbelief.<sup>812</sup> According to Mormon teaching, the dark-skinned Lamanites were the ancestors of the American Indian. In order to reverse the curse of dark skin, Smith received a revelation in 1831 that Mormon men should take multiple wives of the Nephites and Lamanites so that ‘their posterity might become white’.<sup>813</sup> In *Journal of Discourses*, Brigham Young denied the priesthood to blacks (‘those with flat nose and black skin’)<sup>814</sup> arguing that they bore the mark of Cain, their subservient position deserved. Further, Mormon opaque theology was not out of step with race theories that circulated in the United States throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Buckner H. Payne’s *The Negro, What is His Ethnological Status?* (1867), and Charles Carroll’s *The Negro a Beast* (1900) demonstrated that the theory of white race supremacy continued long after the Civil War. Such works perpetuated the theological conception that people of African descent were less than human.

Despite the exclusion and oppression experienced by black slaves, the spirituals they composed were written from an inclusive religious perspective. This was a theology

<sup>811</sup> Ibid. p. 162, 163.

<sup>812</sup> 2 Nephi 5:21

<sup>813</sup> Lawrence Foster, *Religion and Sexuality: Three American Communal Experiments of the Nineteenth Century* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981) p. 135. Foster cited the revelation of 17 July 1831 in an effort to argue for Smith’s early plans for plural marriage. Foster documented the revelation through hymnist W. W. Phelps who recorded the vision in the 1850s or 1860s. Mormon historian and BYU professor Kathryn M. Daynes challenged Foster’s thesis but did not discount his sources. Daynes verified the source as ‘W. W. Phelps to Brigham Young, August 12, 1861’ but discredited its accuracy claiming ‘Phelps’s memory was faulty’. See Kathryn M. Daynes, *More Wives Than One: Transformation of the Mormon Marriage System, 1840-1910* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001) p. 20, 230 n15. David W. Stowe assumes the account to be trustworthy. See Stowe, p. 83.

<sup>814</sup> *Journal of Discourses Delivered by President Brigham Young, His Two Counselors, the Twelve Apostles and Others*, (7; Liverpool: Amasa Lyman, 1860) p. 290, 291.

of humanity and thus, not respecting of persons, produced a corpus of spiritual expression with potential benefit to all readers.

The spirituals did not advance revenge against white slave owners; neither did the slaves emulate in spirituals the prevailing race hatred that sought to dehumanize their spiritual dignity. According to Proctor, 'they were singularly free from malice'<sup>815</sup> and 'entirely absent of the spirit of revenge'.<sup>816</sup> To emphasize his point, Proctor contrasted David's oppression attested in the Psalms in which David pleads for God to consume his enemies.

Although these songs comprised, as I have said, the whole public utterance of a people for two and a half centuries, yet there cannot be found in them a single trace of ill will! Does the world present a parallel to this? Compare this with the Psalms. David, oppressed by his enemies, called down fire, hail, and burning wind, to consume them from the very face of the earth.<sup>817</sup>

Thus, Proctor compared canonical and noncanonical lyrics and favored the latter. Proctor essentially argued that Psalms (canonical) featured revenge texts, whereas the spirituals (noncanonical) were without revenge texts. For Proctor, the spirituals took a high road above slavery and retaliation and, exemplary of ideal spirituality, achieved an expression of grace that evaded 'the Psalmist'. This shows a similar vein of thought to Isaac Watts who edited or omitted the revenge Psalms. As Watts, Proctor seems to have believed the Psalms could be improved upon. The fact that he believed slave songs outperformed the Psalms (at least the revenge psalms) demonstrates his high regard for slave songs.

What impression did this leave on Proctor's readers? Evidently, the spirituals were worthy to consult in matters of faith and praxis. Indeed, the godly lamentation ensuing from the spirituals demonstrated veracity equal to or even greater than the texts of David!

Barton's impression was similar, 'It is noteworthy that these songs, however much they bewail the sorrows of slavery, contain no resentment.'<sup>818</sup> Walker expressed a similar appreciation.

Once again we are startled by the spiritual sensitivity of these rural Black Americans who developed so deep an understanding of the dynamics of the

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<sup>815</sup> Altona Trent Johns, 'Henry Hugh Proctor', *The Black Perspective in Music*, 3/1 (Spring 1975), 25-32 p. 26.

<sup>816</sup> Proctor, p. 85.

<sup>817</sup> Ibid.

<sup>818</sup> Barton, 'Hymns of the Slave and the Freedman', p. 617.

Christian faith in their attempts to cope with the rigors of white racist America.<sup>819</sup>

Indeed, challenges to white superiority in the spirituals are minimal. John Lovell Jr. emphasized the judicial nature of spiritual texts. In this genre, any who declined sanctification were excluded from salvation, including whites.

You may be a white man  
White as the drifting snow  
If your soul ain't been converted  
To Hell you're sure to go<sup>820</sup>

But this type of soteriological warning addressed to whites is extremely rare. As well, it is softened by spirituals that reflect racial differences in worship expression, such as the good-natured approach evident in *Good News*.

De white folks call us a noisy crew  
Good news, O, good news  
But dis I know, we are happy too  
Just comin' from de trone<sup>821</sup>

Furthermore, slaves did not recoil from white color idealizations. Used as a symbol of purity in Revelation, eschatological spirituals commonly used phrases such as 'white robes' and 'white horse' demonstrated in the spirituals *Oh! let me get up*<sup>822</sup> and *Gideon's Band*.<sup>823</sup>

Louis E. Lomax in *The Negro Revolt* observed sensitivities to race language. Lomax claimed that the spirituals were 'a plaintive affirmation of the individual soul couched in a rousing denunciation of this world's ways'<sup>824</sup> later emphasizing that the *Negro National Anthem* was changed in name to *Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing* to affirm 'oneness with the American mainstream'.<sup>825</sup> This was a reversal on two fronts: 1. The racial language was at first black-oriented, and, 2. The black orientation of the song title was changed to avoid race exclusivism. Indeed, this matched the lyrics that were without racial distinction.

A number of black associations were established at the outset of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was

<sup>819</sup> Walker, p. 92.

<sup>820</sup> Lovell Jr., 'Reflections on the Origins of the Negro Spiritual', p. 96.

<sup>821</sup> Higginson, p. 691. *Good News*.

<sup>822</sup> Marsh, p. 174.

<sup>823</sup> Ibid. p. 238.

<sup>824</sup> Louis E. Lomax, *The Negro Revolt* (New York, Evanston and London: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1962) p. 45. *Lift Every Voice and Sing* was written in 1899 by James Weldon Johnson.

<sup>825</sup> Ibid. p. 50.

established in 1909. In 1914 Marcus Garvey founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Garvey didn't use the spirituals to accommodate his program of Black Nationalism. In fact, Garvey regretted the weakness of spirituals (7.2 above). As if to shore up the deficit of black outrage, Garvey wrote his own poetry that expressed aggressively the strife between blacks and whites; lyrics more consistent with Cone's later view of black power and black theology than the spirituals of plantation slaves. In *The Tragedy of White Injustice*, Garvey's racial polemics are emphatic.

Africa's millions laughed with the sun  
 In the cycle of man a course to run  
 In stepped the white man, bloody and grim  
 The light of these people's freedom to dim<sup>826</sup>

What can we do who love the Gracious Lord  
 But fight, pray, watch and wait His Holy word  
 His second coming we know to be true  
 Then, He will greet the white man with his due<sup>827</sup>

Black women are raped by the lordly white  
 In colonies, the shame ne'er reaching light  
 In other countries abuses are given  
 Shocking to morality and God's Heaven<sup>828</sup>

Garvey's lyrics are substantially different from the slave songs. If the spirituals were testimonies of weakness, as Garvey contested, Garvey's corrective texts were profoundly muscular. Rather than perpetuate the meekness of the spirituals, Garvey wrote his own poetry to condemn and vilify white oppressors. As Cone was in search of black liberation texts, Garvey's poetry would have been an obvious source to explore. But Garvey's poetry was not endowed with the recognition ascribed to the spirituals. The spirituals had the theological authority Cone needed but required a racially motivated exegesis to dovetail with the Black Nationalism of Cone's day. Ultimately Cone used a racially motivated exegesis and harvested the spirituals as an authoritative endorsement of his own liberation theology.

The relationship between the spirituals and liberation theology can be understood from another angle. As liberation theologies reflect the particular views and needs of an interest group, their partisan emphasis can delimit the breadth of their scope. Pauli Murray suggested that liberation theologies, such as black theology, feminist theology, and Third World theologies, 'do not attempt to construct an overarching

<sup>826</sup> Marcus Garvey, *The Tragedy of White Injustice* (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1978) p. 4.

<sup>827</sup> *Ibid.* p. 6.

<sup>828</sup> *Ibid.* p. 17.

systematic theology'.<sup>829</sup> Using Murray's measure, if the spirituals fit the category of 'liberation theology' they would not have the capacity to inform Christian doctrine comprehensively but would challenge more poignantly oppression and segregation.

But multiple writers affirmed the comprehensive scope of religious teaching in the spirituals. According to Dixon (page 124), blacks 'could state the cardinal doctrines of the Gospel in the language of song'. After their analysis, both Ryder and Proctor confirmed the spirituals to contain the 'fundamental truths of Christianity'. As I have attempted to demonstrate, the spirituals are a comprehensive testimony of Christian doctrine.

Granted, the theological classification of spirituals is surely more complex than this. What theologians have explored more recently about varying theological perspectives, largely through the impact of liberation theology and feminist theology, has informed the assessment of African spirituality of slave communities in America: theological orientation is not without predisposition. In this paradigm Paris argues, Africans could take ownership of Christianity by 'Africanizing it'.<sup>830</sup> Largely, 'the basic theology of Africans in the diaspora reflected the survival orientation of the community'.<sup>831</sup> For Levine, 'Slave songs are a testament to the ways in which Christianity provided slaves with the precedents, heroes, and future promise that allowed them to transcend the purely temporal bonds of the Peculiar Institution'.<sup>832</sup>

In the process of Christianization, black slaves developed a theological perspective that was distinctive. Largely in a counter position to white Christianity, African American theology opposed the degradation of both religion and government. Rather than disown either Christianity or democracy, the majority movement within black Christianity sought to reclaim both. According to Raboteau, the African American theology that emerged by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century was based on moral superiority<sup>833</sup> and historical legacy. In the first place, African Americans were a persecuted minority,

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<sup>829</sup> Pauli Murray, 'Black Theology and Feminist Theology: A Comparative View', in Gayraud S. Wilmore and James H. Cone (eds.), *Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966-1979* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979) p. 399.

<sup>830</sup> Paris, p. 38.

<sup>831</sup> *Ibid.* p. 45.

<sup>832</sup> Lawrence W. Levine, 'Slave Songs and Slave Consciousness: An Exploration in Neglected Sources', in Timothy Earl Fulop and Albert J. Raboteau (eds.), *African-American Religion: Interpretive Essays in History and Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1997) p. 81. The Peculiar Institution is a reference to 'the South's Peculiar Institution', i.e. slavery.

<sup>833</sup> This is an irony in social situation. Protestant groups believed themselves a part of moral progress but, as Raboteau asserts, it was the black slave who was the most morally progressive.

yet demonstrated a remarkable resilience as victim that modeled their view of Jesus as victim. In the second place, while American Protestantism laid claim to 'the New Israel', African Americans laid claim to the Israel of the Exodus.

Some black theologians developed a distinctive millennialist strand. James Theodore Holly argued that the 'darker races' were endowed with an apocalyptic identity that would usher in the millennial reign of Christ, exercising an eschatological role that would supercede the white Protestant claim to the United States as the Promised Land bestowed to the Puritans by God.<sup>834</sup> From the view of oppressed slaves, the United States was a place of tyranny at the hand of whites whose claim to Christian authority was seriously undermined by their use of conquest and slavery. According to Raboteau, 'black theologians, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, extended the doctrine of black moral superiority from a national to a global scale.'<sup>835</sup>

Raboteau's analysis, at least in part, is evident in Booker T. Washington's reference to 'the old theology' in which Washington demonstrated an emphasis upon Israelite moral code as a fabric part of African American Christianity. Washington expressed his views in an address to the International Sunday School Convention in 1914.

I don't want to spoil the old theology [...] That's the theology that I want you to take to my people on the plantations of the South; my people who are close to the soil and who will be better off for staying there if you will take them the Sunday school and all that the Sunday school means. The old theology! Take them that! The old theology, that says thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not bear false witness. That's the old theology that I mean.<sup>836</sup>

This may hearken back to the early catechetical efforts of Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists who prioritized the Ten Commandments as part of religious instruction for slaves.<sup>837</sup> It also suggests that a 'plantation theology' or 'slave theology' was appreciable to Washington by the turn of the century. Further, Washington was not defending the 'old theology', but was arguing for its return. Clearly he did not need to convince his audience of his terminology, but rather, that their behavior needed to change to a theology of which they were familiar.

<sup>834</sup> In Raboteau, *A Fire in the Bones* p. 54.

<sup>835</sup> *Ibid.* p. 52.

<sup>836</sup> Booker T. Washington, 'An Account of a Speech before the International Sunday School Convention', *International Sunday School Convention* (Chicago, 1914).

<sup>837</sup> According to Raboteau, Anglicans taught the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer.



## 7.27 Conclusion

Ordained ministers and theologians recognized the theological authority of spirituals and improvised hymns. For Dixon, hymn texts were the 'only catechism'. According to Ryder, slave songs contained 'the great fundamentals truths of Christianity' comparable to an ecumenical creed, a claim echoed almost verbatim by Proctor who attempted 'to formulate a system of theologico-religious conceptions from the songs of the Southern slaves.' W. A. Barrett identified spirituals as a source of 'the most acceptable form of doctrine'. Walker believed that late-19<sup>th</sup> century spirituals were 'Bible-based', Christ-centric, and reflected a developed Christology. Following the work of Proctor, Yolanda Smith used the message of the spirituals as a source for Christian education. Even if these writers are inaccurate or exaggerated, their validation of the spirituals in these ways demonstrates the theological authority of slave songs as perceived by ordained ministers, historians, and theologians.

Slave songs were multi-layered. On the one hand, they represented the African response to slavery. On the other, they demonstrated the attitudes and beliefs of Christianized slaves. The association of slaves with Methodists and Baptists, though expressed in but a few spirituals, indicates an intentional affiliation with Protestantism. While the spirituals contained multiple meanings, Ryder argued that the essential Christian message was not negated in such instances, and John Wesley Work III claimed that any double meanings were 'eliminated after the Civil War', an argument I believe to be informed by a strain of anti-Jewishness. Convinced of the affiliation with Protestant Christianity, both Ryder and Proctor used the spirituals as a theological weapon against Catholicism.

The devotional and inspirational impact of the slave songs registered deeply with key voices. Believing slave songs to be among the richest expressions of 'heart religion', W. E. Barton exhorted teachers and pastors to preserve them for future generations. Mark Twain considered the impact of slave songs (at least as sung by the Jubilee Singers) to be without equal. Proctor, Beecher, and Milburn all testified to the powerful emotional impact of the slave songs. As the edificatory value of hymns was vital to the authority ascribed to hymns, recognizing this same value in slave songs demonstrated their equality to hymns. Based on the above testimony, it is arguable that the emotional impact of slave songs exceeded white hymnody.

Related to the emotional impact of slave songs on white audiences is the universality of their message. While various scholars have argued for racial polemics or race-liberation theology in the spirituals, the absence of vengeance and racial discrimination in spirituals points to the contrary. The spirituals consistently present human expression that is without racial distinction. Though themselves subjected to race discrimination amidst opaque theologies that discredited dark skin, the slave songs did not polemicize racial religion – at least not obviously. Compared to Garvey who did, the spirituals come across as broadly applicable expressions of spirituality and piety. Part of their theological authority is attributed to their remarkable universality.

Ryder and Proctor both brought systematic theology to illumine the spirituals. By carrying through with their work using a larger corpus of published slave songs and a more comprehensive approach, I have attempted to demonstrate the doctrinal congruence of slave songs with American Protestantism. Interpreting spirituals and improvised hymns from a literalist perspective, systematic theological analysis confirms a surprisingly complete alignment with American Protestantism. Slave songs testified to the following beliefs: God's sovereignty, the divinity and humanity of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration, the Fall of humanity, a high view of the Bible, the culpability of human beings, experiential conversion and the crucicentric doctrine of substitutionary atonement, a belief in Heaven, the historic and personal ministry of angels, the adversarial role of the Devil, and finally, validation of church identity (Methodist and Baptist) and authority of church offices (deacon and preacher).

A circular argument may be intimated in the claim that slave songs were catechetical because they were doctrinally sound and, hence, doctrinally sound because they were catechetical. But in light of the historical development, the two premises are clearly independent. First, slave songs were not written with a didactic goal primarily, but were considered useful as a catechetical source by Protestant ministers and theologians because of their biblical content and emulation of Protestant expressions. Second, Protestants, not to verify their catechetical usefulness to slaves, analyzed slave songs for theological content to verify the successful Christianization of slaves. As the catechetical role was further appreciated, so too was the theological content, thus proving to be independent observations. In the end, theological authority is tied to both catechetical value and theological content. I have tried to show here that

theological authority of the spirituals is proportional to both the theological content of the spirituals and their catechetical role. As slave songs were used as a primary catechetical source and trusted as a comprehensive expression of orthodox Christian doctrine, their stock of theological authority increased.

## Chapter Eight: Hymns of Marginalized Groups

In this chapter I will discuss the use of hymns by marginalized groups and, in some cases, the use of hymns by Protestant writers against marginalized groups. First, I will discuss the context of sectarianism and marginalization. Secondly, I will use representative hymnals of each marginalized group to demonstrate their doctrinal distinctives, demonstrating the vital theological function of the hymnal. Finally, I will quantify the use of Protestant hymnody by marginalized groups.

### 8.1 Introduction

The contemplation of church and sect distinctions is typically credited to sociologists Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch. H. Richard Niebuhr articulated sectarianism in America within the rubric of denominationalism, judging schisms and fragmentation as 'the moral failure of Christianity.'<sup>838</sup> In his 1948 treatment of American sectarianism, Charles S. Braden conceded the lack of a universal definition for sect, and suggested seven classifications to distinguish sects from a denomination: 1. Non-Christian, 2. Denominational offshoot, 3. A new group with no denominational affiliation, 4. Immigrant group, 5. Prophetic founder, 6. Syncretic, and, 7. Humanistic.<sup>839</sup>

Stark and Bainridge defined sects as groups that have a prior tie with another religious organization and cults as groups that do not have a prior tie (at least typically).<sup>840</sup> David Martin contested the emphasis upon a cult as 'foreign, new and oppositional', suggesting that 'individualism' was the 'fundamental criterion'.<sup>841</sup> Martin E. Marty argued that sects were 'negatively-oriented' and gained adherents by 'isolating people from competing value systems', and that cults were 'usually gathered around

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<sup>838</sup> H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Company, 1968) p. 25.

<sup>839</sup> Charles Samuel Braden, 'Organized Religion in the United States', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 256 (March 1948), 53-62 p. 54, 55.

<sup>840</sup> Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainridge, 'Concepts for a Theory of Religious Movements', in Joseph H. Fichter (ed.), *Alternatives to American Mainline Churches* (New York, New York: The Rose of Sharon Press, Inc., 1983) p. 11.

<sup>841</sup> David Martin, 'A Definition of a Cult: Terms and Approaches', in Joseph H. Fichter (ed.), *Alternatives to American Mainline Churches* (New York, New York: The Rose of Sharon Press, Inc., 1983) p. 37.

charismatic persons or clans'.<sup>842</sup> Catherine L. Albanese emphasized cult movements being in a 'discontinuous relationship with mainstream culture'.<sup>843</sup>

Common to all of these definitions is the reality of estrangement or alienation that occurs between groups. In a general sense, 'to marginalize' means to estrange or alienate. Typically, persons may be marginalized because of identity, such as ethnicity, race, gender, social status or religion. Further, persons may self-marginalize by setting themselves apart from other persons or groups. According to Claude Welch, though early-19<sup>th</sup> century American revivalism had fostered a type of ecumenicalism, preservationist and Biblicist priorities reasserted denominationalism by mid-century.<sup>844</sup>

In almost all cases, hymns of marginalized groups patterned their hymnody after American Protestantism. In all cases, hymns of marginalized groups were integral to their doctrinal distinctives. Mainstream Protestants took seriously the theological authority of hymns used by marginalized groups and contended against them as doctrinal texts. I have selected eight groups that had some type of affiliation with Protestantism, yet were marginalized by American Protestantism and/or marginalized themselves, largely because of doctrinal views. These are, in chronological order of their establishment in the United States: Freemasons, Shakers, Universalists, Unitarians, Mormons, Spiritualists, Christian Scientists, and Jehovah's Witnesses.<sup>845</sup> These groups conflicted with at least two of the determining characteristics of American Protestantism (biblicism, crucicentrism, conversionism and activism) with the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the atonement and the infallibility of the Bible often testing doctrinal boundaries. As all of these groups published their own hymnals, I am interested in the role of hymns and the influence of Protestant hymnody among marginalized groups.

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<sup>842</sup> Martin E. Marty, 'Religion in American Society', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 332 (November 1960), 125-134 p. 129.

<sup>843</sup> Albanese, p. 274.

<sup>844</sup> Claude Welch, *Protestant Thought in the Nineteenth Century* (I; New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972) p. 190.

<sup>845</sup> Though Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy and Judaism experienced varying degrees of marginalization, I will not include them in this current assessment, as none of these groups affiliated with Protestantism. Further, these represent significant traditions that predate Protestantism. Though some might exclude Freemasonry due to the latter, its organization as a fraternal order did not occur until the late-17<sup>th</sup> and early-18<sup>th</sup> centuries, though stonemason guilds existed earlier.

## 8.2 Freemasonry

Henry Price, the 'Father of Freemasonry in America', was inaugurated Provincial Grand Master over all of North America in 1733. Price was successful in establishing Freemasonry in America where, by the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, Masonic lodges were represented in most major cities along the eastern seaboard.<sup>846</sup> On 24 October 1797, a Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons was established 'for the government and regulation of the several Chapters within the said States.'<sup>847</sup>

From the outset, Freemasonry wielded a disproportionate influence in government and Protestantism. In *America: Religion and Religions*, Catherine L. Albanese attested to both of these developments.

Probably fifty-two of the fifty-six signers of the Declaration of Independence were Masons, as were the majority of the members of the Continental Congress. Moreover, nearly every general in the Revolutionary War was a Mason. Enshrined in the Freemasonic lodges, deism existed cordially beside Protestant Christianity and by so doing moved Protestant Masonic brothers in a liberal direction.<sup>848</sup>

In the same year a Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons was established, James Lyon published *Masonic Songs, Oratorios, Odes, Anthems, Prologues, Epilogues and Toasts, Adapted to the Different Degrees of Masonry*. One year later Samuel Larkin published *The Free-Mason's Pocket Companion: A Collection of Masonic Songs*. These works were followed by a fairly steady stream of songbooks, including the *Muse of Masonry* (1801), *The Vocal Companion and Masonic Register* (1802), *The Masonick Minstrel* (1816) and *Masonick Melodies* (1818). This prolific publication of hymnody was grounded in a deep appreciation of music, as expressed in Masonic literature of the period.

Music is that elevated science which affects the passions by sound. There are few who have not felt its charms, and acknowledge its expressions to be intelligible to the heart. It is a language of delightful sensations, far more elegant than words: it breathes to the ear the clearest imitations; it touches, and gently agitates the agreeable and sublime passions; it wraps us in melancholy, and elevates us in joy; it dissolves and enflames; it melts us in tenderness, and excites us to war. This science is truly congenial to the nature of man; for by its powerful charms, the most discordant passions may be harmonized and brought into perfect unison: but it never sounds with such seraphic harmony as

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<sup>846</sup> Mark A. Tabbert, *American Freemasons. Three Centuries of Building Communities* (Lexington, New York and London: National Heritage Museum and New York University Press, 2005) p. 34.

<sup>847</sup> Jeremy L. Cross, *The True Masonic Chart or Hieroglyphic Monitor* (New York: Jeremy L. Cross, 1851) p. 344.

<sup>848</sup> Albanese, p. 123.

when employed in singing hymns of gratitude to the Creator of the universe.<sup>849</sup>

Using Braden's categories of sect, American Freemasonry seems to fit best in the 'syncretic' classification due to its assimilation of truths from multiple religions. While Freemasonry embraced Protestants, including Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Baptists, Lutherans,<sup>850</sup> and Methodists,<sup>851</sup> its membership was not exclusively comprised of Christians.

The editing of *Blest Be the Tie that Binds* may have reflected an attempt by Freemasons to avoid sectarianism. Originally written by Rev. John Fawcett the original reference to 'Christian love' was altered by Freemason editors to 'virtuous love' or 'purest love'. Yet some hymns written by Freemasons intimated exclusive association with Christianity, illustrated by an excerpt from *Most Excellent Master's Ode*, 'Christians unite while Angels sing, All Earth and Heaven the glorious strain prolong'.<sup>852</sup>

Additional Masonic odes suggesting a direct affiliation with Christianity were fairly common in American Freemasonry, although the militaristic emphasis may imply identification with the Knights Templar.

The laws of Christian light  
 These are our weapons bright  
 Our mighty shield  
 Christ is our leader high  
 And the broad plains which lie  
 Beneath the blessed sky  
 Our battle-field<sup>853</sup>

Christian warriors, to the pealing  
 Of the solemn vesper bell  
 Round the triform altar kneeling  
 Whisper each, Emanuel<sup>854</sup>

<sup>849</sup> Charles W. Moore and S. W. B. Carnegy, *The Masonic Trestle-Board Adapted to the National System of Work and Lectures as Revised and Perfected by the United States Masonic Convention* (Boston: Charles W. Moore at the office of the Freemason's Magazine, 1846) p. 48.

<sup>850</sup> James Hardie, *The New Freemason's Monitor or, Masonic Guide for the Direction of Members of That Ancient and Honorable Fraternity*. (New York: George Long, 1819) p. xii.

<sup>851</sup> *Ibid.* p. 111.

<sup>852</sup> Cross, *The True Masonic Chart or Hieroglyphic Monitor* p. 222. Even if this lyric does not require Masons to identify themselves as Christians, the Masonic affiliation with Christ is explicit. Christianity is the only faith mentioned in Masonic hymns.

<sup>853</sup> Geo. Wingate Chase, *The Masonic Harp: A Collection of Masonic Odes, Hymns Songs, &C. For the Public and Private Ceremonies and Festivals of the Fraternity* (Boston: Oliver Ditson & Co., 1868) p. 77.

<sup>854</sup> *Ibid.* p. 160.

But Freemasonry also published dominant Christian hymns, such as *Come Thou Almighty King* (containing Trinitarian piety), *Angels Roll the Rock Away* (celebrating Christ's resurrection), and *All Hail! The Great Immanuel's Name* (ascribing praise to Immanuel). The author's preface to *The True Masonic Chart or Hieroglyphic Monitor* suggests that such songs reflected the disproportionate influence of Christianity that existed in American Freemasonry, Protestantism in particular.

The Author would improve this favorable opportunity, in calling upon all Christian Masons to lend their aid in elevating the Institution to its proper level, by influencing every Mason, by example, exhortation and persuasion, to live up to the moral precepts which are inculcated in it; – at the same time to guard them against relying on any merit in their own works as a title to that REST beyond the grave, which is prepared for the children of God – and to point them to HIM who is the WAY, the TRUTH and the LIFE, to the LION of the tribe of Judah, to the great WATCHMAN of Israel, to our DIVINE REDEEMER, whose name is the only name which is given under Heaven whereby men can be saved, who has made an atonement for sin by the shedding of his own blood, and who has promised that whosoever believeth on Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.<sup>855</sup>

By the 1840s music had become central to Masonic ceremonies (perhaps due to an emerging organist guild). That the role of hymnody was emphasized is evident in directions provided for use in the First Degree, hymns used as substitute for the Bible.

Since the more general introduction of Music into the Lodges, the following Hymn [Behold! How pleasant and how good] is sometimes used as a substitute for this passage of Scripture [Psalm 133:1-3], with excellent effect.<sup>856</sup>

In similar fashion, Ecclesiastes 12:1-7 used in the Third Degree was substituted by the hymn *Let Us Remember in Our Youth*.<sup>857</sup>

According to John Fellows, author of *An Inquiry into the Origin, History and Purport of Freemasonry*, 'The hymns or odes and songs, as well as prayers are retained in great abundance, and compose an essential part of the Masonic ceremonies.'<sup>858</sup> In another work, *The Mysteries of Freemasonry*, Fellows indicated that an organ is

<sup>855</sup> Cross, *The True Masonic Chart or Hieroglyphic Monitor* p. 12.

<sup>856</sup> Moore and Carnegie, *The Masonic Trestle-Board Adapted to the National System of Work and Lectures as Revised and Perfected by the United States Masonic Convention* p. 28, 29.

<sup>857</sup> *Ibid.* p. 53.

<sup>858</sup> John Fellows, *An Inquiry in the Origin, History and Purport of Freemasonry* (New York: John Fellows, 1835) p. 94.



recommended in each Chapter played, for instance, during dedication ceremonies.<sup>859</sup>

This is not surprising considering the rich musical heritage of Freemasonry.<sup>860</sup>

The funeral ceremony was among the most prominent of the Fraternity's ceremonies. William F. Whalen claimed that participation in the funeral ceremony was reserved for Freemasons, citing Henry Wilson Coil's description of its significance.

A man may be born without religious ceremony; he may be married without religious ceremony; but one moment comes to every man when he feels the need of that missing thing – when he comes to crossing into the great beyond. Freemasonry has a religious service to commit the body of a deceased brother to the dust whence it came and to speed the liberated spirit back to the Great Source of Light. Many Freemasons make this flight with no other guarantee of a safe landing than their belief in the religion of Freemasonry. If that is a false hope, the Fraternity should abandon funeral services and devote its attention to activities where it is sure of its ground and its authority.<sup>861</sup>

The funeral ceremony prescribed in the *Masonic Vocal Manual* used explicit Christian theology.

But in the beautiful spirit of the Christian's theology we dare to say, that HE, who 'tempers the wind to the shorn lamb,' looks down with infinite compassion upon the widow and the fatherless, in the hour of their desolation; and that the same benevolent SAVIOR, who wept while on earth, will fold the arms of his love and protection around those who put their trust in HIM.<sup>862</sup>

Various Masonic odes were used for funeral ceremonies, some integrating phrases from the New Testament. *Thou Art Gone to the Grave* identified 'the Savior' as one who has experienced and defeated death, citing a resurrection text from 1 Corinthians 15:55.

Thou art gone to the grave, but we will not deplore thee  
Tho' sorrow and darkness encompass the tomb  
The Savior has passed thro' its portals before thee  
And the lamp of his love is thy guide through the gloom

Thou art gone to the grave, we no longer behold thee  
Nor tread the rough path of the world by thy side  
But the wide arms of mercy are spread to enfold thee  
And sinners may hope since the Savior hath died

Thou art gone to the grave, and its mansions forsaken  
Perhaps thy tried spirit in doubt lingered long  
But the sunshine of heaven beamed bright on thy waking

<sup>859</sup> John Fellows, *The Mysteries of Freemasonry* (London: Reeves and Turner, 1860) p. 298.

<sup>860</sup> Mozart was certainly the most prominent. In the United States, John Philip Sousa (1854-1932) was called the 'March King'.

<sup>861</sup> William F. Whalen, *Christianity and American Freemasonry* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1998) p. 112, 113.

<sup>862</sup> Robert Macoy, *The Masonic Vocal Monitor* (New York: Robert Macoy, 1859) p. 70.

And the song that thou heard was the seraphim's song

Thou art gone to the grave, but't [sic] were wrong to implore thee  
 When God was thy ransom, thy guardian and guide  
 He gave thee, and took thee, and soon will restore thee  
 Where death has no sting, since the Savior hath died.<sup>863</sup>

Protestant hymns used at Masonic funerals emphasized the Fraternity's affiliation with the Christian view of afterlife. Two Protestant hymns that received pride of place in Masonic monitors were, *He Dies, the Friend of Sinners Dies*, sung while the Guard of Honor formed an arch of steel over the grave,<sup>864</sup> and *Hark! From the Tomb a Doleful Sound*, sung 'while the coffin [was] being lowered into the grave'.<sup>865</sup> Both hymns, written by Isaac Watts, were printed without alteration.

Sociologist John Wilson described Freemasonry in the United States as 'the epitome of fraternalism [that] stress[ed] esoteric learning and the promulgation of a moral system grounded in religious belief.'<sup>866</sup> But such emphasis upon religious association solicited strong disagreements from Freemasons, even 'vehement denial' according to Charles H. Lyttle.<sup>867</sup> Albert Pike's famous statement represented the Fraternity's view, 'Masonry is not a religion. He who makes of it a religious belief, falsifies and denaturalizes it.'<sup>868</sup> In the *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* by Albert Gallatin Mackey and H. L. Haywood, Freemasonry's status as a religion is denied, 'These facts [...] prove that the Fraternity is not a religion, is the rival of no church, and has no theology of its own'.<sup>869</sup> Mackey elsewhere described Freemasonry as 'the handmaid<sup>870</sup> of religion'.<sup>871</sup>

<sup>863</sup> Jacob Ernst, *The Craftsmen, and Templar's Text Book, and, Also, Melodies for the Craft* (Cincinnati: Jacob Ernst and Company, 1859). Hymn no. 107

<sup>864</sup> *Ibid.* p. 315, 316.

<sup>865</sup> *Masonic Monitor of the Degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason*, (Arkansas: Free & Accepted Masons of Arkansas, 1954) p. 152, 153.

<sup>866</sup> John Wilson, 'Voluntary Associations and Civil Religion: The Case of Freemasonry', *Review of Religious Research*, 22/2(1980), 125-136 p. 125.

<sup>867</sup> Charles H. Lyttle, 'The Pocket History of Freemasonry by Fred L. Pike; G. Norman Knight', *Church History*, 24/4 (December 1955), 380-381 p. 380.

<sup>868</sup> Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry* (Charleston: L. H. Jenkins, 1917) p. 161.

<sup>869</sup> Albert Gallatin Mackey and H. L. Haywood, *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* (3; Chicago, Illinois: The Masonic History Company, 1946) p. 1213.

<sup>870</sup> 'Handmaid' served as a euphemism of the 'subordinate role', a gendered term indicative of patriarchal attitudes. Yet in the fields of modern theology and philosophy it appears to have been retained, still awaiting a gender-neutral replacement.

<sup>871</sup> J. J. Hammond, 'Editor's Easy Chair: Recantation of Error', *Mackey's National Freemason*, 118(72) p. 220. Mackey published Hammond's recantation in which Hammond apologized for erroneously misrepresenting Freemasonry as antagonistic to Christianity. In his recantation, Hammond described Freemasonry as the 'handmaid of religion'. Mackey used this designation in later publications, such as *Mackey's Masonic Ritualist* published in 1873.

Arthur Preuss challenged this definition writing, ‘The handmaid theory will not bear investigation in light of facts and of Masonic principles.’ In *Study of American Freemasonry*, one of Preuss’ many works examining societies and organizations, Preuss used hymnody as a central part of his argument.

Our handmaid has certainly taken the whole matter into her hands. She institutes her own religious festivals, the brethren unite in worshipping the Grand Architect of the Universe, they meet in a public church, their chaplain celebrates divine service, they sing appropriate hymns and anthems – all this at the bidding and under the control of Masonry; and yet, Masonry is not a religion, but only its handmaid!<sup>872</sup>

Masonry as the handmaid of religion, we have already seen; and how little Dr. Mackey himself believed in the theory you may judge by the hymn in which, doubtless, he often joined in the precincts of the Lodge. ‘Hail! Masonry divine, Glory of ages shine; Long may’st thou reign! Where’er the Lodges stand, May they have a great command, and always grace the land; Thou art divine.’ The hymn is part of the ritual and is called the Mark Master’s song. The absurdity of ‘a handmaid’ ‘reigning,’ is too palpable to merit comment; and what shall we say of ‘divine’ Masonry, the ‘handmaid’?<sup>873</sup>

For Preuss, the content of Masonic hymnody was decisive in measuring the Fraternity as a bona fide religion.

### 8.3 Freemason Distinctives

Solomon was at the heart of American Freemasonry. As the Israelite king credited for building the Temple at Jerusalem, Solomon received reverence and honor in Masonic hymns.

King Solomon, our patron  
Transmitted this command –  
‘The faithful and praise-worthy  
*True light must understand*’<sup>874</sup>

The wisest of men was a Mason, we know  
From him our chief honors and dignities flow;  
He founded the temple, the pillars he raised  
And Solomon still in our songs shall be praised<sup>875</sup>

Ultimately, Solomon was given the title, ‘prince of peace’

Bright wisdom’s footsteps here we trace  
From Solomon’s footsteps here we trace  
From Solomon, from Solomon

<sup>872</sup> Arthur Preuss, *Study in American Freemasonry* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2003) p. 83.

<sup>873</sup> *Ibid.* p. 111.

<sup>874</sup> Cross, *The True Masonic Chart or Hieroglyphic Monitor* p. 186.

<sup>875</sup> Chase, p. 108.

Solomon, the prince of peace<sup>876</sup>

Names for God in Masonic hymnody, not necessarily derived from the Bible (such as 'All-seeing Eye'<sup>877</sup> and 'Great Architect'), set Freemasonry apart from Protestants; the latter derived names and titles for God almost exclusively from biblical texts.<sup>878</sup>

Great Architect of earth and heaven,  
By time nor space confined,  
Enlarge our love to comprehend  
Our Brethren, all mankind.  
Where'er we are, whate'ever we do  
Thy presence let us own;  
Thine Eye, all-seeing, mark our deeds,  
To Thee all thoughts are known<sup>879</sup>

Glorious Architect above  
Source of light and source of love  
Here thy light and love prevail  
Hail! Almighty Master hail!<sup>880</sup>

To Heaven's high Architect all praise  
All gratitude be given  
Who deign'd the human soul to raise  
By secrets sprung from Heaven<sup>881</sup>

Freemason hymns contained numerous designations for the Fraternity, including 'Brothers of the mystic tie' and 'Craftsmen'.

Come, Brothers of the mystic tie  
Our social work begun  
We'll raise an offering song on high  
To him the Holy One<sup>882</sup>

Come, Craftsmen, assembled our pleasures to share  
Who walk by the Plumb, and who work by the Square<sup>883</sup>

Though Freemasonry referred to 'the church', it did so only in reference to a physical building. In contrast, 'the Lodge' was used for both the building and the Fraternity, thereby serving as the main ecclesiological term. Freemason hymns suggested the existence of a universal religion or universal Lodge of which the local lodge was a

<sup>876</sup> Ernst, p. 36, 37.

<sup>877</sup> Though some Protestant hymns employed 'all seeing God,' e.g. Thomas Ken's *Awake, My Soul, and With the Sun* and 'all-seeing eye' as an attribute of God, e.g. Isaac Watts' *Save Me, O Lord From Every Foe*.

<sup>878</sup> 'Trinity' being a noted exception.

<sup>879</sup> Macoy, p. 41.

<sup>880</sup> Ernst, p. 68.

<sup>881</sup> Ibid. p. 88.

<sup>882</sup> Ibid. p. 26.

<sup>883</sup> Ibid. p. 50.

representation, remarkably similar to Protestant ecclesiology of the local church being representative of the Universal Church.

Let posterity e'er bless the names of the three  
 Who founded and handed to us this degree  
 May their firmness and virtue, by us be enjoyed  
 While this world is our Lodge, and we're therein employed<sup>884</sup>

'Masonry' was also used as a universal identifier.

Let Masonry from pole to pole,  
 Her sacred laws expand  
 Far as the mighty waters roll  
 To wash remotest land<sup>885</sup>

## 8.4 Shakers

The 'Shaking Quakers' was at first a pejorative term used by others to describe an English Quaker sect for its exuberant worship that included shouting, dancing, trembling, and glossolalia. Jane and James Wardley, a couple whose ministry was characterized by an emphasis upon apocalypticism and revelatory gifts, initially led the group. Ann Lee was attracted to the group and in fairly short order became a charismatic leader herself, though only in her early twenties. Ann married Abraham Stanley but after the tragic loss of four children in childbirth and having received a vision of sexual intercourse as the cause of The Fall, she resolved that true believers were called to celibacy. Ann preached publicly about this doctrine, an action that provoked controversy and led to her imprisonment. Shortly after her release from prison, Ann Lee took on the title of 'Mother Ann' and led a group of Shakers to the United States, where they settled in New York and established themselves as The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing. Lee's followers revered her as the female embodiment of God or Second Advent of Christ. By the time of her death in 1784, Mother Ann had four thousand followers, all seemingly convinced that she was 'the woman clothed with the sun' described in the Apocalypse.<sup>886</sup> The group reached a peak of about 6000 members but, with celibacy one of its main tenets, became almost extinct by the early-20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Shakers are difficult to classify in sectarian categories. Cheryl P. Anderson included the Shakers among Protestant charismatic groups, such as Pentecostals, a

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<sup>884</sup> Ibid. p. 65, 66.

<sup>885</sup> Ibid. p. 70.

<sup>886</sup> 'The Shakers', *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 15/86 (July 1857), 164-177 p. 176.

view warranted by the group's expressive use of prophecy, tongues, laughing, and shouting. Using Charles Braden's categories, 'prophet founder' seems most applicable given Mother Ann's authority as a prophetic-apocalyptic leader. W. D. Howells included Shakers within his depiction of American spiritualism while establishing their uniqueness from 'the perversion of spiritualism in the world outside'.<sup>887</sup> Howells provided detailed descriptions of Shaker dancing, prophesy, and mesmerism,<sup>888</sup> practices usually prompted by hymn singing. As described by Howells, Shaker faith was based on 'uninterrupted revelation' that was appreciated most deeply in hymns 'communicated to the singers from the other world'.<sup>889</sup> This concurred with an article on Shaker history, practices and doctrine that was published in 1857 by *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*.

They [Shakers] assert that all of the songs and hymns used in their worship are revealed to them, from time to time, by ministering spirits, and that the singers meet once a week to practice the newly revealed production for the coming Sabbath. The music, also, is given to them in the same supernatural way. Sometimes children will break out into singing a song or hymn never before heard among them.<sup>890</sup>

Fitting with their practice of spontaneous inspiration, Shaker musicians often wrote new hymn texts for each weekly service and established an independent hymnal tradition apart from the established hymns of Protestantism.<sup>891</sup> This practice may have ostracized them, but some Protestant denominations made use of at least one Shaker hymn – Richard McNemar's *A People Called Christians*. First published in the 1812 Shaker hymnal *Millennial Praises, A People Called Christians*, it was later embraced by various Protestant denominations, including Baptist, Free Will Baptist, Adventist, Methodist, Methodist Episcopal, and the Evangelical Association, printed in 53 hymnals between the years 1812 and 1878.

Being primarily a prophet-founder sect, Shakers demonstrated vigorous use of hymns common to other prophet-founder groups, such as Mormonism and Christian Science (discussed in sections 8.10 and 8.14). Such groups created a distinctive hymn tradition that served with a functional canonicity to carry doctrine and practices

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<sup>887</sup> William Dean Howells, *The Undiscovered Country* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1908) p. 174.

<sup>888</sup> Hypnotism, named after F. A. Mesmer.

<sup>889</sup> Howells, p. 174.

<sup>890</sup> 'The Shakers', p. 171.

<sup>891</sup> Edward Deming Andrews, *The Gift to Be Simple* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1967) p. 11. While the Shakers wrote original lyrics, Andrews noted that they borrowed secular folk tunes and hymn tunes from Baptists and Methodists.

peculiar to the new movement. Shakers took exclusivity to the greatest extreme by writing original lyrics for all of its songs, whereas other groups borrowed at least a portion from American Protestant hymnals. Edward Deming Andrews, one of the foremost historians of Shakerism, emphasized the separateness of the Shakers and their need to create 'an entirely new body of religious song, hymns expressive of their peculiar faith'.<sup>892</sup> In *Protestant Worship*, James F. White discussed the Shakers within a chapter on Quakers suggesting a main difference between the two groups related to the use and nonuse of hymnody.

Unlike the Quakers, the Shakers developed a large repertoire of hymnody, [...] The most distinctive contribution to hymnody was the expression of their own theological views with female imagery for God and passages about the end of the present world. Shaker theology found its best expression in hymns that all could sing.<sup>893</sup>

### 8.5 Shaker Distinctives

The Shakers established themselves as a restorationist movement. According to Stephen J. Stein, 'the Shakers denounced all other denominations as antichristian and worked to establish a community of saints gathered together in righteousness and perfection'.<sup>894</sup> *The Summary View of the Millennial Church* published by the United Society of Believers described the Society in utopian terms.

Here is the cleansed sanctuary; and here every vessel, or in other words, every talent which God gave his people, though defiled by the wicked, for many ages, is now purified and restored in this living temple, the church of the *latter day*.<sup>895</sup>

The hymn *Faithfulness* identified the Shaker view.

To Jesus Christ and Mother, my fervent thanks begin  
For their peculiar labors, to make an end of sin  
I thank their faithful children who kept the narrow way  
To introduce the glory of this great latter day.<sup>896</sup>

While Andrews suggested that 'hymns and anthems voiced the doctrine of the sect',<sup>897</sup> former Shaker William J. Haskett drew attention to Shaker hymns to challenge their orthodoxy.

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<sup>892</sup> Ibid.

<sup>893</sup> James F. White, *Protestant Worship: Traditions in Transition* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1989) p. 147.

<sup>894</sup> Stephen J. Stein, "'A Candid Statement of Our Principles": Early Shaker Theology in the West', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 137/4 (December 1989), 503-519 p. 508.

<sup>895</sup> Calvin Green and Seth Y. Wells (eds.), *A Summary View of the Millennial Church or United Society of Believers Commonly Called Shakers* (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1848) p. 95.

<sup>896</sup> Richard McNemar, *A Selection of Hymns and Poems, for the Use of Believers: Collected from Sundry Authors, by Philos Harmonaie [Pseud.]* (Watervliet, Ohio, 1833) p. 152.

If any person will read their Hymns, view their Constitution, and closely view its policy, and then call the Shakers a 'respectable body of *Christians*,' I would inform him, that he and I do not embrace the same sentiment respecting them.<sup>898</sup>

Haskett's work included excerpts of hymns that he believed were 'effusions of rank infidelity, and an insolent denial of the scriptures.'<sup>899</sup> Haskett used Shaker hymns to 'verify' numerous allegations against Shaker doctrine, including the following:<sup>900</sup>

1. 'The crown of heavenly glory', promised to the followers of Jesus, was promised, instead, to the followers of Ann Lee.
2. Shaker hymns expressed the divinity of Ann Lee. Worship of Mother Ann was given preference above Jesus.<sup>901</sup>
3. The Godhead was expanded to four persons to include Ann Lee.
4. Ann's legislation of celibacy and denunciation of marriage postured her above Jesus. (Though celibate himself, Jesus endorsed marriage).
5. The pretension by Shakers to identify themselves as the only people of God.
6. Ann Lee, not Christ, was the Alpha and Omega.
7. The gospel of Jesus was rejected. Shakers relied on Ann's doctrine for salvation.
8. Through faith in the gospel of Mother Ann, Shakers were 'already risen from the dead' and fulfilled Jesus' description of those 'not given in marriage'.

Mother Ann is alleged to have had a vision of Adam and Eve 'in the very act of sexual coition' and that this was the cause of the Fall.<sup>902</sup> Resulting from this vision, Mother Ann legislated celibacy for herself and her followers.

She taught them, that the disobedience of Adam, was the cause of his fall, and that the forbidden fruit was the coition of Adam and Eve, and consequent to that, is inherent shame. As her work and duty was to reinstate mankind into their first estate, she taught that those actions must be abandoned by embracing the doctrine of celibacy, and that then, shame would be removed from the sexes, as when they stood in union, with God.<sup>903</sup>

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<sup>897</sup> Andrews, p. 21.

<sup>898</sup> William J. Haskett, *Shakerism Unmasked, or the History of the Shakers; Including a Form Politic of Their Government as Councils, Orders, Gifts, with an Exposition of the Five Orders of Shakerism and Ann Lee's Grand Foundation Vision, in Sealed Pages, with Some Extracts from Their Private Hymns Which Have Never Appeared before the Public* (Pittsfield: L. H. Walkley, 1828) p. 115.

<sup>899</sup> Ibid. p. 287.

<sup>900</sup> See Haskett, p. 242; 244-246; 249; 255, 267; 273; 275; 280.

<sup>901</sup> Haskett added to his indictment of the Shakers, claiming 'falsehoods in the mouths of these people, who in the public professions of their faith, deny that they worship Ann Lee[.]' p. 244.

<sup>902</sup> Haskett, p. 232.

<sup>903</sup> Ibid. p. 52.



Haskett drew attention to the restoration of sexual purity lost at the Fall and used the hymn entitled *The Restoration*.

How long was our nature with fig-leaves conceal'd  
Till Mother the myst'ry of sin had reveal'd  
And taught us how Satan with lust did deceive,  
And overcome both the first Adam and Eve

The first Eve was tempted and led into sin  
The second, more faithful, has led out again;  
With firm resolution, (her word was a sword)  
She fought her way thro' and creation restor'd

A full restoration has now taken place,  
For all who believe of the first Adam's race;  
The male and the female made free from the curse  
And Adam's probation is brought down to use<sup>904</sup>

*A Selection of Hymns and Poems for the Use of Believers* contained several hymns elevating celibacy, the term 'virgin' employed most often by the Shaker hymn writers. Funeral hymns commonly referred to the virginity of the deceased. Elderess Purdence was described as an 'innocent virgin, a soul undefil'd'.<sup>905</sup> Elderess Tincy was remembered in song as 'a virgin follower of the Lamb'.<sup>906</sup> The Shakers attending funerals referred to themselves in hymnody as 'the virgin throng'.<sup>907</sup> In other hymns, the Shakers called themselves 'virgin souls'<sup>908</sup> or 'virgin companions';<sup>909</sup> in Zion, 'virgins meet to dance and sing'.<sup>910</sup> In other Shaker hymns, 'the virgins' emulated Mother Ann, such as in the hymn, *The Everlasting Parent*.

She bore the cross of Jesus  
Against the man of sin  
Until the crown of glory  
Her happy soul did win  
This doctrine is alarming  
It makes a dreadful stir  
When virgins her companions  
Do boldly follow her.<sup>911</sup>

Another area of uniqueness was in demonology. Whereas Protestant hymnody tended to use stately titles when referencing the person and work of Satan, such as 'The Prince of Darkness', 'the Kingdom of Darkness', 'the powers of darkness', 'Satan's

<sup>904</sup> Ibid. p. 241, 242.

<sup>905</sup> McNemar, p. 86.

<sup>906</sup> Ibid. p. 91.

<sup>907</sup> Ibid. p. 84.

<sup>908</sup> Ibid. p. 143.

<sup>909</sup> Ibid. p. 155.

<sup>910</sup> Haskett, p. 250.

<sup>911</sup> Ibid. p. 252.

hosts', often ascribing power and might to Satan,<sup>912</sup> Shakers conveyed the person of Satan in unflattering terms. For example, the hymn *Dismission of the Devil* employed the terms 'old deceiver' and 'Old ugly',<sup>913</sup> ascriptions that did not dignify or assign inadvertent praise to the person and work of Satan.

The Shaker understanding of the Holy Spirit was a blend of sorts, combining their usage of the apostolic gifts in their fullness (fitting in with Cheryl P. Anderson's categorization of Shakers as Pentecostal) with a pragmatic spiritualism (aligning with Howells' inclusion of the Shakers within his depiction of American spiritualism). Despite this functional emphasis on pneumatology, the Shaker view of the Holy Spirit is difficult to assess. Little is written that articulates the Shaker understanding of the person and work of the Holy Spirit, though *A Summary View of the Millennial Church* mentioned the Holy Spirit in a statement concerning manifestations of the Almighty.

The Almighty is manifested as proceeding from everlasting, as the *first Source* of all power, and the fountain of all good, the *Creator* of all good beings, and is the ETERNAL FATHER; and the Holy Spirit of Wisdom, who was the *Co-worker* with him, from everlasting, is the ETERNAL MOTHER, the *bearing Spirit* of all the works of God.<sup>914</sup>

Various hymns attested to the Shaker Godhead consisting of Father, Mother, and Spirit, such as the hymn, *In Love*.

From Father and Mother the fountain of love  
The Spirit descends like a heavenly dove  
Upon their beloved whose souls have drawn nigh  
To drink at the stream that will never run dry<sup>915</sup>

Fundamental to the Shaker concept of God's manifestations was the biblical text, 'So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them'.<sup>916</sup> Commentary on this verse was provided in *A Summary View of the Millennial Church*.

Hence it must appear evident that there exists in the DEITY, the likeness of male and female, forming the unity that creative and good principle from which proceeds the world of *Father and Mother*, manifested in *Power* to create, and *Wisdom* to bring forth into proper order, all the works of God. If it were not so, then man, who was created male and female, as father and

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<sup>912</sup> For example, 'Satan's power' in *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen* and 'prince of darkness' in *Stand Up, My Soul* and in *A Mighty Fortress*, Satan's 'craft and power are great'.

<sup>913</sup> Though the original text of *Jerusalem, My Happy Home* may have included the phrase, 'There is no death nor ugly devil'.

<sup>914</sup> Green and Wells (eds.), p. 100.

<sup>915</sup> McNemar, p. 56.

<sup>916</sup> Genesis 1:27 KJV.

mother, could not, with any propriety, be said to show forth the image and likeness of God.<sup>917</sup>

From this line of reasoning, Shaker hymns celebrated the role of female (or daughter) and male (or son) in the work of redemption.

Since now, in both female and male  
The work of redemption is one  
The good little daughter of Zion we hail  
As free as the good little son<sup>918</sup>

So the vict'ry is won, in the Daughter and Son  
Eternal redemption they've found  
And a pattern they are, to all souls that would share  
In the glories with which they are crown'd<sup>919</sup>

Other hymns applied the female and male manifestations of God to Jesus Christ and Mother Ann.

Then our voices we'll unite  
Celebrate the gospel plan  
Walking in the mutual light  
Of Jesus Christ and Mother Ann<sup>920</sup>

And now the pris'ner quits his chains  
Since Christ in male and female reigns  
Now in this land of liberty  
We'll sing the blessed Jubilee

We'll sing the year of our release  
And labour daily to increase  
We'll sing the love of God to man  
Through Jesus Christ and Mother Ann<sup>921</sup>

Placing Mother Ann alongside the person of Jesus Christ in the work of redemption suggests that her role as the female manifestation of God is equal in stature. While Shakers did not invoke a virgin birth or resurrection for Ann, nor did they propose a kenotic emptying or hypostatic union for her.<sup>922</sup> Nonetheless, her elevated state as the female equivalent to Jesus led to the belief that Ann fulfilled John's vision of a

<sup>917</sup> Green and Wells (eds.), p. 100.

<sup>918</sup> McNemar, p. 45.

<sup>919</sup> *Ibid.* p. 47.

<sup>920</sup> *Ibid.* p. 44.

<sup>921</sup> Haskett, p. 278.

<sup>922</sup> Ann is considered the female embodiment of Christ, but the concept of hypostatic union is not applied to Anne, i.e. the person of Christ who, in one person, subsisted of two natures, deity and humanity. The emphasis among most Christian traditions is upon Christ as fully God and fully human. The Shaker emphasis is gender-based, i.e. the humanity of Christ as fully male (in Jesus) and fully female (in Ann).

‘woman clothed with the sun’. Haskett argued that, in various capacities, Ann superseded Jesus and that she was deemed worthy of worship. After citing a hymn stanza with the lyrics, ‘Glory give unto the Son, For he has redemption won; Glory unto Mother give, For the saints through her do live’, Haskell writes, ‘That they worship Ann, cannot be denied, for how could they express themselves in so plain a manner, unless this was the sentiment of their hearts.’<sup>923</sup>

McNemar’s hymnal contains several hymns that ascribe praise to Ann.

*The Gospel Trumpet*

Precious Mother! Sound her name  
 Ye aged and youth together  
 ’Twas through her redemption came  
 from all the filthiness of nature  
 She reveal’d the man of sin  
 Show’d where he was proudly seated  
 With his whore along with him  
 By the cross she has defeated<sup>924</sup>

Mother Ann was depicted as a unique vessel of the Word in the hymn, *The Morning Star*.

Her soul contain’d the living Word  
 From ev’ry lust refin’d  
 ’Twas like a sharp two-edged sword  
 Against the carnal mind  
 A full redemption from the fall  
 Her children do possess  
 And by this name she shall be called  
 The LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS<sup>925</sup>

*How I Prize My Lovely Treasure* assigned Mother Ann an inner work akin to the Holy Spirit, or indwelling Word of God.

Lord, let Mother’s love be graven  
 on the tablets of our hearts  
 Seal us with the band of union  
 Never let thy love depart<sup>926</sup>

*What Ye Think of Christ?* cast doubt upon the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, and presented Mother Ann as the female incarnation of Christ.

I do not look up to the sky

<sup>923</sup> Haskett, p. 244.

<sup>924</sup> McNemar, p. 144.

<sup>925</sup> Ibid. p. 24. This hymn demonstrates the accuracy of Haskett’s text, i.e. there is only one slight variation with McNemar’s version. ‘A full redemption from the fall, Her children *may* possess’ (Haskett); ‘A full redemption from the fall, her children *do* [or finally] possess’ (McNemar).

<sup>926</sup> Ibid. p. 94.

For some one to save me from sin  
 The Word of salvation is nigh –  
 The kingdom of heaven's within  
 If Christ as the Logos or Word  
 In ever'y Believer doth reign  
 How fruitless, how vain and absurd!  
 To think of his coming again

Well, Christ manifested in man  
 We grant is correctly explained  
 But what about good Mother Ann?  
 And what has the womanhood gain'd?  
 If Christ, in his second display  
 Includes both the Bridegroom and the Bride  
 What think ye of Mother? We say,  
 The fate of all souls will decide.<sup>927</sup>

Typical to Protestant Christmas hymns, Shakers sang songs of Jesus as 'the Son given' and 'the Prince of Peace'. As an innovation, Shakers also recognized Mother Ann in the Christmas story, albeit within a later dispensation.

*Hail the memorable morn!*

Was the heirship then complete  
 Or when did Christ his reign begin?  
 And without an helper meet  
 Could he make an end of sin?  
 Half the Savior then was own'd  
 This was all the world could bear  
 Still the whole creation groan'd  
 Waiting for the Second Heir<sup>928</sup>

*Christmas, 1825*

All hail the last day of the world  
 In this is the glory of all  
 Here's two dispensations unfurled  
 Which saves from the depth of the fall  
 If heaven sang glory to God  
 When Christ was reveal'd in the man  
 The earth may now publish abroad  
 The gift in our good Mother Ann<sup>929</sup>

In contrast to charges against Shaker worship, Charles Warner argued that Shakers did not worship Mother Ann.

Ann Lee is not worshiped as the Catholics worship the Virgin Mary, Mother of God; but from the time of the appearing of Christ to Ann in her prison, she

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<sup>927</sup> Ibid. p. 50.

<sup>928</sup> Ibid. p. 43.

<sup>929</sup> Ibid. p. 47.

was received by the people as a Mother in spiritual things, and was thenceforth by them called *Mother Ann*.<sup>930</sup>

Warner's comment about the Virgin Mary reflects a misinformed view, Mary was not deemed worthy of worship, though she was honored and venerated as the Theotokos. As such, the veneration of Ann may have been comparable to the veneration of the 'Blessed Virgin Mary'.

One of the earliest writings on Shaker theology was *A Summary View of the Millennial Church or United Society of Believers, Commonly Called Shakers*. First written in 1823, this work provided a statement on the Trinity.

[...] after the decease of the apostles and those faithful ministers who were their immediate successors, [...] the Church began to decline towards the world. Many of the Gentiles embraced Christianity by profession. Among these were men eminent for natural wisdom, literary talents, and even learned philosophers. These obtained great influence in the church, and thereby brought in various mysteries pertaining to the religions of the Gentile nations, particularly those in high repute with the doctrines of Christ and the apostles. From this source originated the doctrine of the *Trinity*, or three persons in one God, all in the masculine gender.<sup>931</sup>

The Shaker view of the Godhead was distinct from orthodox Christianity raising the question, 'Did Shakers expand the Trinity?' There are at least three ways to approach this inquiry. On the one hand, Haskett argued that God in Shakerism was comprised of four persons: Father, Mother, Son, and Daughter. (The absence of comment on the Holy Spirit suggests that the Spirit was not considered a distinct person within the Godhead). This could be called a Quadrinity or Quaternity. On the other hand, Shaker sources and various observers of Shaker worship most often use the term 'Duality' and refer to the balance of male and female in God's constitution. We are left with either a Quaternity concept of God or a Duality, but perhaps the two can be harmonized. The concept of a Trinity is also arguable if the Holy Spirit is recognized as distinct from the Mother and Father. Yet Shakers treated the Spirit in vague terms. While the Shakers emphasized the gifts of the Holy Spirit, they did not make a clear statement of the Spirit's inclusion in the Godhead. Regardless of the sum of divine manifestations, and apart from the reductionist or expansionist possibilities, the fact that Shakerism argued the need for a female incarnation of Christ in the person of

<sup>930</sup> Charles Dudley Warner, 'Out of the World', *Scribner's Monthly*, 18/4 (August 1879), 549-558 p. 555.

<sup>931</sup> Green and Wells (eds.), p. 201.

Mother Ann is innovative in Christian thought.<sup>932</sup> The role of hymns in carrying this theological innovation (and others) may be likened to Arius who used hymns to disseminate his ideas about Christ as a created being. In both cases, hymns performed a vital theological function in contesting mainstream doctrines.

## 8.6 Universalism

Tracing their roots to an edict of religious freedom issued by Transylvanian king John Sigismund in 1569, Universalism was planted in the United States in 1793.<sup>933</sup> But religious freedom was not forthcoming in all parts of the United States. In the early-19<sup>th</sup> century, Universalists were sometimes ostracized as ‘unbelievers’. Robert E. Burkholder, professor at Pennsylvania State University, recounted a court case in Connecticut where a Federalist judge rejected a Universalist’s testimony because, ‘the judge reasoned, disbelievers felt no accountability to God or an afterlife’. Burkholder also brought to light the imprisonment of Abner Kneeland (a hymnwriter featured prominently in Universalist hymnals) who, in 1838, was imprisoned two months for blasphemy under Massachusetts law.<sup>934</sup> Kneeland rejected the belief in God, Christ, miracles, and the resurrection of the dead.<sup>935</sup> These accounts suggest that the ‘humanist’ classification from Braden’s categories is probably most fitting.

Believing hymns to express doctrine, Universalists were especially prudent in hymnal compilation. When Hosea Ballou and others were commissioned to compile a hymnal at the 1807 General Convention of Universalists of the New England States,<sup>936</sup> they sought to eliminate atonement theology ‘found in almost all the authors of the divine hymns’.<sup>937</sup> Though the convention delegates may not have intended to reject Protestant hymnody entirely, the resulting work was a hymnal of new hymns written largely by Hosea Ballou and Abner Kneeland – likely an overreaction to earlier Universalist hymnals that included too many Protestant atonement hymns.<sup>938</sup> Despite

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<sup>932</sup> Though early Christianity honored Mary as the Theotokos and Roman Catholicism developed the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, Mary is not perceived as a manifestation of God.

<sup>933</sup> Eileen W. Lindner (ed.), *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches 2005* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005) p. 164.

<sup>934</sup> Robert E. Burkholder, ‘Emerson, Kneeland, and the Divinity School Address’, *American Literature*, 58/1 (March 1986), 1-14 p. 3.

<sup>935</sup> *Ibid.* p. 6, 7.

<sup>936</sup> Thomas Whittmore, *Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou with Accounts of His Writings, and Biographical Sketches of His Seniors and Contemporaries in the Universalist Ministry* (Boston: Hobart & Robbins, 1853) p. 269.

<sup>937</sup> *Ibid.* p. 270.

<sup>938</sup> *Ibid.* p. 269, 270.

the Convention's authorization of the hymnal, Thomas Whittmore described its failure to gain a reception among Universalists.

The result was, a book of entirely original hymns was brought out, which passed through two editions only. In the course of five years it was laid aside by most of the societies. Those who chose to give it up took Belknap's, some Watts', and some the hymn-book brought out by the Universalist society in Boston, under the pastorship of Mr. Murray, which was loaded with hymns in regard to the Trinity, and to that view of atonement which has always accompanied the Trinitarian theory.<sup>939</sup>

But the failure of the 1808 hymnal didn't stop Ballou from making further attempts at compiling a hymnal agreeable with Universalist theology. With Edward Turner, he produced another hymnbook in 1829, this time with few originals. Though hymns were excluded in which 'the Deity required an expiring victim',<sup>940</sup> Ballou considered the hymnal to 'contain considerable matter of a character truly evangelical' and claimed the hymnal to be of 'doctrinal importance'.<sup>941</sup>

## 8.7 Universalist Distinctives

Universalist hymns exuded the positive message that God's love covered all sin. Emphasizing God's mercy and grace, atonement was achieved for all, amounting to a 'common salvation'.<sup>942</sup>

In God's eternity,  
Shall there a day arise  
When all that's born of men shall be  
With Jesus in the skies<sup>943</sup>

The universal enlightenment through Christ is illustrated by the universal light of the sun, such as in Abner Kneeland's hymn, *Behold the Sun* and Hosea Ballou's *The Sun of Righteousness*.

So, like the sun, did Christ appear  
Or like the bright and morning star  
Enlightening all the world below  
That every man the truth may know<sup>944</sup>  
No more impartial is the sun  
To planets, which around him turn  
Than Christ, whose universal love  
Fills earth below, and heaven above<sup>945</sup>

<sup>939</sup> Ibid. p. 270, 271.

<sup>940</sup> Hosea Ballou and Edward Turner, *The Universalist Hymn-Book* (Boston: Munroe and Francis, 1829) p. iv.

<sup>941</sup> Ibid. p. iii.

<sup>942</sup> Ibid. p. iv.

<sup>943</sup> Ibid. p. 350.

<sup>944</sup> Ibid. p. 36.



Universalists embraced the concept of universal redemption, but it was not articulated in terms of blood atonement. Hosea Ballou's hymn *Fast*, celebrated freedom from the yoke of sin.

Let ev'ry vile and sinful yoke  
Of servile bondage, and of fear  
By mercy, love, and truth, be broke  
From sorrow's eye wipe every tear<sup>946</sup>

Though Ballou's final two verses acknowledged 'the Saviour of our race' who 'freely gave himself and dy'd', Christ's death was not described as a sacrifice for sin, but rather as a demonstration of love. Another hymn by Ballou attributed cleansing from sin to 'the word of truth'.

Wash'd by thy word of truth from sin  
May purity be found within  
These hearts which sin beguil'd  
And O! thou kindest friend above  
Preserve us by thy constant love  
From that which has defil'd<sup>947</sup>

Some Universalist hymns made reference to hell, doing so in two distinct ways. In the first place, hell had been conquered.

O then let heaven and earth rejoice  
Let ev'ry creature join his voice  
To hymn the happy day  
When satan's empire vanquish'd fell  
And all the powers of death and hell  
Confess'd his sov'reign sway<sup>948</sup>

In the second place, Universalists dismissed the notion of hell as a place of eternal damnation. Ballou's hymn *The Power of Darkness* rejected as superstitious and deceptive the typical Protestant view of hell as a place of punishment and eternal fire.

But superstition's darker gloom  
Has caus'd our wand'ring hearts to roam  
Far from the light of truth divine  
Where love and grace forever shine

And far more horrid is the yell  
That stuns our ears with death and hell  
More fightful specters too are seen  
In error's wild, disorder'd dream

And more deceptive is the fire

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<sup>945</sup> Ibid. p. 79.

<sup>946</sup> Ibid. p. 226.

<sup>947</sup> Ibid. p. 334.

<sup>948</sup> Ibid. p. 15.

Which false religious views inspire  
 And deeper mire is in the glen  
 Of error, unbelief and sin<sup>949</sup>

## 8.8 Unitarianism

Unitarianism is an undogmatic, non-Trinitarian religious movement that emerged as a voice within Protestantism in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>950</sup> In the United States, Unitarians were active by the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century largely through authors Charles Chauncy, Jonathan Mayhew, and Ebenezer Gay. Their works and sermons were opposed to dogmatism and various Protestant doctrines, including the Trinity, predestination, justification by faith alone, and original sin. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Henry Ware (1764-1845) and Andrews Norton (1786-1853), both professors at Harvard, represented Unitarianism in academia. William Ellery Channing eloquently proposed the distinctives of Unitarianism in his 1819 sermon 'Unitarian Christianity'. In 1825 the American Unitarian Association was formed, the same year Unitarian John Quincy Adams took office as the 6<sup>th</sup> President of the United States. In addition, Unitarianism received an injection of liberal Congregationalists. Despite these seeming advantages, Unitarianism was 'destined to remain nothing more than a small splinter group in the larger body of American Protestantism.'<sup>951</sup> Braden viewed Unitarianism as a humanistic sect.<sup>952</sup>

Evident from this brief historical review, Unitarianism had within its fold leaders of national reputation. Though some of its doctrines were considered significant deviations from orthodox Christianity, Unitarian hymns enjoyed a disproportionate influence among Protestant denominations. Writers such as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882), Sarah Flower Adams (1805-1848), Samuel Longfellow (1819-1892), Julia Ward Howe (1819-1910), Thomas Wentworth Higginson (1823-1911), to name but a few of the more prominent, were widely published in Protestant hymnals. Even the most conservative of denominations included the hymns of Howe, Adams, and S. Longfellow.<sup>953</sup> In addition, Unitarians were active in translation.

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<sup>949</sup> Ibid. p. 80.

<sup>950</sup> Michael Severtus figures prominently in Unitarian history for his writing, 'On the Errors of the Trinity,' for which he was burned at the stake in 1553, though Francis David from Transylvania is considered to be the founder of Unitarianism.

<sup>951</sup> Laurence Buell, 'The Unitarian Movement and the Art of Preaching in 19th Century America', *American Quarterly*, 24/2 (May 1972), 166-190 p. 189.

<sup>952</sup> Braden, p. 61.

<sup>953</sup> *Battle Hymn of the Republic* (Howe) *Nearer My God to Thee* (Adams) and *Again as Evening Shadow Falls* (S. Longfellow).

Without John Sullivan Dwight's English translation of *Cantique de Noel*, American Protestants might never have come to sing, *O Holy Night*.

Yet theological conflict existed that even hymns could not help mediate. Instead, hymns were enlisted to articulate opposing views. Horace Bushnell's polemic against Unitarians, who derided 'death of Christ' jargon, marshaled part of his argument from hymnody.

Our Unitarian friends sometimes drag us into a revolting conclusion, derived from the death of Christ[.] 'Christ,' you say, 'is God. You also say that Christ died. What, then, do you believe and teach but that God died?' A most stringent argument, we sometimes acknowledge on our side, (as our accepted theologic method too generally requires,) and therefore, to show that we can take the conclusions of our logic manfully, we translate them directly into verse ourselves, and sing – 'When God the mighty Maker died.' And yet there are few, I suspect, who do not feel, however confident of the good logic they are singing in this line, that the words do still grate a little upon the nerve and have a rather unpleasant sound to the ear. Hence they are more generally denied as being no part of orthodox truth.<sup>954</sup>

Presbyterian Dr. Charles Hodge defended this same hymn against Unitarian theologians in 'The Latest Form of Infidelity'. Disputing Andover Professor Edwards A. Park, Hodge argued the phrase, 'God, the mighty maker, died' was retained in Presbyterian hymnals 'on the score of doctrinal fidelity'.<sup>955</sup>

But among the doctrines of Protestantism that were rejected by Unitarians, the atonement drew unique attention. In *Some Gospel Principles in Ten Lectures*, C. H. A. Dall, a Unitarian missionary, condemned as 'utterly repugnant' the belief 'which considers Christ as coming between the angry father and the guilty child, to appease one and rescue the other.'<sup>956</sup> While Dall's lecture was based on the parable of the Prodigal Son as the 'keystone of the gospel arch', Dall appealed to the theological shift in Watts' 'post-Unitarian' hymns and the Unitarian rejection of his earlier atonement hymns.

They [the better taught orthodox brethren] are expunging from the later editions of their books of hymns, those lyrics in which, before Dr. Watts became a Unitarian, he so vividly described the Heavenly Father as quenching his flaming sword in the heart's-blood of his child.<sup>957</sup>

<sup>954</sup> Horace Bushnell, *Christ in Theology* (Hartford: Brown and Parsons, 1851) p. 18, 19.

<sup>955</sup> Charles Hodge, 'The Latest Form of Infidelity', *Essays and Reviews* (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1857) p. 562.

<sup>956</sup> C. H. A. Dall, 'The Atonement; the Prodigal's Return to God', *Some Gospel Principles in Ten Lectures* (Calcutta: J. P. Bellamy, 1856) p. 5.

<sup>957</sup> *Ibid.*

In contrast, Charles Hodge defended Watts' Trinitarianism, also appealing to hymnody.

No one familiar with Dr. Watts' *Psalms and Hymns*, can doubt his being a devout worshipper of our Lord Jesus Christ, or call in question his belief in the doctrine of the Trinity. Yet on account of his peculiar views on the person of Christ, there is a vague impression that he had in some way departed from the faith of the Church. It is, indeed, often said that he was an Arian.<sup>958</sup>

The 1859 *Quarterly Journal of the American Unitarian Association* featured an article entitled 'Blood Theology', a criticism of the evangelical view of atonement. Once again hymnody served to emphasize Unitarian divergence, this time a critique of Cowper's *There is a Fountain Filled with Blood*.

Our readers will form their own opinion about the merit of Cowper's poetry, and its value as an aid in devotion. We now call attention to the stanza here quoted, and which is declared to be 'such poetry as redeemed humanity loves to read.' Perhaps it is. We must acknowledge that we know of many excellent and devout persons who sometimes sing the above lines with apparent satisfaction. We believe, however, that they never pause to reflect upon the literal meaning of the words[.]<sup>959</sup>

Also called 'blood-theology', a term that may have been first introduced by Moravian theologians who intended it positively,<sup>960</sup> Unitarians intended it negatively and emphasized their revulsion with the concept.

The theology which ascribes man's salvation neither to his obedience of the laws of his spiritual nature, nor to the unbought mercy of God, but finds the cause in the interposition of a victim, has sometimes been called the 'Sacrificial Theology,' or, still shorter, the 'Blood Theology.' We cannot say that we altogether like this last mode of designating it. [...] While we view with profound awe the sufferings of Christ, and are humbly grateful, as we trust, for the connection between them and human redemption, we have no relish for the everlasting pulpit repetition of the few Scripture phrases relating to the blood of Christ, which suggested themselves, rhetorically, by way of comparison to the Jewish taste of some of the sacred writers. Thankful that they found in the Gospel more than the religion of Moses gave them, and wishing to commend that Gospel to those familiar with the temple service, it was most natural that they could speak of Jesus as their sacrifice, their Passover, the lamb slain for them, by whose blood they were redeemed.<sup>961</sup>

<sup>958</sup> Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (II; United States of America: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003) p. 423.

<sup>959</sup> 'Blood Theology', *The Quarterly Journal of the American Unitarian Association*, vi(1859), 68-72 p. 70, 71.

<sup>960</sup> Moravian hymns made use of the term *Blood-theology* in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, such as *A Collection of Hymns of the Children of God* (1754).

<sup>961</sup> 'Blood Theology', p. 68, 69.

While the above Unitarian writers acknowledged the ‘blood texts’ of the Bible, they inevitably blamed hymn texts for Protestant ‘Blood theology’ with which they quarreled.

If we look again to Cowper’s stanza, what do we find but a hieroglyph, owing its chief influence to the fact that it presents a bloody picture to the mind, as distinctly as, a thousand years ago, some rude drawing presented like a picture to the eye of the worshipper? [...] A deeper education and more refined civilization will by and by prepare the way for its triumph, when all shall see, what at least one saw two thousand years ago, that the Lord loveth not sacrifices and is not pleased with blood offerings – that the only sacrifices acceptable to him are those of a broken and contrite heart.<sup>962</sup>

Though Unitarians rebelled against certain doctrinal views expressed in hymnody, they used hymns to their full advantage. In fact, Unitarians appear to have been among the ‘Boston Liberals’ who were innovative in their use of organs<sup>963</sup> and choirs.

One of the most characteristic techniques for fostering piety employed in the Liberal awakening was the use of sacred music. [...] Most of the hymn lyrics were imported from England, and the favorite hymnographers were theologically liberal Dissenters like Philip Doddridge, Anna Letitia Barbauld (1743-1826), and, of course, Isaac Watts. Along with hymns came the admission of musical instruments into New England meeting-houses. King’s Chapel retained an organ from its Anglican past; the Brattle Street Church installed one in 1790; and within a generation most other Unitarian churches had followed suit. In the early nineteenth century Boston Liberals took another important step: they introduced professional choirs to replace singing by the congregation.<sup>964</sup>

Unitarians contributed various hymns to the repertoire of Protestant hymnody. While many could be cited here, three will provide adequate illustration.

*It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*, written in 1849 by Edmund H. Sears of Massachusetts, was printed in over 300 hymnals between the years 1853-1930. Among the first was Philip Schaff’s *Christ in Song* published in 1869. In *Patterns in History: A Christian Perspective on Historical Thought*, David Bebbington used this hymn to demonstrate the influence of cyclical theory in western thought, and drew attention to this hymn’s alignment with Buddhism.

Yet cyclical theory in its various forms made such considerable inroads into western thought in the past that it can still be detected in unexpected places; and it remains a powerful influence in other parts of the world. Thus Christian

<sup>962</sup> Ibid. p. 72.

<sup>963</sup> In Ira Sankey’s autobiography, he recounts introducing the organ in his church (Methodist Episcopal). Believed to be ‘wicked and worldly,’ the organ was finally introduced in his church in the late-1850s.

<sup>964</sup> Daniel Walker Howe, *The Unitarian Conscience. Harvard Moral Philosophy, 1805-1861* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Oxford University Press, 1970) p. 171.

congregations sing with little sense of anomaly in a Christmas hymn of the time when 'with the ever-circling years comes round the age of gold'. Cosmic cycles continue to be assumed in much Buddhist thought.<sup>965</sup>

Few hymns have been as influential as Julia Ward Howe's *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, an observation noted by Ahlstrom (page 16). Though Ward's hymn did not tally enough printings in the hymnals consulted by Marini to rank in the most printed hymns, its publication in almost 300 hymnals published between the years 1862 and 1930 surpassed some hymns Marini included.<sup>966</sup> Wacker's selection of Howe's hymn to signify the Civil War era indicates its historical impact. First published in the February 1862 *Atlantic Monthly* and shortly thereafter in *The Rebellion Record* (1862) and *The Soldier's Armor of Strength* (1863), *Battle Hymn of the Republic* was destined to become one of the most impacting songs in American history and Howe one of the most impacting hymn writers. The World Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893 invited Howe to give an address to the delegates.<sup>967</sup> As this honor was bestowed on no other hymn writer,<sup>968</sup> it is possible that the universal appeal of *Battle Hymn of the Republic* had almost single-handedly catapulted Howe to the international stage.

But fierce opposition to Howe's hymn came from a familiar voice, Mark Twain composing a scathing rendition of Howe's battle hymn.

Mine eyes have seen the orgy of the launching of the Sword;  
He is searching out the hoardings where the stranger's wealth is stored;  
He hath loosed his fateful lightnings, and with woe and death has scored;  
His lust is marching on.

I have seen him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;  
They have builded him an altar in the Eastern dews and damps;  
I have read his doomful mission by the dim and flaring lamps  
His night is marching on.

I have read his bandit gospel writ in burnished rows of steel:  
"As ye deal with my pretensions, so with you my wrath shall deal;  
Let the faithless son of Freedom crush the patriot with his heel;  
Lo, Greed is marching on!"

<sup>965</sup> David W. Bebbington, *Patterns in History: A Christian Perspective on Historical Thought* (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 1990) p. 40.

<sup>966</sup> *To Our Redeemer's Glorious Name* (282 printings), *On a Hill Far Away* (226 printings), *Let Every Creature Join* (117 printings), *And Am I Only Born to Die?* (93 printings).

<sup>967</sup> Her address was entitled, 'What is Religion?'

<sup>968</sup> Others with reputation in music and hymnody also addressed the Parliament, i.e. 'Religion and Music' by Professor Waldo S. Pratt of Hartford, 'Civil Religion' by W. T. Stead and 'The Reunion of Christendom' by Philip Schaff.

We have legalized the strumpet and are guarding her retreat;  
 Greed is seeking out commercial souls before his judgment seat;  
 O, be swift, ye clods, to answer him! be jubilant my feet!  
 Our god is marching on!

In a sordid slime harmonious, Greed was born in yonder ditch,  
 With a longing in his bosom -- and for others' goods an itch --  
 As Christ died to make men holy, let men die to make us rich --  
 Our god is marching on.<sup>969</sup>

Twain's revision of this Civil War hymn demonstrates the impact of the hymn in broader society. Further, this nationalized hymn must have had an exceptional capacity to carry ideas, both in its original form and in Twain's version. Had this not been the case, Twain would have had little reason to react against the hymn or to use the hymn to carry his jeremiad.

Yet the hymns by Sears and Howe were somewhat limited to the Christmas season and patriotic contexts respectively. The Unitarian hymn that found a place among the top of American Protestant hymnody was Sarah Flower Adams' *Nearer, My God, to Thee*. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Unitarians claimed this hymn as 'probably the most generally used of all the hymns of Unitarian authorship.'<sup>970</sup> Ira Sankey recounted that, as President McKinley lay dying from an assassin's bullet, he was heard singing faintly *Nearer, My God, to Thee*, and that every church in the land sang Adam's hymn the Sunday following his death.<sup>971</sup> This is the most printed Unitarian hymn in Marini's rankings, at 22<sup>nd</sup> place.<sup>972</sup>

Unitarianism is recognized for its commitment to poetic excellence in hymnody, this amid an immense field. Here the pen of Samuel Longfellow (1819-1892) set the standard among Unitarian hymn writers, though his older brother Henry Wadsworth (1807-1882), author of *I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day*, often drew greater popular attention. Two years after Samuel Longfellow's death, Oscar Fay Adams published a tribute to him, featuring his contribution to hymnody.

<sup>969</sup> Frederick Anderson (ed.), *A Pen Warmed-up in Hell: Mark Twain in Protest* (New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1972) p. 15, 16.

<sup>970</sup> *The Unitarian Faith Set Forth in Fifty Hymns*, (Boston, Mass: American Unitarian Association, 1914).

<sup>971</sup> Ira D. Sankey, *My Life and the Story of the Gospel Hymns* (New York and London: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1907) p. 200, 201.

<sup>972</sup> Adams' hymn shares 22<sup>nd</sup> place with *Newton's Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken* and *Watts' Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove*, though the Dictionary of North American Hymnody indicates that *Nearer, My God, to Thee* was printed with much greater frequency, i.e. 1,878 hymnals between the years 1844 and 1975, compared to Newton's at 958 hymnals between the years 1792 and 1978 and Watts' at 760 hymnals between the years 1769 and 1978.

A very marked feature of Mr. Longfellow's hymns is their rounded completeness. There is no striving after expression, and no attenuation of the thought, a frequent fault in religious verse. [...] not a word could be spared, but not one more is needed.<sup>973</sup>

*The Unitarian Faith in Unitarian Hymns*, featuring fifty hymns, included four by Samuel Longfellow.<sup>974</sup>

Eloquent verse, when wed to the oratory skills of William Ellery Channing, may well have been without equal in American pulpits. Charles Rawson Thurston described Channing's inspiring and captivating skill.

From the high, old-fashioned pulpit his face beamed down, it may be said, like the face of an angel, and his voice floated down like a voice from the higher spheres. It was a voice of rare power and attraction, clear, flowing, melodious, slightly plaintive, so as curiously to catch and win upon the hearer's sympathy. Its melody and pathos in the reading of hymns was along a charm that might bring men to the listening like the attraction of sweet music.<sup>975</sup>

Even if the above accolades were overstated, they conveyed accurately the prestige of the hymn writer and orator in the Unitarian tradition, bearing witness to the prestige afforded the hymn. Unitarians guarded against hymns 'cheap in sentiment' and 'feeble in literary form', and highly coveted their own to be 'the noblest religious lyrics yet produced in America.'<sup>976</sup>

In 1888 The Unitarian Sunday-School Society published *Quarterly Lessons on Forty Hymns*. Prepared by Rev. Henry G. Spaulding, this collection was designed to educate children in hymnody. Apart from providing the history of hymns and hymn writers, Spaulding was also interested that children learn the teachings of the hymns.<sup>977</sup> Attention to hymnody as a teaching source seems to have been especially important to Unitarians; this may be partially due to Unitarians priding themselves in their contribution to American hymnody.<sup>978</sup> Further, as the Unitarians came to distance themselves from Calvinism and the doctrine of the atonement, hymnal content may have been the best medium by which to communicate their distinctive theology.

<sup>973</sup> Oscar Fay Adams, 'Samuel Longfellow', *New England Magazine*, 17/2 (October 1894), 205-214 p. 211.

<sup>974</sup> *Eternal One, Thou Living God; Light of Ages and of Nations; O Life that Maketh All Things New, and One Holy Church of God Appears*.

<sup>975</sup> Charles Rawson Thurston, 'The Homes and Haunts of Channing', *New England Magazine*, 21/4 (December 1896), 417-432 p. 421.

<sup>976</sup> *The Unitarian Faith Set Forth in Fifty Hymns*. Preface.

<sup>977</sup> Henry G. Spaulding, *Quarterly Lessons on Forty Hymns* (Boston: Unitarian Sunday-School Society, 1888). Preface.

<sup>978</sup> *The Unitarian Faith Set Forth in Fifty Unitarian Hymns*, (Boston, MA: American Unitarian Association, 1900?). Preface.



Indeed, the publication of *The Unitarian Faith in Unitarian Hymns* strengthens this perception, 'there is no better index to the religious life of any given period, or of any body of people, than the hymns which are widely used in that period by those people.'<sup>979</sup> Finally, the Unitarians saw fit to separate themselves from other groups by their hymns, 'These hymns represent the faith and emotion of a people who are neither the passive heirs of a traditional system of doctrine, nor religious illiterates ready to accept a crude and sensational theology.'<sup>980</sup>

## 8.9 Unitarian Distinctives

The distinctives of Unitarianism were presented by Channing in an address delivered at Baltimore, namely: The Bible was regarded as a work of human authors, the doctrine of God's UNITY (in objection to the Trinity), Jesus as distinct from God, the Moral Perfection of God, the work of Jesus as moral deliverance through his example (in objection to atonement theology that connected Christ's death and human forgiveness), and the virtue of human nature (in objection to irresistible divine influence).<sup>981</sup>

At the World Parliament of Religions, the Unitarian Congress articulated Unitarian doctrines. Essentially, two concepts were promoted as Unitarian: 1. Humanity is led into the knowledge of religious truth as into every other knowledge, and, 2. Jesus was 'an ascending man.' Valuing the unity of God, Unitarians ascribed worship only to God, the Father. This was reflected clearly throughout their hymnody, Unitarian hymns most frequently addressing God as Father.

The deification of Jesus common to most Protestant hymnody was absent, seen in the omission of *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name* and *Jesus, Lover of My Soul*. Jesus did not receive worship, though Bulfinch used the phrase 'Holy Son of God Most High' in a rare instance.<sup>982</sup> Instead, hymns that worshiped God were the mainstay of Unitarian hymnals, such as *Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah* and *Before Jehovah's Awful Throne*. Unitarian hymns were directed to God or about God, such as *Father supreme! Thou high and Holy One* and *O God, Whose Presence Glows in All*.

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<sup>979</sup> Ibid.

<sup>980</sup> Ibid. p. Preface.

<sup>981</sup> William Ellery Channing, *Unitarian Christianity: Delivered at the Ordination of Rev. Jared Sparks in the First Independent Church of Baltimore on May 5, 1819* (American Unitarian Association, 1947).

<sup>982</sup> Samuel Longfellow and Samuel Johnson, *A Book of Hymns for Public and Private Devotion* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1857) p. 106.

Longfellow's hymnal made no mention of orthodox Trinitarianism, instead 'Wisdom, love and might' were honored as the 'Thrice holy trinity'.<sup>983</sup>

The Moral Perfection of God is evident in many Unitarian hymns. In *The Unitarian Faith Set Forth in Hymns*, Eliza Scudder's hymn *Thou Grace Divine* is featured as an example of 'God's perfect wisdom and love of in spite of the inscrutable tragedies of life,'<sup>984</sup> each stanza extolling an attribute of God's love.

*The Crucifixion* by Stephen Greenleaf Bulfinch, represented an appropriation of the crucifixion acceptable within Unitarian Christology.

In the Saviour's hour of death  
Round upon the cross of fear  
While his quick and struggling breath  
Spoke the fatal moment near  
While his proud, triumphant foes  
Mocked the sufferings that he bore  
Then his loving spirit rose  
More sublime than e'er before

He has taught us to forgive  
By his words in days gone by  
He has taught us how to live  
Can he teach us how to die?  
Listen! As the cross they raise  
One brief prayer ascends to heaven  
For his murderers he prays—  
Father, may they be forgiven!<sup>985</sup>

In his hymns, Bulfinch's portrayal of 'the Saviour' comports with Channing's emphasis upon Jesus' exemplary life that, in the efficacy of his crucifixion, 'was not merely salvation from sin, but went further, that is, it was to leave its mark on the character of the saved.'<sup>986</sup> As a result, Channing based the Unitarian emphasis upon piety that sought to emulate the piety of Jesus Christ testified in his 'character and work',<sup>987</sup> a view of Jesus emphasized in the hymns *The Life of Jesus* and *Redeeming Power of Love*.

He lived as none but he has lived  
That wisest Teacher from above  
He died as none but he has died—  
His every act an act of love

<sup>983</sup> Ibid. p. 150.

<sup>984</sup> *The Unitarian Faith Set Forth in Fifty Hymns*, p. 21.

<sup>985</sup> Longfellow and Johnson, p. 121.

<sup>986</sup> Prescott B. Wintersteen, *Christology in American Unitarianism* (Boston, Massachusetts: The Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship, 1977) p. 21.

<sup>987</sup> Ibid. p. 25.

His fervent piety was breathed  
 To the lone waste, the desert hill  
 And in the haunts of men he sought  
 To do his Heavenly Father's will<sup>988</sup>

What precept, Jesus, is like thine—  
 Forgive, as ye would be forgiven  
 In this we see the power divine  
 Which shall transform our earth to heaven.<sup>989</sup>

Unitarians also used Cowper's hymn *The Cross*, its text emphasizing Christ's love rather than atonement for sin.

'Tis my happiness below  
 not to live without the cross  
 But the Saviour's power to know  
 Sanctifying every loss  
 Trials must and will befall  
 But with humble faith to see  
 Love inscribed upon them all—  
 This is happiness to me.<sup>990</sup>

Indeed, Longfellow and Johnson's hymnal contained not a single reference to blood atonement.

The virtue of human nature was also attested in various hymns. Nathaniel Frothingham's *O God, Whose Presence Glows in All* suggested the universal goodness of humanity.<sup>991</sup> Sarah Flower Adams' *Nearer My God to Thee* is rendered as 'the aspiration, uttered or unexpressed, of the human soul toward God.'<sup>992</sup> In contrast, *Prayer for Strength* by J. F. Clarke appeared to address inherent carnality, 'That we may conquer base desire and passion, That we may rise from selfish thoughts and will'.<sup>993</sup>

While there are many references to angels, Unitarian hymns do not broach the subject of spiritual warfare. There are no demons and devils in Unitarian hymns, though spirits of the departed were conceived of as nearby and communicative, as in the hymns *The Departed* and *Spiritual Presence*.

The spirits of the loved and the departed  
 Are with us, and they tell us of the sky  
 A rest for the bereaved and broken-hearted

<sup>988</sup> Longfellow and Johnson, p. 114.

<sup>989</sup> Ibid. p. 346.

<sup>990</sup> Ibid. p. 221.

<sup>991</sup> Ibid. p. 40.

<sup>992</sup> *The Unitarian Faith Set Forth in Fifty Hymns*, p. 19.

<sup>993</sup> Longfellow and Johnson, p. 56.

A house not made with hands, a home on high  
 Holy monitions – a mysterious breath –  
 A whisper from the marble halls of death.<sup>994</sup>

It is faith sublime and sure  
 That ever round our head  
 Are hovering, on noiseless wing  
 The spirits of the dead.<sup>995</sup>

## 8.10 Mormonism

Mormonism began with the 1830 publishing of the *Book of Mormon*, though founder Joseph Smith Jr. (1805-1844) claimed numerous supernatural experiences from his boyhood years. In *American Religions and the Rise of Mormonism*, Milton V. Backman Jr. recounted numerous visits paid to Smith by personages, including Christ and the angel Moroni. Smith emerged from these visits with the belief that he was called of God to correct the false teachings that plagued all denominations and, serving as God's Prophet to restore the church, to translate the Golden Plates buried in the Hill Cumorah after a cataclysmic battle between two pre-Columbian nations, the Lamanites and Nephites. Under Joseph's leadership, Mormonism migrated to Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois, hoping to establish Zion in the location Joseph believed to be the original Garden of Eden.

Braden posited Mormonism in the 'prophet founder' sect, especially given Smith's literature published to supplant the Bible.<sup>996</sup> But Mormonism was also syncretic, Joseph having blended knowledge gained from his Presbyterian and Methodist background together with millenarianism, militaristic apocalypticism, Masonic symbols and orders and, according to D. Michael Quinn, magic, occultism, and spiritualism.<sup>997</sup> Even elements of Islam were detected in his hybrid religion,<sup>998</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> century social researcher Henry Mayhew referring to Joseph as 'the American Mohamet'.<sup>999</sup>

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<sup>994</sup> Ibid. p. 281.

<sup>995</sup> Ibid. p. 282.

<sup>996</sup> Braden, p. 55.

<sup>997</sup> D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1998).

<sup>998</sup> Elements include the use of the title Final Prophet, reinstatement of polygamy, purification of the Judeo-Christian tradition, a self-written scripture received from an angelic being, the Prophet as military general and theocratic rule.

<sup>999</sup> Henry Mayhew's book, *The Mormons, or Latter-day Saints*, was published in 1851. E. D. Howe's book, *History of Mormonism* (1840) also likened Joseph Smith to 'Mahomet'.

According to Mormon hymnologist Karen Lynn Davidson, ‘Latter-day Saints revere their hymnbook almost as scripture because of their belief that the first LDS hymnal had its origins in divine commandment.’<sup>1000</sup> In 1835 Emma Smith compiled the first Mormon hymnal adding an expanded edition in 1841. Her authority to do so was revealed to her husband Joseph Smith the Prophet through a revelation, later recorded in *Doctrine and Covenants*.

Hearken unto the voice of the Lord your God, while I speak unto you, Emma Smith, my daughter; [...] And it shall be given thee, also, to make a selection of sacred hymns, as it shall be given thee, which is pleasing unto me, to be had in my church.<sup>1001</sup>

The use of Protestant hymns by Mormons is highly significant. As Joseph Smith believed himself to be the prophet who would restore the gospel truth that had been lost for centuries due to the Apostasy of Christianity, it is remarkable that early Mormonism endorsed hymns written by Christians during the Apostasy. Eric A. Eliason likened the use of Protestant hymns with the use of folk magic, the recruitment of both to be equally surprising.

Folklorists have helped demystify distinctions people commonly make between magic and religion by showing them to be functionally and structurally similar concepts whose differences have more to do with culturally constructed notions emerging from relationships of class and power than from intrinsic qualities of either phenomenon. For Mormons who understand this, the idea that the restoration of all truth might draw on folk magic is no more shocking than that Protestant hymns would find their way into LDS hymnbooks.<sup>1002</sup>

But Mormon use of Protestant hymns is consistent with the restoration mandate of Mormonism’s Prophet who, where the Church lacked truth, was instructed to provide it by translating the *Book of Mormon*, and, where the Bible lost truth, he was instructed to restore it by revising the Bible. Therefore, where Protestant hymnals may have provided hymns with partial truths, the Prophet’s wife ensured that her hymnal, was ‘adapted’ to their faith and belief in the gospel,<sup>1003</sup> and would enable Saints to ‘sing with understanding’, provided in her hymnal songs that would ‘answer

<sup>1000</sup> Karen Lynn Davidson, ‘Hymns and Hymnody’, in Daniel H. Ludlow (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* (2; New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992), 667-669 p. 667.

<sup>1001</sup> *The Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Containing Revelations Given to Joseph Smith, the Prophet*, (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1982) p. 25:1,11.

<sup>1002</sup> Eric A. Eliason, ‘Introduction’, in Eric A. Eliason (ed.), *Mormons and Mormonism: An Introduction to an American World Religion* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001) p. 17.

<sup>1003</sup> Emma Smith, *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints* (Kirkland, Ohio: F. G. Williams, 1835). Preface.

every purpose till more are composed'.<sup>1004</sup> But a new hymnal would soon replace Emma's, its compiler catapulting over Joseph's revelation.

The success of the Mormon mission in England justified, at least in the mind of Brigham Young, the dire need for a British hymnal; and he moved with surprising speed indicative of premeditation.<sup>1005</sup> Arriving in Liverpool on 6 April 1840, nine days later Young was part of a strategy to print a new Mormon hymnal in Britain. On 15 April, Joseph Fielding and Brigham Young (both members of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles) moved and seconded a motion at the General Conference to publish a hymn book, 'that the publishing of the Hymn book, shall be done by the direction of the Twelve.'<sup>1006</sup> Two days later, Brigham Young sent a letter to Joseph Smith.

Concerning the Hymn book, when we arrived here, we found the brethren had laid by their old Hymn books, and they wanted new ones; for the bible religion, and all is new to them. When I came to learn more about carrying books into the States, or bringing them here, I found the duties were so high that we never should want to bring books to the States.<sup>1007</sup>

Michael Hicks, Professor of Music at Brigham Young University, provided a commentary on the correspondence.

In this letter to Smith, Brigham Young, without asking permission to print new books in Manchester, reminded Joseph that it would be utterly impractical to send hymnbooks from the States to England. Brigham was keenly aware that, all expediency aside, Joseph's wife, Emma, was the official hymnal-compiler for the church. His indirect discussion of the hymnbook left the matter open to Joseph to forbid the project, without forcing the Prophet to explicitly sanction a hymnal produced without Emma.<sup>1008</sup>

Young's letter is not only remarkable for its power play, but curious for its appearance, namely: Young's letter implied the intention to reproduce Emma's hymnal through a British book-binder rather than incur the cost of shipping copies from the United States. And with the advanced technology of British book production, the task of typesetting and binding could have been accomplished within a week or two. However, Young did not reprint Emma's hymnal, but created his own, co-edited with Parley P. Pratt and John Taylor – almost certainly a bombshell when

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<sup>1004</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1005</sup> Brigham's priority was to pass a motion for a new hymnal. Though he was not specifically mandated in the motion, he took on the task of producing a new hymnal. He edited the hymnal, borrowed funds for its printing and supervised its speedy publication, putting it ahead of printing the *Book of Mormon*. This combination of events begs the question, 'Did Brigham Young go to England for the main purpose of compiling a hymnal, hoping to usurp Emma's authority and status?'

<sup>1006</sup> Brigham Young, 'Letter to President Joseph Smith and Counselors', in Joseph Smith (ed.), (*Times and Seasons*, 1840) p. 120,121.

<sup>1007</sup> Ibid. p. 121,122.

<sup>1008</sup> Hicks, p. 33.

later discovered by Joseph and Emma. Brigham borrowed the necessary funds to print the hymnal and the Book of Mormon. The new hymnal was published promptly in June 1840 and the *Book of Mormon* was published in the year following.<sup>1009</sup> Perhaps anticipating that his hymnal would extend beyond the British mission, Young entitled his hymnal<sup>1010</sup> *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Europe*. Once Brigham was President and Prophet of the Utah Mormons, he guaranteed that his hymnal would cross any foreign language barriers by his mandate to European immigrants, 'Your next duty is to learn English, the language of these latter days.'<sup>1011</sup>

Young's decision to replace Emma's authorized hymnal and inform the Prophet after the General Conference, foreshadowed the strife between Emma and Brigham over succession and the church's claim to Smith family property after Joseph's death in 1844. According to Leonard J. Arrington, 'Brigham's failure to express his sympathy to Emma soon after his arrival in Nauvoo and his ineptitude in dealing with her in the months that followed must have caused him many headaches.'<sup>1012</sup> But Arrington is understated as Emma's contempt for Brigham Young was largely due to his ambition for power and penchant for more wives. After Joseph's death, Young followed 'Old Testament practices dictat[ing] that one should marry his dead brother's wife or wives and "raise up seed" to him.'<sup>1013</sup> Emma opposed polygamy and was not among Joseph's wives who submitted to Young in matrimony.<sup>1014</sup> Hymnist Eliza R. Snow, one of Joseph's wives who married Young, was duly rewarded. Once Emma's, 'the celestial queenship of the church fell upon Eliza',<sup>1015</sup> and her hymn *O My Father*, written a year and a half after Joseph's death, was published in *Times and Seasons* and afterwards considered by Utah Mormons to be 'a revelation'.<sup>1016</sup>

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<sup>1009</sup> Leonard J. Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (United States of America: University of Illinois Press, 1986) p. 84.

<sup>1010</sup> In discussing the Manchester Hymnal, Henry Mayhew attributed authorship to Brigham Young.

<sup>1011</sup> Arrington, p. 327.

<sup>1012</sup> *Ibid.* p. 119.

<sup>1013</sup> *Ibid.* p. 121.

<sup>1014</sup> Emma rejected Brigham Young as a husband and as Joseph Smith's successor. In 1860, Emma's son Joseph Smith III came of age to succeed his father as President and established The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Emma was asked to compile a hymnal. It was published in 1863. This was followed by the Saints' Hymnal in 1870.

<sup>1015</sup> Keith and Ann Terry, *Emma: The Dramatic Biography of Emma Smith* (Santa Barbara, CA: Butterfly Publishing, Inc., 1979) p. 121. Keith and Ann Terry quote from an article in the *New York World*.

<sup>1016</sup> Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson (eds.), *Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective* (United States of America: University of Illinois Press, 1992) p. 65.

After Young had settled in Utah, he was faced with the expensive proposition of shipping hymnals from Manchester to the United States – a situation that he decried in his argument of needing a British hymnal in the first place. But Young took this problem in stride through devious means by evading the payment of shipping duty. Unfortunately for the new Prophet, his importing enterprise was discovered by the Chicago post office and reported by the *New York Evening Post* as a ‘smuggling operation’. Further, the *Post* reported the lyrics of Mormon hymns to be ‘peculiar and alarming’.<sup>1017</sup>

John Taylor, co-editor of the hymnal and Young’s successor to the Presidency, also endorsed the *Manchester Hymnal* for the Utah Mormons. Based on the endorsement of consecutive Prophets, the *Manchester Hymnal* was firmly entrenched, going through twenty-five editions until it was finally replaced in 1927.<sup>1018</sup>

Many years precedent to his Presidency, Taylor had sung by the prophet’s side in the Carthage jail and witnessed the prophet’s death. With his trial imminent, Joseph requested the hymn *A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief*, a song about Jesus that has been reinterpreted to Smith’s death, according to the Mormon tradition, as a sacrificial martyrdom.<sup>1019</sup> Indeed, this song was considered central to the account, all of its seven verses published in *A Correct Account of the Murder of Generals Joseph and Hyrum Smith*. Karen Lynn Davidson writes, ‘This hymn is especially loved among Latter-day Saints because of the role it played in the last hours before the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith.’<sup>1020</sup> Though Smith was smuggled a pistol<sup>1021</sup> with which he killed two men,<sup>1022</sup> John Taylor’s account of Smith’s death recorded in *Doctrine and Covenants* portrayed Smith as ‘a lamb going to the slaughter’<sup>1023</sup> reminiscent of the suffering servant described in Isaiah 53.<sup>1024</sup> But this type of immortalization is

<sup>1017</sup> ‘Brigham Young as a Smuggler’, *Littell’s Living Age*, 16/1346 (19 March 1870), 726-727 p. 726.

<sup>1018</sup> Davidson, p. 11,12.

<sup>1019</sup> Joseph Fielding Smith, *Essentials in Church History: A History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints from the Birth of Joseph Smith to the Present Time 1922* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing Company, 2004) p. 382.

<sup>1020</sup> Karen Lynn Davidson, *Our Latter-Day Hymns: The Stories and the Messages* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1988) p. 57.

<sup>1021</sup> Dallin H. Oaks and Marvin S. Hill, *Carthage Conspiracy: The Trial of the Accused Assassins of Joseph Smith* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1979) p. 20.

<sup>1022</sup> William M. Daniels, *A Correct Account of the Murder of Generals Joseph and Hyrum Smith at Carthage, on the 27th Day of June, 1844; by Wm. M. Daniels, an Eye Witness* (Nauvoo, Ill.: John Taylor, 1845) p. 11. John Hay reported in the *Atlantic Monthly* that Smith had shot four men.

<sup>1023</sup> Joseph Smith described himself as ‘a lamb to the slaughter’. See *Doctrine and Covenants* 135:4.

<sup>1024</sup> *Doctrine and Covenants* 135:4 is cross-referenced to Isaiah 53:7.



understandable given Taylor's extraordinary affection for the prophet, emphasized by Mormon historian J. Spencer Cornwall.

John Taylor loved the Prophet Joseph Smith with all the devotion that one man could possibly have for another. His two poems written to the prophet 'O Give Me Back My Prophet Dear' and 'The Seer' have in them all the poetical fervor he could muster to portray his inmost feelings.<sup>1025</sup>

The hymn was emphasized in Sunday School literature.

In the afternoon Joseph asked Elder Taylor to sing the hymn, commencing: 'A poor wayfaring man of grief.' And when it was done he asked him to sing it again. Brother Taylor said he could hardly sing it, he felt so sad, but he sang the hymn again.<sup>1026</sup>

Mormon children were taught that Joseph Smith faced two hundred men whose 'bullets flew like hail into the room.' No mention was made of Joseph Smith shooting three of the four men that stormed the jail cell. Amid this Mormon Sunday School account, the hymn served to portray Joseph as a type of Jesus, beautifying Joseph as a saintly martyr. With the hymn, Taylor was able to meld two motifs from Isaiah 53 and apply them to Joseph: a man acquainted with grief and a lamb led to the slaughter.

Soon after the Mormon Prophet's death, Taylor's hymn *The Seer, Joseph, The Seer* was premiered at a tribute concert<sup>1027</sup> and was published by the Utah Mormons with remarkable longevity, only recently discontinued by the editors of the 1985 hymnal. Numerous phrases of the hymn praised the person of Joseph Smith, such as 'His equal now cannot be found', 'With Gods he soared in the realms of day', and 'Like the sun he spread his golden light'.<sup>1028</sup> Such idyllic deification of Smith was almost certainly inspired by Joseph Smith's revision of the Bible, otherwise known as the Joseph Smith Translation (JST). Smith had added a prophetic section to Genesis 50 providing details of a seer named Joseph who would denounce false doctrine and bring true knowledge to the world in the 'latter days'.

<sup>1025</sup> J. Spencer Cornwall, *Stories of Our Mormon Hymns* (Deseret Book Company; Salt Lake City, Utah, 1971) p. 285.

<sup>1026</sup> Nephi Anderson, *A Young Folks' History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Sunday School Union, 1916) p. 120.

<sup>1027</sup> Hicks, p. 59.

<sup>1028</sup> *Hymns: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1973). Hymn no. 296.

Taylor's hymn drew severe criticism from those outside of Mormonism. Methodists cited it as 'Josepholatry.'<sup>1029</sup> In 1842, two years prior to Joseph Smith's death, Daniel

- P. Kidder published an expose of Mormonism. His monograph was preceded by at least two other anti-Mormon works, *History of Mormonism*,<sup>1030</sup> by E. D. Howe and *A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter-day Saints*<sup>1031</sup> by John Corrill. Kidder listed the 'cardinal positions' of Mormonism to demonstrate its 'ghastly skeleton', following which he used *Hymn 265* from Emma Smith's 'inspired' 1835 hymnal to demonstrate the theological distinctives of Mormon beliefs.<sup>1032</sup>

1 Now we'll sing with one accord,  
For a *prophet of the Lord*,<sup>1033</sup>  
Bringing forth his precious word  
Cheers the saints as anciently

2 When the world in darkness lay  
Lo, *he* sought the better way  
And he heard the Saviour say  
"Go and prune my vineyard, son!"

3 And an angel surely, then,  
For a blessing unto men,  
Brought the priesthood back again,  
In its ancient purity

4 Even Joseph he inspires,  
Yes, his heart he truly fires  
With the light that he desires,  
For the work of righteousness

5 And the Book of Mormon, true,  
With its covenants ever new,  
For the Gentile and the Jew,  
He translated sacredly

6 The commandments of the church  
Which the saints will always search  
(Where the joys of heaven perch,)  
Came *through him* from Jesus Christ

<sup>1029</sup> 'The Gospel in All Lands', 1891 p. 25.

<sup>1030</sup> The full title of Howe's 1840 work is *History of Mormonism; or a faithful Account of that singular Imposition and Delusion, with Sketches of the Characters of its Propagators, to which are added, Inquiries into the probability that the Historical Part of the Golden Bible was written by one Solomon Spalding, and by him intended to have been published as a Romance.*

<sup>1031</sup> The full title of Corrill's 1839 work is *A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter-day Saints, (commonly called Mormons,) [sic] including an Account of their Doctrines and Discipline, with Reasons of the Author for leaving the Church.*

<sup>1032</sup> The hymn is published no. 26 in *A Collection of Hymns* by Emma Smith (1835). Entitled *Now We'll Sing in One Accord*, the hymn has been retained in the latest LDS hymnals.

<sup>1033</sup> Italics are used in Kidder's citation. Emma's original hymnal did not use italics.

7 Precious are his years to come,  
 When the righteous gather home,  
 For the great millennium,  
 Where he'll rest in blessedness.

8 Prudent in this world of woes,  
 He will TRIUMPH O'ER HIS FOES,<sup>1034</sup>  
 While the realm of Zion grows,  
 Purer for eternity.

The six 'cardinal positions' that Kidder exposed are as follows:<sup>1035</sup>

1. Joseph Smith is a prophet of the Lord, and a priest after the order of Melchisedek.
2. The Book of Mormon is true (inspired).
3. Zion is on this land (Nauvoo, Illinois).
4. Matter is eternal.
5. God is a material being.
6. The saints are to be baptized for their dead relations, on peril of their own salvation.

The placement of this hymn in Kidder's book is important. Cited in chapter 13 devoted to 'the theology of Mormonism' indicates that the hymn was central to Kidder's theological argument against Mormonism.<sup>1036</sup> For Kidder's Protestant audience, the fact that Mormons sang this hymn 'in their worship'<sup>1037</sup> was evidence enough that every Mormon sincerely believed the theology embedded in the lyrics.

Henry C. Sheldon, professor of historical theology at Boston University traced the doctrine of polygamy and, while showing its legislation in Brigham Young's discourses (who threatened damnation to those Mormon men who opposed the practice), argued polygamy as a widespread practice given its endorsement in Mormon hymnody.

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<sup>1034</sup> Upper case letters are used in Kidder's citation. The original version of the Mormon Church uses lower case.

<sup>1035</sup> Daniel P. Kidder, *Mormonism and the Mormons. A Historical View of the Rise and Progress of the Sect Self-Styled Latter-Day Saints* (New York: G. Lane & C.B. Tippet for the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1844) p. 234. The first edition was published in 1842.

<sup>1036</sup> Kidder's chapters are organized thus: 1. Prevalence of imposture, 2. Character of inspired men, 3. Sidney Rigdon (and Solomon Spalding), 4. The Book of Mormon published, 5. P.P. Pratt makes his appearance in Ontario county, 6. Early developments in Ohio, 7. Preliminary operations in Missouri, 8. Zion established, 9. Theological studies, 10. Progress of events in Missouri, Chapter 11. Escape to Illinois, 12. Military organization, 13. Theology of Mormonism, 14. Relation of Mormonism to Christianity, 15. Prophecies.

<sup>1037</sup> Kidder, p. 235.

Through him who holds the sealing power,  
 Ye faithful ones, who heed  
 Celestial laws, take many wives  
 And rear a righteous see.  
 Though fools revile, I'll honor you  
 As Abraham, my friend  
 You shall be gods, and shall be blest  
 With lives that never end.<sup>1038</sup>

According to Sheldon, the doctrine of plural wives included in Mormon hymnody was sufficient proof to assert that 'the Mormon hierarchy have given complete demonstration of their conviction that polygamy belongs in the very foundation of their system.'<sup>1039</sup>

Of the marginalized religious groups in 19<sup>th</sup>-century America, none used hymns as forcibly as did the Mormons. In 1836, 'A Prophetic Warning' written by Orson Hyde<sup>1040</sup> and reissued as a 'A Timely Warning to the People of England' a year later, announced that, following the Gentile apostasy of Christendom, the Lord's return and the Millennial reign of Christ were imminent. The reader was invited to join the saints in singing a new song:

The Lord hath brought again Zion  
 The Lord hath redeemed his people, Israel,  
 According to the election of grace,  
 Which was brought to pass by faith  
 And covenant of their fathers.  
 The Lord hath redeemed His people  
 And Satan is bound, and time is no longer.  
 The Lord hath gathered all things in one;  
 The Lord hath brought up Zion from above;  
 The Lord hath brought up Zion from beneath.  
 The earth hath travailed and brought forth her strength,  
 And truth is established in her bowels;  
 And the heavens have smiled upon her;  
 And she is clothed with the glory of her God;  
 For he stands in the midst of his people.  
 Glory and honor and power and might,  
 Be ascribed to our God, for he is full of mercy,  
 Justice, grace and truth and peace,  
 Forever and ever – Amen.<sup>1041</sup>

<sup>1038</sup> Henry C. Sheldon, *A Fourfold Test of Mormonism* (New York and Cincinnati: The Abingdon Press, 1914) p. 114.

<sup>1039</sup> *Ibid.* p. 115.

<sup>1040</sup> Identified in the work as 'an elder of the church.'

<sup>1041</sup> *The Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Containing Revelations Given to Joseph Smith, the Prophet*, p. 84:99-102.

This hymn also announced the belief that, through the Utah Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, America was the literal Zion of the Millennial reign. Its inclusion in *Doctrine and Covenants* situated it within Mormon canonical literature and established it as a universal warning.

### 8.11 Mormon Distinctives

Levette J. Davidson's research on Mormon hymns and songs resulted in a 27-page article published in *The Journal of American Folklore* in 1945. In his article, 'Mormon Songs', Davidson suggested that 'Singing Saints' would be an appropriate substitute for 'Latter-Day Saints'.<sup>1042</sup> Davidson substantiated his claim by demonstrating the pervasive role of music, composed for virtually every belief and activity of the Mormon settlement in Utah, including songs of migration, war, and anti-Federalism. According to Levette, various doctrinal distinctives of Mormonism were contained in their hymn tradition.

Some of the peculiar doctrines of Mormonism, such as celestial marriages, baptism for the dead, the destruction of the Nephites, the revelations in the Book of Mormon, and polygamous marriages are used as themes in several of the songs included in the older editions of the hymnal.<sup>1043</sup>

Davidson also used Eliza R. Snow's song, *In Our Lovely Deseret*, to show how the 'Word of Wisdom', a health instructive issued by Joseph Smith, was perpetuated in hymns.

That the children may live long  
And be beautiful and strong  
Tea and coffee and tobacco they despise  
Drink no liquor, and they eat  
But a very little meat;  
They are seeking to be great and good and wise.<sup>1044</sup>

Recalling Lamanite-Nephite wars described in the Book of Mormon, Utah Mormons (in particular) held a fascination with American Indians as Lamanites. In the *Journal of Discourses*, Heber C. Kimball identified Indians as Lamanites, charging them to be 'a scourge' needing to repent.<sup>1045</sup> Michael Hicks, professor of music at Brigham

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<sup>1042</sup> Levette J. Davidson, 'Mormon Songs', *The Journal of American Folklore*, 58/No. 230 (Oct-Dec 1945), 273-300 p. 273.

<sup>1043</sup> Ibid. p. 276.

<sup>1044</sup> Ibid. Whereas the Word of Wisdom ambiguously prohibited consumption of 'hot drinks', this hymn identified tea and coffee as specific beverages that were forbidden. In this way, the hymn served as an official interpretation of revelation for Mormon faithful.

<sup>1045</sup> G. D. Watt (ed.), *Journal of Discourses* (2; Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855) p. 107, 108.

Young University, described this Mormon belief as it was expressed in early Mormon hymnody.

For Mormons, Native Americans represented a sacred kindred to be reclaimed, literal descendents of Israel in need of civilizing. And when they were converted, the Indians would not only be saved, they would become 'white and delightful,' divinely ready to possess the continent.' [...] Early Mormons expressed their unique empathy for Indians (or 'Lamanites,' as they called them) by frequently singing the American popular songs *The Indian Hunter* and *The Indian's Lament* as well as their own hymn *The Red Man*.<sup>1046</sup>

Emma Smith's 1835 hymnal included the hymn *O Stop and Tell Me Red Man* in which 'the Red Man' was identified as 'Ephraim' (Israel). Brigham Young's hymnal, politicizing his eschatological view included *Lord, Hear the Red Man's Wail*, an anti-Federalist hymn with a message of vengeance. Lyrics published by the *New York Evening Post*, drew particular attention to the theme of retribution.

Up, awake, ye defenders of Zion  
 The foe's at the door of your homes  
 Let each heart be the heart of a lion  
 Unyielding and proud as he roams  
 Remember the wrongs of Missouri  
 Forget not the fate of Nauvoo  
 When the God-hating foe is before ye  
 Stand firm and be faithful and true<sup>1047</sup>

The threat of retaliation in the context of Young's theocracy was clear, 'Subvert our foes' (in *Lord, Hear the Red Man's Wail*) and 'And await the time coming to give them redress' (in *Deseret, Deseret, Home of the Free*). Brigham's hymns accused 'the cheating pale-face' of stealing Mormon and Indian lands, suggesting that Utah Mormons and eastern Indian tribes had a common vendetta against the United States.<sup>1048</sup>

Within two years the call to arms was realized in one of the worst civilian slaughters in American history. In September 1857, a Mormon militia and its Paiute allies slaughtered 120 men, women, and children in a wagon train crossing Mormon territory, thereafter called the Mountain Meadows Massacre. A Mormon folk hymn, written by disapproving Mormons, carried the record.

Come all ye sons of freedom  
 And to this song give ear  
 About a bloody massacre  
 You very soon will hear

<sup>1046</sup> Hicks, p. 210.

<sup>1047</sup> 'Brigham Young as a Smuggler', p. 727.

<sup>1048</sup> Ibid.

Across to Zion's mountains  
 Some thirty wagons came  
 Surrounded by an angel band  
 And Utah bears the blame

'Twas on the Mountain Meadows  
 This wagon train was seen  
 Surrounded by that wicked band  
 All on the meadow green  
 The Avenging Angels caught them  
 As they got under way  
 The men corralled the wagon train  
 And fought in blood all day

Then Lee, the Angel's leader  
 His word to them did give  
 That if they'd give up all their guns  
 He'd surely let them live  
 Their guns they gave to Angel Lee  
 Toward Cedar they did go  
 They're then attacked in Injun style  
 And gentile blood did flow

They melted down with one accord  
 Like wax before a flame  
 Men and women, young and old  
 And Utah bears the blame  
 By order of Brigham Young  
 This deed was done, you see  
 And the captain of that wicked band  
 Was Captain John D. Lee<sup>1049</sup>

This ballad of the Mountain Meadows Massacre revealed several characteristics of Utah Mormon theology. First, it verified that outsiders were considered as Gentiles; second, that Utah was considered a literal Zion; and third, the theocratic rule of Brigham Young. Implicitly, 'they're attacked in Injun style', may have indicated that emulation of the Paiutes, thus representing the Mormon belief that American Indians were Israelites. Testimony from confessors, who participated in the slaughter confirming that the Mormon militia disguised themselves as Paiutes when they attacked the 'Gentile wagon train,' adds substance to this speculation.

A group known as the 'Avenging Angels' cited above in the *Ballad of the Mountain Meadows Massacre* allegedly fulfilled a taste of the revenge prophesied in Mormon hymnody. According to J. Barre Toelken, Director of Utah State University Folklore

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<sup>1049</sup> J. Barre Toelken, 'The Ballad of the 'Mountain Meadows Massacre'', *Western Folklore*, 18/2 (April 1959), 169-172 p. 169, 170.

Program (1985-2003), the 'Avenging Angels' were also known as the 'Destroying Angels', a special militia that 'carr[ied] out the Church's orders of blood atonement.'<sup>1050</sup>

## 8.12 Spiritualism

There is no founder of Spiritualism in America, though the Fox sisters of Hydesville, New York are usually cited as being a precipitating influence.<sup>1051</sup> The Fox sisters' claim to communicate with the dead was representative of a highly varied movement that was united under the umbrella phrase, 'There is no death, there are no dead.' Braden listed Spiritualism among the 'syncretic' sects.<sup>1052</sup>

While some associated Spiritualism with the charming story of Johnny Appleseed<sup>1053</sup> who provided seedlings to settlers of the American frontier while at the same time distributing Swedenborgian literature, others viewed Spiritualism as a dangerous threat to Christianity.

It takes the form of a Church organization and has religious services, -- its prayers, and hymns, its sermons and conference meetings,-- at which its doctrines are inculcated and the personal experience of its adherents is set forth. [...] But whatever it may be, its direct hostility to Christianity, to its principles and its institutions, is manifest and palpable[.]<sup>1054</sup>

Theological awareness was evident in one writer's commentary of Spiritualist hymnody, particularly as it applied to the doctrine of the Intermediate State.

The importation of religious views into the discussion of survival has in the past always served to obscure the argument and to confuse the issue in various ways. For example, survival has frequently been taken as equivalent to immortality, and many Spiritualist hymns seem to make this mistake.<sup>1055</sup>

According to Trevor H. Hall, Spiritualism flourished in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century against the backdrop of 'modernism in theology, scientific agnosticism and a divided Christianity.'<sup>1056</sup> With the growing interest in mesmerism and other spectacular

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<sup>1050</sup> Ibid. p. 169. Brigham Young taught that some sins were so grievous that atonement could only be obtained through the sinner shedding his own blood. In this context, the killings conducted by the Destroying Angels were believed to be redemptive killings.

<sup>1051</sup> Charles Samuel Braden, *These Also Believe. A Study of Modern American Cults and Minority Religious Movements* (New York: MacMillan Company, 1967) p. 319.

<sup>1052</sup> Braden, 'Organized Religion in the United States', p. 55.

<sup>1053</sup> John Chapman (1774-1847)

<sup>1054</sup> 'The Free Love System: Origin, Progress, and Position of the Anti-Marriage Movement', *Littell's Living Age*, 46/592 (29 September 1855), 815-821 p. 818.

<sup>1055</sup> H. Ernst Hunt, *Do We Survive Death?* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2003) p. 9.

<sup>1056</sup> Trevor H. Hall, *The Spiritualists. The Story of Florence Cook and Williams Crookes* (New York: Helix Press, 1963) p. xi.



phenomena and, as hymns facilitated mediumship, séances and trances, hymnody was early on deemed integral to Spiritualist ‘circles’ and public meetings. Robert Hare, professor of chemistry at Pennsylvania, provided a detailed report of his investigation into Spiritualism in *Experimental Investigations of the Spiritual Manifestations Demonstrating the Existence of Spirits and their Communion with Mortals*. Dr. Hare referred to the practice of hymn chanting, providing a representative episode at the house of a Spiritualist.

I was allowed to subject the table to a strict scrutiny, removing the drawer to obtain a more thorough inspection. This table was nevertheless repeatedly agitated with an energy which could not be ascribed to the hands placed quietly upon its surface by a circle of persons perfectly quiescent. Often at this circle, and at others during the chanting of hymns, have I seen a table thus situated keeping time by its vibratory movements with a sympathetic tremour [sic].<sup>1057</sup>

Emma Hardinge, who served as a medium, musician, and historian of Spiritualism, reported of a similar experience that occurred at a séance.

Before the first strain [an old familiar ‘song of Zion’] is ended, every voice has joined in the rough but harmonious chorus, and ere the hymn is done, the table is rocking with mysterious intelligent precision that assured them the vast solitudes are people with invisible but tenderly sympathetic witnesses.<sup>1058</sup>

In *Radical Spirits*, Anne Braude indicated the role of music in circles to be essential for unity, reporting that hymns, along with silence, meditation, and prayer, served to enhance communication with spirits.<sup>1059</sup> Children appear to have been active in spiritualist practices. *Zillah, The Child Medium*, depicted a young girl who carried a pocket hymn book wherever she went, hymns the means to bring her to a trancing state.

While the role of hymns was important to Spiritualists, it was considered a means to an end. Indeed, one Spiritualist leader accused American Christianity of divisiveness and regarded denominational hymnals to be endowed with an inflated status and a chief cause of strife.

Their christianity [sic] becomes the seed of division and contention, and gives rise to numerous sects, instead of becoming a bond of union, and bringing them into harmony with each other, and giving them one faith, one Lord, and one baptism. These divisions tend to develop still stronger their selfish

<sup>1057</sup> Robert Hare, *Experimental Investigations of the Spiritual Manifestations, Demonstrating the Existence of Spirits and Their Communion with Mortals* (New York: Partridge & Brittan, 1855) p. 45.

<sup>1058</sup> Emma Hardinge, *Modern American Spiritualism* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2003) p. 478.

<sup>1059</sup> Ann Braude, *Radical Spirits: Spiritualism and Women's Rights in Nineteenth-Century America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989) p. 20.

individuality, and exclusiveness, and to engender strife and antagonism. There must be a meeting house, and a priesthood, and a hymnbook, [...] and ten thousand other differences, equally foolish and foreign to the object and end of true christianity [sic].<sup>1060</sup>

In *Spiritualism versus Christianity*, J. W. Daniels took exception to the Spiritualist view of angels. Citing from an address by the Society for the Diffusion of Spiritual Knowledge, Daniels documented the Spiritualist claim to consultation with angels and spirits.

We believe that Spirituality is a Heaven-born truth. We profess to know that angels from Heaven – that the Spirits of good men, progressing toward perfection – have come here upon the earth we stand on, and talked with us, face to face, and uttered words to us bearing the impress of their divine origin.<sup>1061</sup>

To combat the heretical influences of Spiritualism, Daniels rallied Christians to ‘adopt the exhortation of Mr. Wesley’ and cited three verses of Charles Wesley’s hymn *Soldiers of Christ Arise*.<sup>1062</sup>

Janesville rector A. H. Barrington also sought to ‘expose’ Spiritualism, along with Theosophy and Christian Science, as ‘contrary to the Christian religion’. In his work *Anti-Christian Cults* (featuring a commentary by the Bishop of Wisconsin) Barrington challenged the Spiritualist view of the Intermediate State; for various reasons, including the notion that the deceased could be engaged in communication. Barrington discounted such practices as contrary to biblical teaching, ‘Moreover, it is impossible to find in the Holy Scriptures *any sanction for the consultation of the dead*.’<sup>1063</sup> Further, Barrington opposed the Spiritualist view of angels as ‘disembodied spirits’ or ‘glorified forms of the departed of this world’. Barrington defined angels as a ‘distinct creation’, but indicated that humans can ‘be like unto them [...] after the resurrection.’<sup>1064</sup> While Barrington used the Bible to argue these points (and others), he used the hymnal at the close of his work. Like Daniels, Barrington called Christians to take action, encouraging those with ‘an active living

<sup>1060</sup> J. Tiffany, *Lectures on Spiritualism Being a Series of Lectures on the Phenomena and Philosophy of Development, Individualism, Spirit, Immortality, Mesmerism, Clairvoyance, Spiritual Manifestations, Christianity, and Progress, Delivered at Prospect Street Church in the City of Cleveland During the Winter and Spring of 1851* (Cleveland: William Mitchell, 1851) p. 351.

<sup>1061</sup> J. W. Daniels, *Spiritualism Versus Christianity; or, Spiritualism Thoroughly Exposed* (New York and Auburn: Miller, Orton & Mulligan, 1856) p. v.

<sup>1062</sup> *Ibid.* p. 252.

<sup>1063</sup> A. H. Barrington, *Anti-Christian Cults. An Attempt to Show That Spiritualism, Theosophy and Christian Science Are Devoid of Supernatural Powers and Are Contrary to the Christian Religion*. (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: The Young Churchman Co., 1898) p. 45.

<sup>1064</sup> *Ibid.* p. 47.

faith in the Lord Jesus' to 'realize the power of Jesus Christ over mankind' and sing as 'Saints in the Light'.<sup>1065</sup> Like Daniels, Barrington selected a hymn text, citing James Montgomery's *What are these in Bright Array?*

Hunger, thirst, disease unknown, On immortal fruits they feed;  
 Them the Lamb amidst the throne, Shall to living fountains lead,  
 Joy and gladness banish sighs; Perfect love dispels their fears;  
 And forever from their eyes, God shall wipe away their tears.<sup>1066</sup>

### 8.13 Spiritualist Distinctives

Communication with angelic beings and spirits of the deceased was a common theme in Spiritualist hymns.

#### *Angel Footsteps*

When the hours of day are numbered  
 And the voices of the night  
 Wake the better soul that slumbered  
 To a holy, calm delight

Ere the evening lamps are lighted  
 And like phantoms grim and tall  
 Shadows from the fitful firelight  
 Dance upon the parlor wall

Then the forms of the departed  
 Enter at the open door  
 The beloved ones, the true hearted  
 Come to visit me once more

With a slow and noiseless footstep  
 Come the messengers divine  
 Take the vacant chair beside me  
 Lay their gentle hands in mine<sup>1067</sup>

#### *There are Loved Ones Gone before Us*

There are loved ones gone before us  
 To that bright and happy land  
 And those who've left us here below  
 To join the angel band

Yet still they come with smiles of joy  
 They leave their home of flowers  
 They come at morn, at noon, and night  
 To this cold world of ours<sup>1068</sup>

<sup>1065</sup> Ibid. p. 170.

<sup>1066</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1067</sup> J. B. Packard and J. S. Loveland, *The Spirit Minstrel; a Collection of Hymns and Music for the Use of Spiritualists, in Their Circles and Public Meetings* (Boston: Bela Marsh, 1856) p. 7.

Spiritualist hymnody reflected a tremendous fascination with angels. The hymnal, *Spirit Voices: Odes Dictated by Spirits of the Second Sphere*, was compiled entirely of hymns delivered from angels through mediums. Angels were prevalent in the hymn titles: *An Angel's Lesson; Angel Guides; Angels' Visitations; Ministration of Angels; An Angel Mother's Love; Welcome to Angels*, and *Angel Voices* are but a sampling.<sup>1069</sup> The activity of angels among human beings included communication, protection and bringing comfort and peace through their presence.

*The Angel's Welcome*

Hark! the songs of angels swell  
 Deep'ning thro' the radiant home  
 Where the blest immortals dwell  
 Where the throngs of seraphs roam

Softly now these voices breathe  
 Echoing through the fainting heart  
 Smiles of hope and joy they wreath  
 Bliss celestial they impart<sup>1070</sup>

*Guardian*

Angel-mother, long I listened  
 Listened with attentive ear  
 And my eyes with tear-drops glistened  
 When I knew that thou wast near

Thou, my guardian-spirit ever  
 Ever through this lower sphere  
 Till the hand of death shall sever  
 Every tie that binds me here

Angel-mother, life is dearer  
 Dearer since my doubts are flown  
 And the lamp of life burns clearer  
 When the way of truth is known<sup>1071</sup>

*Angel Father!*

Angel father, oh! be near me  
 On my journey to the tomb  
 Let thy blessed presence cheer me  
 In the hours of pain and gloom

Angel mother, see me languish

<sup>1068</sup> Ibid. p. 10.

<sup>1069</sup> As critics noted of Spiritualist hymnals, *Spirit Voices* does not contain a single reference to the name of Jesus, nor do the hymns mention the Bible, the church, the cross, the crucifixion, blood, hell or the resurrection.

<sup>1070</sup> Packard and Loveland, *The Spirit Minstrel; a Collection of Hymns and Music for the Use of Spiritualists, in Their Circles and Public Meetings* p. 17.

<sup>1071</sup> Ibid. p. 28.

Almost ready to despair  
 Thou canst calm the brow of anguish  
 Thou canst soothe the heart of care<sup>1072</sup>

*Light from the Spirit World appears*

Light from the Spirit World appears  
 The day begins to dawn,  
 Glad spirits bid us dry our tears  
 And hail the glorious morn<sup>1073</sup>

*Let us with Joyful Minds*

Bright, Angel bands e'er hover  
 In the air around us spread  
 And we feel their presence near  
 In the daily paths we tread<sup>1074</sup>

Describing his experience with spirit manifestations at the house of Dr. N. B. Wolfe, journalist F. B. Plimpton claimed to have heard the voice of a child through the voice of medium Mrs. Mary J. Hollis. Dr. Wolfe recognized the voice as that of a girl who had died at the age of six.

At his request, she sang a verse of the song, "I want to be an angel," in company with him. It was a child's voice, unmistakably, in its limited vocal power and range, immature tone and accent and articulation of words, and very near to us.<sup>1075</sup>

This children's song, thought by some to be incongruous with Judeo-Christian theology (page 97), fed into the Spiritualist fascination with angels.

Citing Rev. F. Fielding-Ould in *Chaos of Cults: A Study of Present Day Isms*, author Jan Karel Van Baalen drew attention to the omission of Jesus' name.

In the Spiritualist hymn-book the name of Jesus is deleted – for example, 'angels of Jesus' read 'angels of wisdom. At their service His name is carefully omitted in the prayers. The miraculous conception of Christ is merely a fabulous tale.<sup>1076</sup>

The Reformed Church in the United States had published previously a similar indictment of Spiritualist hymns in the *Reform Church Review*.

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<sup>1072</sup> Ibid. p. 30.

<sup>1073</sup> Ibid. p. 34.

<sup>1074</sup> Ibid. p. 36.

<sup>1075</sup> N. B. Wolfe, *Startling Facts in Modern Spiritualism* (Chicago: Religio-Philosophical Publishing House, 1875) p. 337.

<sup>1076</sup> Jan Karel Van Baalen, *The Chaos of Cults: A Study of Present-Day Isms* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1938) p. 31.

The hymn *Circle*, according to Bret E. Carroll, was ‘written especially for the séance meeting’, and was ‘intended to establish harmony and community at the outset of the ritual’.<sup>1077</sup>

Holy Father, gently bless us  
As we meet in love tonight  
Let no earthly care oppress us  
May we all be filled with light

Loving spirits hover o’er us  
Angels bright, in truth arrayed  
Ope [sic] the path of life before us  
Lead us on to cloudless day

Let no jarring thought divide us  
Sweetest harmony be ours  
Wisdom’s richest feast provide us  
As we pass these happy hours

May the grace of Guardian Angels  
And the Father’s boundless love  
With the Loving Spirits’ favor  
Rest upon us from above

Thus may we abide in union  
With each other and the Lord  
And possess, in sweet communion  
Joys which earth cannot afford<sup>1078</sup>

The hymn served an essential role in preparing for a séance.

There should be a leading mind to give the key-note, or pitch, with which the rest are to harmonize. But before they can harmonize, mutual faith and confidence must be established. If there is anything which prevents this, it must be removed out of the way. If any two or more members out of whom this [strong mental] battery is to be formed, distrust [sic] each other, or cherish unkindly feelings, they must become reconciled or leave the circle.<sup>1079</sup>

Hymns in Spiritualism, used as a vehicle of unity for the circle, were highly valued. Though Spiritualists may have regarded their usage to be different from Protestants (that Spiritualists alleged were divided by hymns) in function, hymns were used to express the doctrinal distinctives of Spiritualists. By default, if not by intention, these hymns maintained a doctrinal separation from Protestantism.

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<sup>1077</sup> Bret E. Carroll, *Spiritualism in Antebellum America* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997) p. 131.

<sup>1078</sup> Packard and Loveland, *The Spirit Minstrel; a Collection of Hymns and Music for the Use of Spiritualists, in Their Circles and Public Meetings* p. 87.

<sup>1079</sup> Tiffany, p. 145.

## 8.14 Christian Science

- Mary Baker Eddy, nee Baker (1821-1910), the founder of Christian Science, published *Science and Health with Key to the Scripture* in 1875. Eddy claimed to be the woman of Revelation 12, with her writings providing the ‘key of David’ (Revelation 3:7). In 1879 she established the Church of Christ Scientist. Along with Mormonism, Braden grouped Christian Science with sects having a prophet-founder, Mary Baker Eddy’s role as personal founder and her supplanting of the Bible with her ‘key’ set her apart as a prophet or divinity.<sup>1080</sup>

*The Christian Science Hymnal*, first published in 1898, contained seven hymns<sup>1081</sup> written by Mary Baker Eddy: *Blest Christmas Morn, Brood o’er us with Thy sheltr’ing wing, It matters not what be thy lot, O gentle presence, O’er waiting harpstrings of the mind, Saw ye my Saviour?* and *Shepherd, show me how to go*. The latter hymn received special attention in the narrative of a child’s healing.

[...] the little one said, ‘Mamma, sing Shepherd – our Leader’s hymn, that both the big and little children love. I began singing, and commencing with the second line, the little voice joined me. I shall never forget the feeling of joy and peace that came over me, when I realized how quickly God’s word, through Science and Health and the beautiful hymn, had accomplished the healing work.’<sup>1082</sup>

By the early-20<sup>th</sup> century, the Christian Science hymn tradition bore a striking resemblance to Methodism. The Church of Christ Scientist published hymnals, hymn concordances, and a hymnal commentary, an array of hymnological resources almost exclusive to Methodism. The *Christian Science Hymnal Concordance and General Index* was published in 1926 and *Hymnal Notes*, using some of the best bibliographic resources available at the time (including Julian’s *Dictionary of Hymnology*, Frank J. Metcalf’s *American Writers and Compilers of Sacred Music* and *Church Music* by Edmond S. Lorenz) was published in 1933. Despite the use of such resources, *Hymnal Notes* defaulted to a hagiographical style when treating the hymns of Mary Baker Eddy. Acclaimed worthy of prestigious tunes Eddy’s hymn *Brood o’er us with Thy sheltr’ing wing* was set to Bach’s *Gottlob*. As the tune did not perfectly align with the

<sup>1080</sup> Braden, ‘Organized Religion in the United States’, p. 55.

<sup>1081</sup> The 1910 edition of the *Christian Science Hymnal* omitted two of Mary Baker Eddy’s hymns, *Brood o’er us with Thy sheltr’ing wing* and *It matters not what be thy lot*. They were re-inserted in the 1932 edition.

<sup>1082</sup> Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (Boston, Massachusetts: The Christian Science Board of Directors, 2000) p. 620.

lyrics, Bach's tune, rather than Eddy's text, was 'slightly altered'<sup>1083</sup> by 'the omission of one or two repeated notes'.<sup>1084</sup>

Twain's *Christian Science*, a critical review of Mary Baker Eddy's organization, provided a unique commentary on the hymnal.

Mrs. Eddy has contributed the words of three of the hymns in the Hymnal. Two of them appear in it six times altogether, each of them being set to three original forms of musical anguish. Mrs. Eddy, always thoughtful, has promulgated a By-law requiring the singing of one of her three hymns in the Mother Church 'as often as once each month.' It is a good idea. A congregation could get tired of even Mrs. Eddy's muse in the course of time, without the cordializing incentive of compulsion.<sup>1085</sup>

Twain exposed other idiosyncrasies of Eddy's hymn legislation, including the By-laws 'stopping the salary' of any soloist who neglected or refused to sing one of Eddy's songs on the minimum monthly basis, and legislating that Christian Scientists 'must sing the hymns and prayers provided by her, [using] no others in the services, except by her permission.'<sup>1086</sup>

High estimation of hymns in general continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In a public lecture, Rev. Andrew J. Graham attested to the prominence of songs in Christian Science.

Probably there is no way in which Christian Scientists show their appreciation of goodness wherever manifested more than in the songs which they sing at their religious services and in their homes.<sup>1087</sup>

Similarly, Charles E. Jarvis presented a lecture on the person of Christ as 'Truth' and the revelation of man, illustrating by way of the Christian Science hymn *Eternal Mind the Potter is*.

It is this same Christ, Truth, which unfolds in our consciousness and enables us to recognize God as the author of man's being. When this revelation comes to us and we are transformed by the renewing of the mind, the fear, sickness, pain, sin, sorrow, and discouragement which we have hugged in our bosoms

<sup>1083</sup> *Christian Science Hymnal*, (Boston, Massachusetts: The Christian Science Board of Directors, 1932). Hymn no. 32.

<sup>1084</sup> Maria Louise Baum, *Hymnal Notes. Being Brief Studies of the Hymns and Hymn Tunes, the Poets and Composers Represented in the Christian Science Hymnal* (Boston, Massachusetts: The Christian Science Publishing Society, 1933). Hymn no. 32.

<sup>1085</sup> Mark Twain, *Christian Science* (New York, Toronto and London: Greystone Press, 1907) p. 119.

<sup>1086</sup> *Ibid.* p. 164.

<sup>1087</sup> 'Christian Science Pastor Explains Church Teachings', *Charleston Gazette*, Sunday 19 December 1926 p. 3.



begin to melt away as mist before the morning sunshine and we realize that, as one of our hymns say, 'Man does stand as God's own child.'<sup>1088</sup>

Universalist hymnody appears to have been influential among Christian Scientists. Rev. Andrew J. Graham cited the hymn *When God is Seen with Men to Dwell* by Hosea Ballou and put it on almost equal footing with the writings of Mary Baker Eddy.

Where outside of the writers of their own Leader [Mary Baker Eddy] can Christian Scientists find a song richer in their hopes and desires than the glorious Gospel declaration of the Universalist leader, Hosea Ballou [...]?'<sup>1089</sup>

Ballou's hymn was published in all versions of the *Christian Science Hymnal*. Though adapted by the editors of the *Christian Science Hymnal*, the only significant change<sup>1090</sup> is the first line, 'When God descends with men to dwell' (Universalist)<sup>1091</sup> is changed to 'When God is seen with men to dwell' (Christian Scientist).<sup>1092</sup> This edit comports with the Christian Science teaching that Christ was 'the spiritual idea, – the reflection of God', not the incarnation of God.<sup>1093</sup>

## 8.15 Christian Science Distinctives

Though the hymns written by Christian Scientists do not perpetuate some of the more spectacular teachings of Mary Baker Eddy, such as her conviction that she was the woman clothed with the Sun recorded in the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Apocalypse, they do contain concepts and phrases distinct to Christian Science.

The unique identity of Christian Science was fostered through hymn texts by use of the word 'science'. Though Freemason hymns also used the term 'science', their usage was largely descriptive of their activities, whereas Christian Scientists derived from this term a sense of self-understanding and doctrinal differentiation. Verse three of Edmund Beale Sargant's hymn, *Be Firm Ye Sentinels of Truth* associated the 'Science' of God with the mission of Christian Science.

<sup>1088</sup> 'Pictures Christian Science as Hope of Humanity', *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, Saturday 16 February 1929 p. 4.

<sup>1089</sup> 'Christian Science Pastor Explains Church Teachings', p. 3.

<sup>1090</sup> In verse 3, 'Lilies on parched ground shall grow' (Universalist) is altered to read 'On parched ground the lilies grow' (Christian Science). Otherwise, the *Christian Science Hymnal* omits stanzas two and five.

<sup>1091</sup> Adams and Chapin, *Hymns for Christian Devotion Especially Adapted to the Universalist Denomination*. Hymn no. 289.

<sup>1092</sup> *Christian Science Hymnal*. Hymn no. 384.

<sup>1093</sup> Eddy, p. 333. Early Universalism affirmed the incarnation, though the fullness of the Deity in Jesus went through a 'theological reconstruction' later in the century.

With healing in his wings he comes  
 God's messenger of love  
 'Tis yours to sound the trumpet call  
 His Science yours to prove<sup>1094</sup>

Florence L. Heywood's hymn, *Breaking Through the Clouds of Darkness* parsed  
 Christian Science as a distinctive gospel.

Breaking through the clouds of darkness  
 Black with error, doubt, and fear  
 Lighting up each somber shadow  
 With a radiance soft and clear  
 Filling every heart with gladness  
 That its holy power feels  
 Comes the Christian Science gospel  
 Sin it kills and grief it heals<sup>1095</sup>

Another hymn identified 'Science' as 'the angel with the flaming sword', admired as  
 that which 'fulfills all prophecy'.<sup>1096</sup>

Bringing harsh criticism against Christian Science in his work *The Non-sense of  
 Christian Science*, Albert Clarke Wyckoff charged Eddy with the deliberate  
 elimination of the Crucifixion, Atonement, and Resurrection, substituting Jesus' name  
 used in Protestant hymnody for 'some indefinite, general word, like God or Lord'.<sup>1097</sup>  
 Wyckoff believed there to be only one reason for her editing: 'These hymns give  
 expression to His Lordship and Deity, and this she will not sanction.'<sup>1098</sup>

But Wyckoff may have overstated the case. While divinity was often generalized,  
 Jesus was not always substituted out of Protestant hymn texts nor slighted in Christian  
 Science hymns. Of special note, the *Christian Science Hymnal* included without  
 alteration *I Love to Tell the Story*, one of the highest ranked American gospel hymns  
 on Marini's list.<sup>1099</sup> While blood atonement and crucifixion are absent, the  
 resurrection is attested in Christian Science hymns.

Hid with Christ in God, O gladness  
 O the meekness and the might  
 When the risen Christ has lifted  
 All our thoughts into the light<sup>1100</sup>

<sup>1094</sup> *Christian Science Hymnal*. Hymn no. 17.

<sup>1095</sup> *Ibid.* Hymn no. 29.

<sup>1096</sup> *Ibid.* Hymn no. 297.

<sup>1097</sup> Albert Clarke Wyckoff, *The Non-Sense of Christian Science* (New York: Fleming H. Revell  
 Company, 1921) p. 104.

<sup>1098</sup> *Ibid.* p. 105.

<sup>1099</sup> *I Love to Tell the Story* is ranked ahead of *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*, *Pass Me Not O Gentle  
 Savior* and *The Old Rugged Cross*.

<sup>1100</sup> *Christian Science Hymnal*. Hymn no. 370.

When we turn from earth to Spirit  
 And from self have won release  
 Then we see the risen Saviour  
 Then we know his promised peace<sup>1101</sup>

One of the dominant terms used in the Christian Science Hymnal is 'Truth', occurring almost 200 times and only second in frequency to the term 'God'. Often 'Truth' was used to denote the person of Jesus: 'When we touch Truth's healing garment', 'Christ, the Truth, for all mankind', and 'Christ, the Truth, foundation sure'. At other times, 'Truth' is used in a more abstract sense: 'When all to Truth must come', 'Give us, O Truth, Thou light of men', and 'One Truth unchanged while ages run'.

Christian Science hymns employed several unique distinctive terms. Mary Baker Eddy introduced 'God-Idea' in her hymn *Christmas Morn.*

'The God-idea, Life-encrowned  
 The Bethlehem babe –

Beloved, replete, by flesh embound –  
 Was but thy shade<sup>1102</sup>

Reflecting the Christian Science name for Deity, Christian Science hymnwriters used the term 'Father-Mother God'.

O Father-Mother God, whose plan  
 Hath given dominion unto man  
 In Thine own image we may see  
 Man pure and upright, whole and free<sup>1103</sup>

O God, our Father-Mother, Love  
 Purge Thou our hearts from sin  
 That in Thy radiancy divine  
 We may with eyes undimmed define  
 Thy will, reality<sup>1104</sup>

Some hymns incorporated numerous distinctives of Christian Science. *O Jesus, Our Dear Master* is a prime example making reference to the Science of Christ, revelation, healing power, and the eradication of sin and pain, God as Father-Mother, the concept of Truth, and the Kingdom of God within each person.

O Jesus, our dear Master  
 Thy works, now understood  
 Reveal their full effulgence  
 Through love and brotherhood

<sup>1101</sup> Ibid. Hymn no. 171, 413.

<sup>1102</sup> Ibid. Hymn no. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 28.

<sup>1103</sup> Ibid. Hymn no. 12, 13.

<sup>1104</sup> Ibid. Hymn no. 206, 428.

Today Christ's precious Science  
 Thy healing power makes plain  
 With joy may all obey thee  
 And cast out sin and pain

The Christ, eternal manhood  
 As God's own Son beloved  
 A tender ever-presence  
 Within each heart is proved  
 O God, our Father-Mother  
 Thy name we see expressed  
 By man, who in Thy Science  
 Is perfect, holy, blessed

O Science, God-sent message  
 To tired humanity  
 Thou art Love's revelation  
 Of Truth that makes us free  
 Thy kingdom, God, within us  
 Shows forth Love's sweet control  
 God's idea, man, rejoices  
 He knows the reign of Soul<sup>1105</sup>

This comprehensive expression of Christian Science distinctives (contained in a single hymn) demonstrates the vital theological role of hymns in Christian Science.

## 8.16 Jehovah's Witnesses

The Jehovah's Witnesses trace their history to Charles Taze Russell. An active writer, Russell published various articles for *The Watchtower* and multiple monographs. In 1881 he formed Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society. The society was incorporated in 1884 and later renamed the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society in 1896, though the movement functioned as the International Bible Students Association until 1916 when the organization was renamed Jehovah's Witnesses after Russell's death.<sup>1106</sup>

Braden classified Jehovah's Witnesses as a non-denominational sect, or as a sect with new associations.<sup>1107</sup> J. Gordon Melton who grouped the primary religious bodies in

<sup>1105</sup> Ibid. Hymn no. 221.

<sup>1106</sup> *Jehovah's Witnesses: Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, (Brooklyn, New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1993) p. 229.

<sup>1107</sup> Braden, 'Organized Religion in the United States', p. 55.

the United States into nineteen families, classified the Jehovah's Witnesses as 'a primary body within the Adventist family'.<sup>1108</sup>

Charles Taze Russell was recognized for his comprehensive examination of the Christian Scriptures and scrutiny of ecclesiastical dogma. Lesser known, Russell also turned his attention to Protestant hymnody. On one hand, Russell found theological value in hymnody, employing hymns to illustrate his biblical expositions. He used hymns that were published by the Dawn Bible Students Association such as *Give Strength Blest Savior*, *The Glory of the Lord* and *A Little Light*, as well as familiar hymns by Watts, Bliss, Stennett, and Keble. On the other hand, Russell criticized certain popular Protestant hymns. Russell charged Cowper's *O For a Closer Walk with God* with facilitating a fickle relationship with God.

Others, more full of assurance than knowledge, claim that they have the witness of the Holy Spirit, and refer to their happy *feelings* as the evidence. But soon [sic] or later such, if candid, must confess that the 'witness' they rely on is a most unsatisfactory one: it fails them in the times of greatest need. When all men speak well of them, when health is favorable, when they are financially prosperous, when friends are numerous, they feel happy; but in proportion as some or all of these conditions are reversed they feel unhappy: they lose what they suppose was the 'witness of the Spirit,' and cry in anguish of soul: 'Where is the blessedness I knew, When first I found the Lord?'<sup>1109</sup>

Russell believed that Cowper's hymn appealed to people who were 'deceived and misled by their feelings'.<sup>1110</sup> *Hymns of Millennial Dawn* included *O For a Closer Walk with God* but, in accordance with Russell's critique, omitted the verse of contention. Russell included Newton in his censure of Protestant theology, judging the hymn *'Tis a Point I Long to Know* a 'misapprehension of the doctrine of election.'<sup>1111</sup>

Russell concluded that 'hymn-book theology' of Protestantism was associated with philosophy, a discipline that Jehovah's Witnesses opposed as a pagan influence in

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<sup>1108</sup> J. Gordon Melton, *Jehovah's Witnesses. The Millenarian World of the Watch Tower*, ed. J. Gordon Melton (Cults and Nonconventional Religious Groups; New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992) p. 11.

<sup>1109</sup> Charles Taze Russell, *The Atonement between God and Man* (Clawson, MI: Oakland County Bible Students, 2000) p. 226, 227.

<sup>1110</sup> *Ibid.* p. 227.

<sup>1111</sup> *Ibid.*

Christianity. In his critique of Protestant doctrine of the immortality of the soul, Russell may have possibly coined the term ‘hymn-book theology’.<sup>1112</sup>

It is quite in harmony with the foregoing [‘The Soul That Sinneth, It Shall Die’], but quite out of harmony with the usual thought on the subject, that we find the Scriptures declaring repeatedly the death of the soul, which human philosophy and hymn-book theology most emphatically declare to be indestructible.<sup>1113</sup>

## 8.17 Jehovah’s Witnesses Distinctives

The first hymnal of the International Bible Students Association was entitled *Hymns of Millennial Dawn*. Hymns printed by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society featured, at least to a limited degree, doctrinal distinctives that came to be associated with Russellites or Jehovah’s Witnesses. Doctrines prominent to the Jehovah’s Witnesses included use of the Divine name, anti-Trinitarianism, Jesus as a created being, denunciation of hell, and opposition to blood atonement and the immortality of the soul. Their millennial emphasis was similar to the millenarianism common among Adventist groups, though the belief that ‘Redemption was not finished on Calvary [but] awaits completion in the millennial age’, was unique to Russell.<sup>1114</sup>

Though the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society did not publish the New World Translation of the Greek Christian Scriptures until 1950, in which ‘Jehovah’ was used in place of ‘Lord’, Charles Taze Russell had many years earlier employed ‘Jehovah’ as the divine Name based largely on Isaiah 42:8 (I am Jehovah: That is my name).<sup>1115</sup>

In early Jehovah’s Witnesses hymnody, the name ‘Jehovah’ is used primarily, though not exclusively.

See the dead risen from land and from ocean;  
Praise to Jehovah ascending on high;  
Fall’n are the engines of war and commotion;  
Shouts of salvation are rending the sky.<sup>1116</sup>

Hail to the Lord’s Anointed,  
Jehovah’s blessed Son!

<sup>1112</sup> Various authors used the term ‘hymn-book theology’ following Russell, such as Ivan Howland Benedict in *The Great Problem* (1911), the Unity School of Christianity in *Unity* (1915), and Alfred Emanuel Smith in *New Outlook* (1935).

<sup>1113</sup> Russell, p. 328.

<sup>1114</sup> J. L. Neve, *Churches and Sects of Christendom* (Burlington, Iowa: The Lutheran Literary Board, 1940) p. 583.

<sup>1115</sup> Russell, p. 41.

<sup>1116</sup> *Hymns of Millennial Dawn*, (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1909) p. 69.

Hail, in the time appointed,  
His reign on earth begun!<sup>1117</sup>

Though storms his face obscure,  
And dangers threaten loud,  
Jehovah's covenant is sure,  
His bow is in the cloud.<sup>1118</sup>

To the work! to the work! there is labor for all;  
Soon the kingdom of darkness and error shall fall,  
And the name of Jehovah exalted shall be  
In the loud-swelling chorus, Salvation is free!<sup>1119</sup>

Reminiscent of the Arian Christological view, Charles Taze Russell associated 'the Word' (Gospel of John) with 'Wisdom' (Proverbs).

The Logos, the beginning of the creation of God, called also by Isaiah the Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, etc. (Isa. 9:6), we find described by Solomon, and represented under the name Wisdom, yet with all the details which harmonize the statement with the account given by John the Evangelist (John 1:1, 18).[.]<sup>1120</sup>

According to Russell's argument, Paul's reference in *Colossians* to Jesus as the 'firstborn' implied that Jesus was a created being in the same way that 'Wisdom' was, (described as 'the beginning of God's works in Proverbs 8). Similar to Arius' hymn *The Unbegun* (page 23) that cast God as the only 'Unbegun who made the Son' (therefore Jesus as 'begun' and thus not pre-existent), Jehovah's Witnesses wrote hymnody to teach that Jesus was 'the Firstborn' (interpreted as 'first created'). The hymn *A Little Flock* used the designation 'Firstborn' and *Divine Wisdom* incorporated the association of Christ with 'Wisdom'.

A little flock, so calls he thee;  
Church of the Firstborn, hear!  
Be not ashamed to own the name;  
It is no name of fear.<sup>1121</sup>

Happy the man who learns to trace  
The leadings of Jehovah's grace;  
By wisdom coming from above,  
He reads and learns that God is love.  
Wisdom divine! who tells the price  
Of wisdom's costly merchandise?  
Wisdom to silver we prefer,  
And gold is dross compared to her.

<sup>1117</sup> Ibid. p. 70.

<sup>1118</sup> Ibid. p. 217.

<sup>1119</sup> Ibid. p. 295.

<sup>1120</sup> Russell, p. 93.

<sup>1121</sup> *Hymns of Millennial Dawn*, p. 10.

Her hands are filled with length of days,  
 True riches and immortal praise;  
 Her ways are ways of pleasantness,  
 And all her paths lead unto peace.  
 Happy the man who wisdom gains;  
 Thrice happy who his guest retains;  
 He owns, and shall forever own,  
 Wisdom and Christ are truly one.<sup>1122</sup>

The hymn *Rest With God*, used the terminology ‘a God’, but without the direct teaching that Christ (as the Word) was a lesser god than Jehovah. The doctrine of Christ as a ‘lesser god’ was articulated more clearly with the 1961 New World Translation. The translation committee rendered John 1:1b, ‘and the Word was a god.’<sup>1123</sup>

Hell, either figuratively or literally, is absent from *Hymns of Millennial Dawn*. Blood atonement, however, is mentioned.

A little flock, so calls he thee;  
 Who bought thee with his blood;  
 A little flock disowned of men,  
 But owned and loved of God.<sup>1124</sup>

Christ Jesus is mighty to save,  
 And all his salvation may know  
 On his merit I lean, and his blood makes me clean,  
 Yes, his blood has wash'd whiter than snow.<sup>1125</sup>

While immortality was celebrated in their hymns, Jehovah’s Witnesses denounced the view of the soul’s inherent immortality. *Forever with the Lord* and *The Glorious Day* depicted that humans would be endowed with immortality, the latter expressing the belief that Jehovah’s Witnesses will eventually reign over an earthly paradise.

‘Forever with the Lord!’  
 Amen, so let it be!  
 Life from the dead is in that word,  
 ’Tis, immortality.<sup>1126</sup>

The harvest of the earth is ripe;  
 The dead who sleep in Christ awake  
 In likeness of their Lord.  
 To life immortal they arise,

<sup>1122</sup> Ibid. p. 74.

<sup>1123</sup> *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, (Brooklyn, New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1961) p. John 1:1.

<sup>1124</sup> *Hymns of Millennial Dawn*, p. 10.

<sup>1125</sup> *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, p. 13.

<sup>1126</sup> Ibid. p. 53.



Inheritors of Paradise,  
 Where death finds no abode.  
 Stupendous scene! Those men of old,  
 Prophets who have the story told  
 Of this transcendent day;  
 The patriarchs, apostles, too,  
 Who lived and died with this in view,  
 In glorious array.  
 Now entered into their reward,  
 Those faithful servants of the Lord  
 Have not served him in vain;  
 A band of heaven's royalty,  
 In glory and in majesty,  
 O'er all the earth they reign.<sup>1127</sup>

### 8.18 Use of Protestant Hymnody by Marginalized Groups

After tabulating the use of Protestant hymns by marginalized groups (referenced from Marini's list) a composite list of dominant hymns can be determined. This list indicates the Protestant hymns that were valued in common by marginalized groups.<sup>1128</sup> The most printed hymn by marginalized groups is *From all that Dwell Below the Skies*, printed by seven of the eight groups. *Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah* follows closely with six printings. Two hymns were printed by five groups: *Joy to the World* and *Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken*. The hymns, *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name*, *Praise God, from Whom all Blessings Flow*, *Come Ye Disconsolate* and *God Moves in a Mysterious Way* were included by four groups.<sup>1129</sup> Of these top-ranked hymns printed by marginalized groups, only the Jehovah's Witnesses printed all eight. Mormons included seven, Universalists and Unitarians six, Freemasons and Christian Scientists five, and Spiritualists two. Shakers did not print any Protestant hymns.

In addition, the number of American Protestant hymns printed by each group can be measured using the following guide: 1-20 = low; 21-40 = low-moderate; 41-60 = moderate; 61-80 = high moderate; 81-100 = high. Based on this guide, Spiritualist usage was low (8); Freemasonry (24), Unitarians (20) and Christian Science (26) were low-moderate in usage; Mormons (67) and Universalists (77) register as high-moderate; and Jehovah's Witnesses ranked high (87).<sup>1130</sup>

<sup>1127</sup> Ibid. p. 276.

<sup>1128</sup> See Appendix 14: The Top Hymns in Hymnals of Marginalized Groups.

<sup>1129</sup> These hymns are all included by Marini and are ranked 34, 7, 11, 22, 1, 52, 30 and 33 respectively.

<sup>1130</sup> Comparatively, representative Protestant hymnals indicate a range from 61 to 180, i.e. 61-80 = low; 81-100 = low-moderate; 101-120 = moderate; 121-140 = high moderate; 141-160 = very high. For

## 8.19 Conclusion

- The use of hymns by marginalized groups contributes to our understanding of the role of hymns in American Protestantism. Each of these groups had an interest in Protestantism and hymns, identifying themselves in some way with Protestantism and borrowing from or emulating its hymnody. But how did hymns operate outside of their mainstream Protestant context? In some cases, marginalized groups appear to have placed a higher premium on hymns than did mainstream Protestants. In most cases, marginalized groups printed Protestant hymns in their sectarian hymnals. In almost all cases, hymns of marginalized groups were patterned after the hymnody of American Protestantism. In all cases, hymns of marginalized groups were integral to their doctrinal distinctives.

American Freemasonry held in common with Protestantism the use of hymnody in its Lodge ceremonies and services, including Protestant hymns in the funeral ceremony. In some instances, Masonic monitors recommended that hymns substitute for authorized Bible readings. Though Freemasons wrote their own hymns, they continued to incorporate a considerable number of dominant hymns.

In his anti-Masonic writing, Preuss appealed to Freemason hymns to argue that Freemasonry was a religion despite claims by Mackey and Pike to the contrary. For Preuss' argument to be effective, his use of hymns must have resonated with Freemasons. In other words, 'the hymn' could not have been used as a weapon by Preuss had it not been authoritative to both parties. Hymn lyrics carried, at large, doctrines and beliefs distinctive to the Fraternity. This indicates the theological authority invested in hymnody by American Freemasonry.

Given its Quietist roots, the adoption of hymns by Shakers is highly significant. Shakerism used hymns at the centre of its worship expression, its doctrines and beliefs thoroughly embedded in its hymnody, thus indicating the theological authority invested in hymnody by Shakers. Andrews, Haskett, and White held a common view that Shaker hymnody contained the whole of Shaker doctrine. To Andrews, hymns

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example, a representative Baptist hymnal contained 63 hymns from Marini's list of 266, a representative Presbyterian hymnal contained 116 hymns, and a representative Free Methodist hymnal contained 162 hymns, etc. However, the comparison is not entirely equitable as hymnals of marginalized groups were smaller, usually including between 300 and 500 hymns. In contrast, some Protestant hymnals exceeded 700 hymns.

were informative of the sect; to Haskett, hymns revealed its heresy; to White, nothing expressed Shaker theology better than its hymns.

*A People Called Christians*, a Shaker hymn published widely in Protestant hymnals, suggests that numerous Protestant denominations considered Shakers a Christian tradition. Had Shakerism been considered a heresy, its use of the title 'Christian' would have seemed a misfit and self-appointment to mainstream Protestants. In such a case, Baptists and Methodists would have been less likely to print a Shaker hymn.

Reaction to the hymnal compiled by Ballou and Kneeland showed a high level of attachment to Protestant hymnody among Universalists. The hymnal compiled by Ballou and Kneeland proved unpopular and was rejected by Universalist laity. This may indicate that Universalists were more willing to compromise doctrinal distinctives in their hymnal than give up entirely their cherished Protestant hymns. In any event, Ballou and Kneeland clearly underestimated the level of attachment that hymns commanded. Twenty years after the Ballou-Kneeland hymnal, Ballou partnered with Edward Turner in compiling a new collection, providing Universalists a hymnal that included evangelical hymns.

To Unitarians, hymnody was a source of pride for its poetry and theology. Unitarian hymns were a proven commodity among American Protestantism and Unitarians took pride in the quality of their contribution to hymnody, Howe's role in the 1893 World Parliament of Religions is a testament to their extensive impact. Therein lies the difference between Unitarianism and virtually every other religious sect in America – the Unitarians had a rich collection of hymns widely published by evangelicals. This affiliation through hymnody denied any theologian the right to cast Unitarianism outside of the Protestant tradition. Only after the 1961 merger with Universalists did Unitarians marginalize themselves outside of the Protestant fold, though Protestants would still retain several pre-merger hymns.

Unitarian theologians voiced their aversion to 'blood theology', disowning Cowper's *There is a Fountain Filled with Blood*. But while Cowper was dispensable, Watts was not. Reconstructing Watts' spiritual biography through his hymnic theology, Unitarians argued that Watts converted to Unitarianism, allowing them a claim to his post-atonement enlightenment as a denominational trophy. Aversion to Cowper and

attraction to Watts demonstrates that, to 19<sup>th</sup>-century American Unitarians, hymnody and theology were inextricably linked.

While Mormons supplanted the Bible with the *Book of Mormon*, replaced apostolic succession with the Prophet's office, and reinvented the sacrament of baptism to include baptism for the dead, it did not – perhaps because it could not – supplant, replace, or reinvent Protestant hymnody. Hymns were an independent and authoritative source of truth, and the task of compiling a hymnal of sacred hymns was entrusted through prophetic revelation to Emma exclusively. This honor was highly coveted, verified by Brigham Young's attempt to usurp Emma's authority.

Though the leadership succession was the main crisis in early Mormonism, Young's earlier quest for control of Mormon hymnody is significant. Young's challenge to Emma's authority while Joseph was still alive indicates that Young took a high measure of risk, suggesting significant value assigned to Emma's mantle. The perpetuation of *The Manchester Hymnal* among Utah Mormons is strong evidence that Young assigned it with canonical value. Also, it is unimaginable that Young could have established a dynamic theocracy in Utah without both the *Book of Mormon* and his prized *Manchester Hymnal*. Compiled by two leading Mormon missionaries (Pratt and Taylor) both of whom later served in the office of Prophet-President, the authority of *The Manchester Hymnal* was uncontested by Utah Mormons until it was replaced with a modern version in 1927.

Joseph Smith's death as 'martyrdom' is among the most cherished memories in Mormon history. In the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, *A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief* became the theme of Smith's assassination and was used to reconstruct Smith's murder as an act of martyrdom. This hymn was used in apologetics, promoted in Sunday School lessons, and affixed to the Mormon psyche as the persecuted people of God.

Kidder's polemical response to Mormon hymnody was entirely theological. Kidder used hymns as central to the faith and praxis of Mormons to 'prove' that Mormon doctrine was functionally heretical. Like Preuss (against Freemasonry), hymns served Kidder as a weapon of considerable force. Similarly, the exposure of anti-Federalism in Mormonism by the *New York Evening Post* was based on its hymn lyrics. Thus,

outsiders believed that Mormon doctrine was shaped and perpetuated through its hymnody.

The doctrine of the Intermediate State was once again a central focus, this time among Spiritualists. Communication with spirits of the deceased its foundational doctrine, Spiritualism ensured its emphasis in hymnody – even dedicating an entire hymnal to treat the subject. And while these hymns articulated theology for Spiritualists, they played a pivotal role in faith and praxis by serving to energize séances and circles. Indeed, the impact of hymns on ‘circle unity’ was considered indispensable, the shaking table commonly associated with the rhythm and volume of hymn singing. As hymns served to facilitate unity for rituals, Spiritualists viewed hymns as a means to an end. In contrast, Spiritualists charged Protestants with elitism and divisiveness in which hymns were the end.

From the outset hymns were integral in Christian Science worship with Mary Baker Eddy contributing a number of original hymns, the only case of a founder who was also a hymn writer. With uncontested authority, Eddy legislated usage of her hymns, indicating the high value placed upon hymns by Eddy. Though Christian Science hymns did not mention Eddy’s apocalyptic identity, Christian Science hymns contained the epitome of Christian Science teaching. Following Eddy’s supplanting of the Bible with her own literature, her hymns elevated the Christian Science hymnal to canonical status.

If any of the marginalized groups used hymns in order to pose as Protestant, Christian Science would be a prime suspect. Christian Science published an authorized hymnal with commentary and concordance. This collection of hymnological resources was akin to Methodism, arguably the most dominant hymn tradition in America. One could fairly conclude that Christian Science sought a measure of credibility by this association.

At first affiliated with a branch of Adventism, it is not surprising that Charles Taze Russell used hymns within his theological writings in the model of Protestant theologians, hymns serving to demonstrate both heresy and orthodoxy. Russell’s use of the term ‘hymn-book theology’ verifies that hymnic theology was substantive to theological discourse of the period. *Hymns of Millennial Dawn*, a hymnal containing a high proportion of Protestant hymnody, bolstered Russell’s interest in hymns early on

in his ministry. *Hymns of Millennial Dawn* contained the central teachings of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society expressed in both adapted Protestant hymns and their own sectarian hymns.

The high usage of Protestant hymns, though sometimes edited beyond recognition, indicated an unusual attachment to Protestantism. But the depth of this bond would be contrasted with entire detachment from Protestant hymnody by the early-19<sup>th</sup> century. Though Jehovah's Witnesses used Protestant hymnody through its formative years, by 1928, interest in hymnody declined. The years 1938-1944 were a period of 'fermata', a holding pattern when hymn singing was discouraged during congregational meetings. A resurgent interest in hymnody culminated in the publication of the 1944 *Kingdom Service Songbook* followed, in 1961, by the *New World Translation of the Scriptures*. These two publications represented resources that promoted and protected the exclusive theological orientation of Jehovah's Witnesses and their move to disaffiliate from Protestantism.

Examining the 'cultural power' of the Bible, Stephen J. Stein tracked key developments in Bible translation, paraphrase and revision. Using Kendall W. Folkert's categorization of Canon I (vectoring with ritual, myth or symbol) and Canon II (a sacred text, sufficient to itself), Stein determined that texts such as Joseph Smith's *Book of Mormon* and Mary Baker Eddy's *Science and Health with a Key to the Scriptures* were both type II.<sup>1131</sup> Further, most 19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century Bible revisions (in America) were prompted by 'the targumizing impulse' the practice of interpreting and expanding the biblical text.<sup>1132</sup> Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses emerged with the most successful bibles of this type, *The Book of Mormon*<sup>1133</sup> and *The New World Translation* respectively. Both of these works are probably revisions of the King James Bible rather than actual translations from original languages, as neither Joseph Smith nor the Watch Tower society had demonstrable academic know-how to translate from the original languages. Revisionism and 'the targumizing impulse' were also applied directly to hymnody. Mormonism went directly to work on a sacred hymnal and Jehovah's Witnesses revised American Protestant hymnody half a century before beginning their distinct Bible translations. In the case of Jehovah's Witnesses, they learned doctrinal revisionism via hymn editing many years

<sup>1131</sup> Stephen J. Stein, 'America's Bible: Canon, Commentary, and Community', *Church History*, 64/2 (June 1995), 169-184 p. 176-178.

<sup>1132</sup> Ibid. p. 172.

<sup>1133</sup> Joseph Smith's translation of the Bible was less successful.

before they revised the Bible; major eschatological and soteriological edits of Watts predating ‘reclamation of the Tetragrammaton’ for the New Testament. Hymnic revision was a pioneering work through which Jehovah’s Witnesses made their doctrinal distinctives known.<sup>1134</sup>

A number of interesting observations can be drawn from Braden’s categories. Humanistic sects tended toward liberalism, emphasized poetic eloquence, and were especially critical of blood atonement and victim sacrifice. This was evident in views expressed by Universalist and Unitarian writers and hymn compilers. The ‘prophet-founder’ sects used hymns more forcibly than other sects. Shakers, Mormons, and Christian Scientists treated hymnody as essential and functionally canonical. The theocratic structure of Mormonism is seen in its hymnody, the hymn compiler a privileged position.

The power of hymns was used as ‘occultic device’. Among Shakers and Spiritualists, angels and deceased spirits inspired hymn writers to write new songs. In Spiritualism, hymns unified séance participants, usually manifest in the table shaking. Spiritualists and Mormons shared a fascination with angels, both emphasizing communication with angels and deceased spirits.

Shakers and Mormons shared an interest in the American Indian. As Shakerism predated Mormonism by more than fifty years and, given the close proximity of the New York colonies Watervliet and New Lebanon to Palmyra, it is highly unlikely that Joseph Smith could have escaped the regional Shaker influence. Indeed, Smith’s 1831 revelation to correct the false teachings of Shakers – especially their commitment to celibacy<sup>1135</sup> – establishes this beyond any doubt. But Shakers and Mormons wrote ‘Indian songs’ for very different theological purposes. To the Shaker, interaction with American Indians was evidence of the Shaker ministry that was a respecter of no ethnicity, race, culture, or nation. To Mormons, interaction with American Indians was evidence of Mormon interest in them as ancestors of Israel and as warriors who would assist the Mormons in conquering the God-less nation of America.<sup>1136</sup> With

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<sup>1134</sup> In the case of Bible revisionism (a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century endeavor) they exploited heavily Benjamin Wilson’s 1864 *Emphatic Diaglott*, a translation of the Greek New Testament.

<sup>1135</sup> *The Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Containing Revelations Given to Joseph Smith, the Prophet*, p. 49:15.

<sup>1136</sup> The most notorious battle in which Mormons used Indian allies was the Mountain Meadows Massacre in 1857. The Mormon militia disguised themselves as Paiute Indians and ambushed 120 settlers traveling to California. Mormons blamed the Indians for the massacre, but testimonies of

the Indian Removal Act,<sup>1137</sup> resulting in the forced migration of Indian tribes to move west of the Missouri River, Mormons became more engaged with Indian interests.

In sum, the above groups in some way identified themselves with the Christian tradition, either in a direct or indirect way. Obviously a group's use of Protestant hymns does not make that group Protestant, any more than a group's use of the Roman Missal would qualify a group to be Catholic, and, while it is tempting to consider Durkheim's concepts of 'legitimation' and 'collective consciousness', such an analysis would require speaking on behalf of a group's intentionality. Regardless of the manner or means or affiliation with Christianity, each group reflected a direct influence from Protestantism. This influence, while varied, always involved hymnody; hymns used by these groups were in all cases central to their activities and in almost all cases functioned alongside the Bible or in its replacement. While these groups varied in their theological self-understanding, hymns played a key role in both faith and praxis. Examining the doctrinal distinctives of marginalized groups through their hymnody shows the theological value that each group assigned to the hymnal.

In chapters six through eight I have examined three representative case studies including children's hymnody, African American spirituals and improvised hymns, and the hymnals of marginalized groups. Sunday school aligned with Ahlstrom's commentary on theology in America and the treatment on African American spirituals and improvised hymns aligned with Noll's emphasis upon the rise of African American Protestantism 1825-1900. In the case of marginalized groups, these were usually vibrant movements whose intersection with American Protestant hymnody has been sorely neglected (other than minimal treatments of Unitarians and Mormons). Through the examination of these three groups I have demonstrated the role of hymns. From here I will explore the usage of hymns in two representative areas of praxis: conversion and missions.

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confessors revealed that Mormon militia promised the settlers safety through the meadows if the settlers would disarm themselves. The settlers complied and, once disarmed, the Mormon militia with Indian allies slaughtered them.

<sup>1137</sup> The Indian Removal Act 1830 was given under President Andrew Jackson.



## Chapter Nine: Hymns and Conversionism

In this chapter, I will explore the role of hymns in conversionism. First, I will discuss the rise of experiential conversionism, and the precipitating role of song leaders and hymns. Second, I will consider the *lex orandi lex credendi* axiom applied to conversion hymns, examine biblical sources for hymns, and explore the soteriological efficacy of hymns. Finally, I will demonstrate the salvific interpretation of Revelation 3:20 in transactional salvation, and the role of hymnody in shaping 'evangelistic theology'. In my analysis I will use a cross-section of hymns, giving special attention to Fanny Crosby's hymnody.

### 9.1 Introduction

The article 'The Power of a Hymn to Convert Souls' took its title from an 'eminent Divine' who said, 'There is power in a hymn to convert souls.'<sup>1138</sup> The writer, Mrs. N. F. Mossell, described a man who had 'strayed from the path of righteousness' but, after the death of his parents, 'was reminded of a hymn from his childhood'. *Behold a Stranger at the Door*<sup>1139</sup> revived compelling images of 'the closed door and the patient Saviour' and the man could not help but wonder 'at the love that kept this one friend knocking again and again at the door of our hearts.'<sup>1140</sup> Mossell contended,

Under the power of these hymns many were truly convicted and converted and the truth of the thought "There is power in a hymn to convert souls," has been well attested. [...] a grand old hymn may break the stony heart and melt it to receive the "shower of blessing," and a soul may see the truth and come out into the light.<sup>1141</sup>

The 'eminent Divine' went unidentified, but the tone matches that of Henry Ward Beecher who heartily endorsed the converting power of hymns.

If there is any here that have never been Christians, and have never praised Christ, yet who, at any point in this singing, have felt a movement in your hearts, as though you could say, 'O, if only I were a Christian!' let me tell you, don't wait to be a Christian; say it, and be one. There is many a man that could be converted by a hymn, blessed be God! If only he would let it carry him up.<sup>1142</sup>

<sup>1138</sup> N. F. Mossell, 'The Power of a Hymn to Convert Souls', *The Christian Recorder*, December 17 1885 p. 454.

<sup>1139</sup> *Behold a Stranger at the Door*, written by Rev. Joseph Grigg, shares 63<sup>rd</sup> place in Marini's list of hymns.

<sup>1140</sup> Mossell.

<sup>1141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1142</sup> 'America', *The Christian Miscellany*, 4/Second Series (July 1858), 209-224 p. 217. Beecher's ministry is featured in this article.

Though statements of biblical authority typically claimed the Bible as ‘the sole guide to salvation’, hymns, in functional equality to the Bible, prescribed the manner and process of conversion in transactional salvation. By the term ‘transactional salvation’ I refer to the offer-acceptance construct intrinsic to the offer by Christ to forgive, and the sinner’s acceptance of Christ’s forgiveness. In this exchange, Jesus requests entrance into the life of the sinner and, in positive response, Jesus is invited into the sinner’s heart. This sequence was based on Revelation 3:20, a text that depicts Jesus knocking at the door of the Laodicean Church. I will identify and investigate conversion hymns whose writers articulated their experience and understanding of conversion resulting in this theological construct. Several questions steer me in this endeavor. Did hymn writers, in expressing personal experiences, shape the expectations of converts and establish criteria to validate or standardize the conversion experience? When different hymn writers utilized the same biblical text, was there a trend toward uniformity of interpretation? If so, did that interpretation influence theology?

## **9.2 Rise of Experiential Conversionism**

Though there was general agreement on the Christ-centeredness of atonement, Protestants did not agree entirely on the nature of human beings and salvation. Differences among Protestant views included the nature of conversion, the human being’s capacity as an agent in salvation, the activity of God’s election (determinism), and free will. Calvinism and Arminianism demonstrate two divergent traditions. Calvinism calculated the human being as depraved, prescribing regenerative baptism of infants and catechism resulting in confirmation of faith. Arminianism calculated the capacity of the human being, accommodated both infant and adult baptism, and prescribed conviction resulting in conversion (while recognizing the potential of the human being to resist grace).

As conversionism became popular in American Protestantism, it is important to note that experientialism was generally acceptable across the mainstream denominations. Though there were theological divisions in American Protestantism, especially Calvinism vs. Arminianism, and Liberalism vs. Fundamentalism, the appreciation of experiential faith was a part of ‘ecumenical Protestant theology’ and, shared broadly, was expressed authoritatively in hymnody. Richard Lint identified the common ground between liberal and conservative factions through hymns (page 15). While the

two groups were adversarial in doctrinal matters, the experientialism promoted in 19<sup>th</sup> century and early-20<sup>th</sup> century hymnody appealed to their pragmatic roots.

In fact, the success of experiential conversionism became a central focus of the 1886 National Council of Congregational Churches. In his address to the NCCC, George F. Pentecost noted the success of other denominations in evangelism, especially the Baptists and Methodists, 'We number our converts by the thousand; they by the million.'<sup>1143</sup> Pentecost suggested that the decline in evangelism among Congregationalists had been due to the Congregationalist emphasis on 'pastoral theology' at the expense of 'evangelistic theology'.<sup>1144</sup> For Pentecost, Congregationalists had allowed the church to become an end in itself resulting in its detachment from society. Pentecost testified to the power of revivalism to bring 'all classes' together, 'singing from the same book', and reminded the council of the powerful ministry of D. L. Moody in which 'Christianity ha[d] held ascendancy over churchanity [sic].'<sup>1145</sup>

With the rise of 'evangelistic theology' and the burgeoning fascination with Heaven,<sup>1146</sup> the emphasis upon personal conversion reached zenith proportions. As the 18<sup>th</sup> century had witnessed the shift to personal responsibility in salvation, an emerging 'new birth' soteriology, and testimonial hymnody, the 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the dogmatization of personal culpability, the standardization of transactional salvation, and the emerging doctrinalization of conversionism in hymnody. The evangelistic thrust of 19<sup>th</sup>-century American Protestantism championed individual salvation, instantaneous-punctiliar conversion (vs. gradual-linear) and portrayed individuals as both culpable and capable. With free volition, each person was required to respond to God's invitation, setting the stage for soteriological hymns to be doubly effective: 1. Hymns were experiential (evoked emotions and expressed sentiment), and, 2. The emerging conversionism as experiential (birthed in revivalism) relied on hymns as a primary vehicle. The normative directive mandating personal transactional salvation came from hymns.

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<sup>1143</sup> George F. Pentecost, 'Evangelization: A Paper Read before the National Council of Congregationalist Churches', *The National Council of Congregational Churches Sixth Triennial Session* (Chicago: Congregational Sunday-School Publishing Society, 1886), 1-32 p. 7.

<sup>1144</sup> *Ibid.* p. 11.

<sup>1145</sup> *Ibid.* p. 23.

<sup>1146</sup> Sandra S. Sizer, *Gospel Hymns and Social Religion: The Rhetoric of Nineteenth-Century Revivalism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978) p. 40. In her thematic analysis of hymnody, Sizer suggested that 'nearly two-thirds of all the hymns' included the themes of 'grace, refuge, loving Jesus and a happy heaven'.

Further, the 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the fusion of music and preaching in the presentation of the gospel message. Though preaching delivered the biblical mandate for personal salvation, and singing served to validate the salvation invitation and experience, songs during this period gained equal footing to sermons. In *The Kingdom of God in America*, H. Richard Niebuhr's commentary verified that, by the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, conversion and hymnody were virtually inseparable.

Regeneration, the dying to the self and the rising to new life [...] becomes conversion which takes place on Sunday morning during the singing of the last hymn or twice a year when the revival preacher comes to town.<sup>1147</sup>

### 9.3 Song Leaders, Hymns, and Evangelism

As 'hymns of human composure' developed, hymn writers addressed topics and themes of many varieties. Many denominational hymnals of post-Civil War America indexed hymns by title, first line, and topic. Relying on this categorization, one is able to detect the proportion of the hymnal that is dedicated to each topic. In content analysis of hymn books used by prominent evangelists between 1875 and 1975, Marvin McKormick and James Sallee determined that songs of invitation were prominent. The revival ministries analyzed were those of Dwight Moody, Billy Sunday, Billy Graham, and Jack van Impe. For example, songs of praise in Moody's ministry accounted for 10% of the songbook content, whereas songs of exhortation and invitation accounted for 35%. Further, the strong connection between music and evangelism is underscored by their study. The mid-19<sup>th</sup> century firmly entrenched the practice of the song leader-preacher duo: Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899) had Ira D. Sankey (1840-1908), George F. Pentecost (1842-1920) had George Stebbins (1846-1945), R. A. Torrey (1856-1928) had Charles Alexander (1867-1920), and Billy Sunday (1862-1935) had Homer Rodeheaver (1880-1955).<sup>1148</sup> In 'Concerning Sacred Music, Ancient and Modern' (1881) Rev. G. H. Griffin cited the phrase, 'Nowadays, every Moody must have his Sankey; every Pentecost<sup>1149</sup> his Stebbins.<sup>1150</sup> They hunt in couples.'<sup>1151</sup>

<sup>1147</sup> H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Kingdom of God in America* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1959) p. 179, 180.

<sup>1148</sup> Sallee also discussed the partnership of preacher Billy Graham (b. 1918) with musicians Cliff Barrows (b. 1923) and George Beverly Shea (b. 1909).

<sup>1149</sup> George F. Pentecost, Congregationalist minister, author, and evangelist.

<sup>1150</sup> An American Gospel hymn writer who composed the music for *There Is a Green Hill Far Away*, *Ye Must Be Born Again*, *Take Time To Be Holy* and *Have Thine Own Way*.

<sup>1151</sup> Rev. G. H. Griffin, 'Concerning Sacred Music, Ancient and Modern', *The New Englander*, 4/161 (July 1881), 445-456 p. 454.

In *A History of Evangelistic Hymnody*, James Sallee explored the social history of theology. While Sallee contended that mass evangelism and gospel hymnody had not changed from the late-18<sup>th</sup> century to the early-19<sup>th</sup> century, he believed societal realities had shifted considerably to facilitate a dramatic increase in their impact. He attributed the mass effect of evangelistic hymnody to a significant change in societal factors, such as immigration, movement to cities, and the emergence of the working class and the 'idle rich'.<sup>1152</sup> This contention, while deserving, is a bit overstated. While Sallee may not have seen an interesting difference between the success of revivals and development of songs, he overlooked what Robert Stevenson believed to be exceedingly important: the immediate and sweeping publication of gospel songs by their writers. In contrast to hymnody prior to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Sankey era ushered in the mass publication of music for quick application. Stevenson reported that one of Sankey's collections sold eighty million copies in England alone within fifty years after its initial publication.<sup>1153</sup> In the United States, *Gospel Hymns and Sacred Songs* sold fifty million copies in twenty-five years,<sup>1154</sup> almost double the amount of Bibles printed by the American Bible Society during a one hundred-year period.<sup>1155</sup>

The burst in published literature in the early-19<sup>th</sup> century is important. From Stevenson's observation, that mass publication of music for virtually immediate usage delivered individual copies of gospel songs to a broad audience, it is clear that a concentrated and large market was easily accessed with a host of music printed for the purpose of converting masses of people.<sup>1156</sup>

Exploring the hymnal's role in 'evangelistic theology' that characterized the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, I hope to reconstruct an integral part of the social history of hymnic theology. To the work of Sallee, Stevenson, Noll, and Marini, I suggest that common conversion hymns of common biblical teaching were widespread in their

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<sup>1152</sup> James Sallee, *A History of Evangelistic Hymnody* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1978) p. 55, 56. Sallee writes, '[...] the different social and economic conditions which existed demanded a change in the nature of revivalism.'

<sup>1153</sup> *The Ira D. Sankey Centenary*, (New Castle, Pennsylvania, 1941) p. 35. In Robert M. Stevenson, *Patterns of Protestant Church Music* (The United States of America: Duke University Press, 1953) p. 152.

<sup>1154</sup> Sanjek, p. 251.

<sup>1155</sup> During the period 1830-1930 the American Bible Society printed 28, 324,837 bibles.

<sup>1156</sup> Adding to this argument is the view taken by Stephen Rachman, specialist in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century British and American literature, who argued that the 1850's witnessed a flourishing of novel publications and an increased emphasis on the conversion experience by Sunday schools. See Stephen Rachman, 'Shaping the Values of Youth: Sunday School Books In 19<sup>th</sup> Century America', <<http://digital.lib.msu.edu/projects/ssb/index.cfm?CollectionID=58>>, accessed 27 December 2005.

impact, and that their contribution to the understanding of salvation was prominent and authoritative. Specifically, hymn writers forged an almost unquestioned soteriology around Revelation 3:20. With this verse they portrayed a surprisingly united reader-hermeneutic, portraying Jesus as a Savior who knocked at the heart of the sinner. The sinner, in turn, was saved by the act of opening their heart's door.

#### 9.4 The *Lex Credendi Lex Orandi* Axiom

From the *lex credendi lex orandi* axiom (section 3.5) Mark A. Noll asserted that, '*lex credendi* was the *lex orandi*, that the way the church formally defined itself depended ultimately on what and how the church prayed.'<sup>1157</sup> Noll argued further, comparing hymns to 'diligent preaching', 'incredible organizational energy' and 'learned theology', determining that 'nothing so profoundly defined the *lex credendi* of evangelicalism as the *lex cantandi*'.<sup>1158</sup> Conspicuously absent from Noll's comparison is the Bible itself. Yet the Bible should be considered. Hymn texts contributed to 'regulative theology' and 'made faith audible' more than any other medium, the Bible not excepting.

This argument could appear incompatible with *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone, or the Church subordinate to the Bible). But Protestants did not always use the Bible to inform or govern theology. The Bible certainly provided a sense of salvation history, expository preaching sought to explain the Bible, theologians interpreted the Bible, but the hymnal condensed the lived faith (including biblical and homiletical influences) into bite size creeds. For Protestants in 19<sup>th</sup>-century America, singing hymns as creedal texts was normative to faith and praxis.<sup>1159</sup>

Perhaps under 'perspicuity of Scripture', laity were permitted to write 'hymns of human composure' that articulated experience (both individual and corporate) that influenced popular beliefs. In this way, hymns served to articulate lived faith that, in turn, contributed to regulative theology. As a logical conclusion, the operant

<sup>1157</sup> Noll, *American Evangelical Christianity: An Introduction* p. 268.

<sup>1158</sup> Ibid. *lex cantandi* is the law of song or the creed of hymns.

<sup>1159</sup> This argument does not suggest that Protestants lowered their view of biblical infallibility. Indeed, the 'demise of biblical civilization' (argued by Grant Wacker) did not encroach the functional authority of the Bible until the 1930s. See Grant Wacker, 'The Demise of Biblical Civilization', in Nathan O. Hatch and Mark A. Noll (eds.), *The Bible in America: Essays in Cultural History* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982) p. 122.

hermeneutic of hymn writers was deemed a trustworthy source in matters of faith and praxis.<sup>1160</sup>

## 9.5 Biblical Sources for Hymns

As mentioned above (section 4.1) hymnody evolved in Protestantism from metrical psalmody to hymns of human composure. Isaac Watts forged a revolutionary approach by rewriting Psalms in the language of the New Testament. His work helped to pioneer inspirational hymnody that eventually permitted hymn writers creative freedom to draw on all biblical texts equally for lyrical inspiration. Personal lyrical expression was conventional by the time of Charles Wesley in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century – though the distinction remained between psalms and hymns. John Wesley's *Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists* (1780) provided a new standard for American Protestant hymnody. By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, devotional hymns and gospel songs written by English and American writers were printed extensively and embraced readily by a broad audience.

Most hymns were affiliated with a biblical text as source of inspiration. Robert Robinson's 1758 work, *Come Thou Fount*, was clearly indebted to 1 Samuel 7:12<sup>1161</sup> for its reference to 'Ebenezer'. Identifying the Christian as a type of Jacob, the African American spiritual *We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder*, drew from the patriarchal narrative of Genesis 28:12.<sup>1162</sup> Similarly, *Jesus I My Cross Have Taken* was clearly based on Matthew 16:24,<sup>1163</sup> *There is a Balm in Gilead* on Jeremiah 46:11,<sup>1164</sup> and both *Lily of the Valley* and *Jesus, Rose of Sharon* on Song of Songs 2:1.<sup>1165</sup>

In each of these cases (only a few examples among thousands) the operant hermeneutic of the hymnwriter is partly evident. In the case of *Come Thou Fount*, Robinson adapted Samuel's ritual of setting up a monument stone to thank God for

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<sup>1160</sup> Where hymn writers used the Bible as a source of inspiration, their interpretation was a variable to authority; at least if interpretation of the Bible is equal in authority to the biblical text itself.

<sup>1161</sup> 1 Samuel 7:12 'Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Jeshanah, and named it Ebenezer; for he said, "Thus far the LORD has helped us.'" (NRSV)

<sup>1162</sup> Gen. 28:12 'And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.' (NRSV)

<sup>1163</sup> Matthew 16:24 'Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.'" (NRSV)

<sup>1164</sup> Jeremiah. 46:11 'Go up to Gilead, and take balm, O virgin daughter Egypt! In vain you have used many medicines; there is no healing for you.' (NRSV)

<sup>1165</sup> Song of Songs 2:1 'I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys.' (NRSV)

military victory over the Philistines to express his own thanksgiving to Jesus for protection from danger. *Climbing Jacob's Ladder* employed Jacob's personal pilgrimage to encourage slaves in their hope for freedom, though the songwriter(s) did not address the claim to the specific and individual promises given to Jacob.<sup>1166</sup> Worship addressed to Jesus as the 'Lily of the Valley' and the 'Rose of Sharon' is based on the interpretation that the Song of Songs foreshadowed the Church as the Bride of Christ.

In addition to theological ramifications, the methods of hymn writers and their use of scriptural text to accommodate their spiritual experience and perspective, demonstrate both the discretionary use of canonical text and reader-subjectivity while using it. The 'evangelistic theology' (or emergent soteriology) sparked by numerous hymns that employed Revelation 3:20, portray an individualistic and salvific understanding of its meaning and application.

Thus far I have presented the rise of experiential conversion, the influence of hymns and song leaders in evangelism, the principle of hymn texts (*lex cantandi*) as shapers of doctrine (*lex credendi*), and the personal interpretation of biblical texts by hymn writers as authoritative. Below I will argue the soteriological efficacy of the hymnal, the agency of the hymnal in salvation and, based on Revelation 3:20 as the most prominent text of 'evangelistic theology', the role of hymn texts in 'regulative theology' and the expression of 'audible faith'.

## 9.6 Hymnal as 'Sole Guide to Salvation'

In his introduction to the 1991 *Baptist Hymnal* James T. Draper, President of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention wrote, 'This hymnal contains the plan of salvation.'<sup>1167</sup> It is not my interest to gauge the accuracy of the statement, but its implication regarding the hymnal's worth. Even if the hymnal does not contain 'the plan of salvation', that Draper believed it did is significant. Draper is perpetuating an estimation of hymnody long-held in American Protestantism.

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<sup>1166</sup> As mentioned in chapter seven above, African American spirituals carry a variety of interpretations, from the 'secret strain' interpretations of Miles Mark Fisher who emphasized the superficial usage of Christian terms that, in many cases, served as a Christian face to disguise the traditional beliefs of African religion, to the overtly biblical Christian meanings argued by Wyatt Tee Walker.

<sup>1167</sup> *The Baptist Hymnal*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Convention Press, 1991).



The soteriological efficacy of the Bible was (and still is) believed by Protestants to be a characteristic exclusive to the Bible, setting it apart from all other literature. In his book *Thoughts on Popery* (1836), Presbyterian minister Rev. William Nevins defended the Bible as ‘a Rule of Faith and Guide to Salvation’ and, in his contrast of Protestants and Roman Catholics wrote, ‘We say the Bible is sufficient. They say that it is not.’<sup>1168</sup> Nevins’ anti-Catholic treatise presented the Bible as ‘the guide to salvation’ in opposition to Catholic sacramentalism presented as ‘the Christian’s guide to heaven’.<sup>1169</sup> For Protestants, soteriological efficacy was the Bible’s jealous domain.

But how did this conviction work itself out in practice? As demonstrated in chapter six, the hymnal was central to the Christian education of children, even displacing some of the emphasis upon catechism. While Sunday Schools taught that the Bible was the source of salvation, hymns were among the main carriers of this doctrine. Children sang, ‘We’ll not give up the Bible, but spread it far and wide, until its saving voice be heard, beyond the rolling tide’.<sup>1170</sup> Though the Bible was elevated as the ‘saving voice’, hymn texts expressed the soteriological efficacy of the Bible. Why did children believe in the authority of the Bible, and were they convinced by ‘The Bible’ or ‘The Hymnal’? Arguably, hymnic expression of biblical authority was the Bible’s authority. Similarly argued, in the agency of salvation, hymnic expression of the Bible was the Bible.<sup>1171</sup>

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<sup>1168</sup> William Nevins, *Thoughts on Popery* (New York: John S. Taylor, 1836) p. 7.

<sup>1169</sup> Nevins opposed the Catholic publication *The Christian’s Guide to Heaven: A Manual of Catholic Piety*.

<sup>1170</sup> J. Treadwell Walden, *The Sunday School Prayer Book* (Boston: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1862) p. 2.

<sup>1171</sup> This rhetoric was not limited to children: The Disciples of Christ championed the slogan, ‘We have no creed but Christ, no book but the Bible’. Yet even the Disciples joined the rush to publish their own hymnal, the hymnal every bit as essential to their publishing as their Bible revision. Established by Thomas Campbell and his son Alexander Campbell the Disciples of Christ concentrated on book publishing from the outset of their ministry. Campbell’s first hymnal was published in 1828 entitled *Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs*. This hymn book competed with an earlier hymn book by Barton Stone. Eventually the two leaders joined their efforts and Stone merged his hymn book with Campbell’s, resulting in the 1834 edition of *Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs*. Alexander Campbell published his own ‘immersion version’ of the New Testament in 1826, its final revision published in 1832. See P. Marion Simms, *The Bible in America: Versions That Have Played Their Part in the Making of the Republic* (New York: Wilson-Erickson, Inc., 1936) p. 248, 249. According to Simms, Campbell’s version of the New Testament used the translations of others, i.e. Dr. George Campbell (the Gospels), Dr. James MacKnight (the Epistles), and Dr. Philip Doddridge (Acts and Revelation), and that Campbell’s version had very few revisions to their works. For the most part, Campbell’s work was a compilation.

Hymnic authority in the agency of salvation is illustrated in Finney's revivalism and his use of the 'anxious bench'.<sup>1172</sup> Finney lectured on the 'ascribing role' of the Bible in conversion, 'The Scriptures ascribe the conversion of a sinner to four different agencies – to *men*, to *God*, to the *truth*, and to the *sinner himself*.'<sup>1173</sup> Regarding the agency of men, Finney had the preacher in mind (an instrument that speaks the truth of God to sinners). Based on this principle of human agency in conversion, it is reasonable to consider the song leader. Using hymns to speak 'the truth' of God to 'sinners', song leaders served in a capacity similar to the preacher, using the hymnal as the source of soteriological authority rather than the Bible. Adapting Finney's construction, 'The Hymnal' ascribes the conversion of a sinner to four different agencies: 1. To *men* [song leaders, Sunday School teachers, parents, and preachers], 2. To *God*, 3. To the *truth* [the words of the hymn], and, 4. To the sinner [the sinner's decision to respond to the invitation or testimony of the hymn]'.<sup>1174</sup>

The use of music at the 'anxious-bench' is illustrated by a description of the Washington Israel Bethel Church in the December 1873 *Atlantic Monthly*. With *Roll Jordan Roll* ringing in the background, some chanting the Lord's Prayer, and still others singing improvisations, sinners came forward for salvation.

Half a dozen are alternately rising and kneeling at the farther end of the "anxious-bench," praying and sobbing in the same breath. Two sisters have fallen on each other's necks in the middle of the aisle, [...] A young couple are dancing with clasped arms while they sing Rock of Ages.<sup>1174</sup>

Aware of the impact of hymns, Finney critiqued hymn lyrics exposing what he perceived to be false teaching.

Sometimes people pray for anxious sinners as humble souls. "O Lord, these sinners have humbled themselves." Why, that is not true, they have not humbled themselves; if they had, the Lord would have raised them up and comforted them, as he has promised. There is a hymn of this character, that has done great mischief. It begins "Come humble sinner in whose breast a thousand thoughts revolve." This hymn was once given by a minister to an awkward sinner, as one applicable to his case. He began to read, "Humble sinner, that is not applicable to me, I am not a humble sinner." Ah, how well was it for him that the Holy Ghost had taught him better than the hymn. If the hymn had said, Come anxious sinner, or guilty sinner, or trembling sinner, it would have been well enough, but to call him a humble sinner would not do. There are a vast many hymns of the same character. It is very common to find

<sup>1172</sup> A designated place to sit, intended for individuals convicted of sin and seeking conversion.

<sup>1173</sup> Charles Grandison Finney, *Lectures on Revivals of Religion* (New York: Leavitt, Lord & Co., 1835) p. 181.

<sup>1174</sup> 'Israel Bethel Church', *The Atlantic Monthly*, 32/194 (December 1873), 727-736 p. 730, 731.

sinner quoting false sentiments of some hymns, to excuse themselves in rebellion against God.<sup>1175</sup>

J. W. McGarvey was also critical of some hymns used at 'the mourning bench'. Demonstrating the unscriptural expression of some conversion hymns, McGarvey took special issue with the hymn *O Turn You, O Turn You* that featured the lyrics, 'If still you are doubting, make trial and see'.

Now this would suit very well as an invitation to the mourning bench, and for some such purposes it was originally composed; but it is most unscriptural to invite a sinner who is "still doubting" to come and make the confession. I have never heard it sung without feeling shocked at the incongruity, and wishing that the whole stanza were cut off from the hymn, which is otherwise a good one.<sup>1176</sup>

Finney's approach to conversion served to influence others, especially D. L. Moody. Though Moody used 'less blatant techniques'<sup>1177</sup> he nonetheless carried the tradition of emotional conversion to the end of the century. Ira Sankey served as his song leader and, through his leadership, hymns capitalized on sentimentalism. Paul Westermeyer addressed this in *Let the People Sing*.

After Finney, the next logical step was to identify with the culture in such a way that music became one of the techniques to convert people. Ideas about sanctification and heart religion were modified to support this position. The notion that music was about sentimental feelings was easily allied with the modifications, so that music became a central converting technique.<sup>1178</sup>

In 'Evangelism and Contemporary American Life', Bill J. Leonard recognized the role of hymnody in 'the salvation invitation'.

D. L. Moody, the great evangelist of the late 1800s, elaborated on Finney's views regarding the means of evangelism. [...] The hymns of frontier and urban revivals, spontaneous testimonies, preaching style and entire worship format frequently have been shaped by the revivalist context. This is particularly true of what in many churches is the most important symbol of evangelical conversion, the invitation.<sup>1179</sup>

James F. White also discussed the impact of conversionism on 'frontier worship'.

The fact that worship should be the primary form of mission rather than education, social action, or charitable service is significant. It meant discovery of a new function of worship, although one overshadowed in the

<sup>1175</sup> Finney, p. 329.

<sup>1176</sup> J. W. McGarvey, 'Hymns and Hymn Books', *Lard's Quarterly Devoted to the Propagation of the Defense of the Gospel*, 1/1 (September 1863), 319-329 p. 326.

<sup>1177</sup> Paul Westermeyer, *Let the People Sing: Hymn Tunes in Perspective* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2005).

<sup>1178</sup> Ibid. p. 392.

<sup>1179</sup> Bill J. Leonard, 'Evangelism and Contemporary American Life', in Paul W. Chilcote and Lacey C. Warner (eds.), *The Study of Evangelism: Exploring a Missional Practice of the Church* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008) p. 104, 105.

first Great Awakening and Wesleyan movement. For conversion itself to become a main function of worship was a major historical shift.<sup>1180</sup>

Exploring the impact of hymns in post-Finney revivalism, Sandra Sizer concluded that hymns gained a universal and 'ultimate' role in American Protestantism.

The hymns' proposed solutions, too, are intended to be the answer for all time. That is, they make a claim to ultimacy. Of course, we can say that all this comes down to is that the hymns speak of sin versus salvation and, we might add, in a conversionist form.<sup>1181</sup>

## 9.7 Agency and Testimony of Hymns in Salvation

Few leaders could have demonstrated the agency and testimony of hymns in conversion more convincingly than Ira D. Sankey. In the final years of his life, Sankey wrote *My Life and the Story of Gospel Hymns* in which he testified repeatedly to the role of hymns in conversion.

*At the Cross*, an Isaac Watts hymn adapted with a refrain in 1885 by Ralph E. Hudson, was promptly published in revival song books and Methodist hymnals, and became relatively popular by the end of the century. According to Sankey, the children's evangelist E. P. Hammond 'credit[ed] the hymn with his conversion'.<sup>1182</sup> Recalling the impact of hymns from his tour of Great Britain with D. L. Moody, Sankey reported that a missionary in a northern city credited hymns for the conversion of 'not less than one-third' of 150 converts in a single congregation.<sup>1183</sup> Sankey claimed that Ellen K. Bradford's hymn *Over the Line* had 'been a blessing to thousands of souls all over the world, leading to the conversion of very many.' As an example, Sankey recounted the story of an Iowa minister who observed a Utah man 'brought to full surrender of himself to Christ by the singing of the hymn'.<sup>1184</sup>

Sankey also noted the impact of hymns in the temperance movement, reporting *Scatter Seeds of Kindness*<sup>1185</sup> as the favorite hymn of the temperance preacher Francis Murphy. Observed by Murphy, 'thousands of drinking men have been saved through

<sup>1180</sup> James F. White, *Protestant Worship* (Louisville, Kentucky: John Knox Press, 1989) p. 178.

<sup>1181</sup> Sizer, p. 166.

<sup>1182</sup> Sankey, p. 117.

<sup>1183</sup> *Ibid.* p. 139.

<sup>1184</sup> *Ibid.* p. 217.

<sup>1185</sup> *Scatter Seeds of Kindness* was popular leading up to end of the temperance movement. It was printed in almost 70 hymnals between the years 1870-1916, after which it dropped off sharply from hymnal collections.

its instrumentality.<sup>1186</sup> Sankey related how the hymn *Shall You? Shall I?*<sup>1187</sup> persisted in the memory of a drunken man and, 'Ringing in his ears' long after the sermon had been forgotten, the hymn prompted the man to 'give his heart to God'.<sup>1188</sup> Sankey added that the man continued in his faith and became a Methodist minister! Many more hymns are discussed by Sankey, including *Something for Jesus*<sup>1189</sup> that caused a lawyer to consecrate his life 'to Christ's service and thereafter devote himself with his whole heart to evangelistic work'<sup>1190</sup> and *There is a Fountain Filled with Blood* whose impression 'overpowered' a Union Army lieutenant who 'gave [his] heart to God'.<sup>1191</sup> Yet few hymns could compare with *The Ninety and Nine*, 'the most famous tune Sankey ever composed'.<sup>1192</sup> A hymn of exceptional force with large crowds, Sankey personalized its impact recounting the story of a hotel owner who, while 'under the guidance of the Holy Spirit' put a copy of Sankey's hymns in the hotel room of a young man ('the only unconverted member of his family') and underlined the phrase, 'One was out on the hills far away'. When the young man returned to his hotel room he read the underlined phrase.

He went over and read the penciled line. Like a flash the image of his home came up before him, and all the dear ones there, until his stony heart was broken. Throwing himself upon his knees, he cried for mercy and besought the Father to receive him for Christ's sake. Soon the answer came, and he rose to his feet a new man in Christ Jesus.<sup>1193</sup>

While Gideon Bibles later became the standard sacred text placed in American hotel rooms, it appears that Sankey's hymnal may have set the precedent.<sup>1194</sup>

## 9.8 Doctrinal Expression in Hymns

Although emphasis upon conversion as an essential distinctive was not exclusive to expression in hymnody, and though it would be reckless to contend that hymn writers spearheaded the initial emphasis upon conversion, it is fair to say that the transaction

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<sup>1186</sup> Sankey, p. 239.

<sup>1187</sup> *Shall You? Shall I?* was written in 1887 by James McGranahan.

<sup>1188</sup> Sankey, p. 241.

<sup>1189</sup> Also known as *Savior! Thy Dying Love*. Written in 1862 by Baptist pastor Sylvanus. D. Phelps. Printed in 98 hymnals between the years 1871 and 1930. This is the hymn that Grover C. Loud used (in his selection of hymns that represented episodes in American revivalism) to introduce the influence of immersion led by Baptists. See Loud, p. 181.

<sup>1190</sup> Sankey, p. 243.

<sup>1191</sup> *Ibid.* p. 283.

<sup>1192</sup> Ernest K. Emurian, *Living Stories of Famous Hymns* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1998) p. 128.

<sup>1193</sup> Sankey, p. 275.

<sup>1194</sup> The Gideons placed Bibles in hotel rooms beginning in 1908. Sankey's book, containing the story of a hymnal in a hotel room, was published in 1906.

language of conversion was expressed and defined by hymn writers. As such, hymns serve as an historical source to demonstrate the emerging doctrinal distinctives of evangelical Protestantism as related to salvation. Key biblical texts utilized by hymn writers to explain or describe salvation provide a hermeneutical model of interpreting texts for understanding and articulating the soteriology of evangelical Protestantism.

Stephen Marini suggested that lyrical texts played a significant role in the shaping of American Evangelicalism. In *Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land*, Marini concluded that hymnals provide a comprehensive statement of evangelical doctrines and, that in hymns held most in common, the description of 'popular beliefs, practices and piety' is 'surprisingly precise'.<sup>1195</sup> I venture further and say that common hymns of conversion took a principal role in *shaping* (vs. describing) 'popular belief, practice and piety' of conversion. Hymns carved out a dogmatic expression and view of conversion within Protestant soteriology.

There is a cumulative line of reasoning worthy of mention here: Marini has argued that hymns of American evangelicalism provided a comprehensive statement of doctrine; thus it is reasonable to conclude that hymn texts expressed doctrine. Noll has argued that hymns (*lex cantandi*) shaped Protestant theology (*lex credendi*) more than any other means (though Noll's comparison was within noncanonical sources). Moving past the research governor that impedes examination of hymns as texts comparable with the Bible's canonical authority, I suggest that the hymnal had the capacity to dislodge the Bible's monopoly as the 'sole guide to salvation'. Hymns were endowed with soteriological efficacy and their reach was expansive; indeed, the doctrinal development of transactional language in conversion is due largely to hymns whose writers developed a salvation hermeneutic from Revelation 3:20. This verse and its imagery pervaded 19<sup>th</sup>-century hymnals. Hymns based on Revelation 3:20, especially those held in common, exerted disproportionate influence in the development of 'evangelistic theology' in 19<sup>th</sup>-century America.

## 9.9 Homiletical Influences and Revelation 3:20 Sermons

In tracing the development of 'evangelistic theology' in American Protestantism, sermons deserve consideration. I will soon consult hymns as the central source, but a

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<sup>1195</sup> Stephen A. Marini, 'Introduction', in Edith L. Blumhofer and Mark A. Noll (eds.), *Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2004) p. 7.

brief review of sermons is requisite, especially in the interest of Noll's argument that pitted 'diligent preaching' to *lex cantandi*.<sup>1196</sup>

Most certainly, American hymn writers did not construct the salvific interpretation of Revelation 3:20. Early on in American Protestantism, sermons employed Revelation 3:20 in a salvific function. Though this conversion model became dominant in hymnody, its impetus can be traced at least as far back as the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1741 John Webb, pastor of a Church of Christ, published the sermon 'Christ's Suit to the Sinner'. In the construction of his sermon, Webb recognized the Laodicean context of Revelation 3:20, but suggested a personal salvific message could be derived for unregenerate sinners.

Now these Words tho' they were directed immediately to the hypocritical Professors of the Laodicean Church, yet may be improved for the Direction and Encouragement of all unregenerate sinners under the Light of the Gospel; while the Day and Season of Grace lasts with them.<sup>1197</sup>

In his soteriological application, Webb emphasized a figurative interpretation.

For the Explanation of the Terms, we must know that the Words are figurative; [...] And from hence we may easily learn, that by the Door we are to understand the Door of the Sinner's Heart[.]<sup>1198</sup>

In 1778, Jonathan Bird of Hartford published his sermon 'Jesus Knocking' and promoted the Arminian view of free will and free agency.

Again, Jesus comes near to invite us: He doesn't stand aloft, or at a distance when he calls; no, but he comes to the very threshold of the heart, he touches it with his power; behold I stand at the door, and knock: Christ by his word and spirit comes to the heart of every sinner under the gospel, and the sinner knows him to be there[.]<sup>1199</sup>

The salvific use of Revelation 3:20 continued into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Rev. Theo. L. Cuyler's 1867 sermon 'Who Keeps You From Christ?' serving as an example.

Christ is waiting to change your heart; he has been ready to do it for many a guilty year of your life; the Spirit of Love is wooing you; [...] My friend! You are trifling with your soul! You are trifling with god [sic]. He offers the now [sic] heart; he offers the grace that can convert you. Christ has knocked for many a year at your heart's door; the arm that knocks is not weary yet. But presently you will hear another knock-the hand of *death* will be at the door, and him you cannot shut out.<sup>1200</sup>

<sup>1196</sup> Noll, *American Evangelical Christianity: An Introduction* p. 268.

<sup>1197</sup> John Webb, *Christ's Suit to the Sinner, While He Stands and Knocks at the Door* (Boston: S. Kneeland, 1741) p. 3.

<sup>1198</sup> *Ibid.* p. 5.

<sup>1199</sup> Jonathan Bird, *Jesus Knocking* (Worcester, Massachusetts: Anthony Haswell, 1778) p. 7.

<sup>1200</sup> Theo L. Cuyler, 'Who Keeps You from Christ?' *The Christian Recorder*, 16 November 1867.

Surprisingly, the salvific use of Revelation 3:20 by these ministers, was not as common among major revivalist preachers Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, Charles Finney, Dwight L. Moody, and Billy Sunday.

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) used the imagery of Christ knocking, but in a different sense. In 'The Manner in Which the Salvation of the Soul is to be Sought', Edwards writes,

All the blows of the hammer and axe, during the progress of that building, were so many calls and warnings to the old world, to take care for their preservation from the approaching destruction. Every knock of the workmen was a knock of Jesus Christ at the door of their hearts: but they would not hearken. All these warnings, though repeated every day, and continued for so long a time, availed nothing.<sup>1201</sup>

While Edwards makes use of Revelation 3:20, the reference to Christ 'knocking' is related to 1 Peter 3:20 and the discussion of God's patience during the building of the ark by Noah. Similarly, in 'Pressing Into the Kingdom of God', Edwards likened 'knocking' to God's Spirit striving with mortals as suggested by Genesis 6:3.<sup>1202</sup> In 'The Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners', Edwards indeed makes the connection between conversion and the knocking of Christ: 'God graciously sends his own Son, who comes and knocks at your door with a pardon in his hand.'<sup>1203</sup> One of Edwards' most renowned sermons, 'Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God', makes no allusion to the 'knocking' of Christ.

While George Whitefield (1714-1770) preached thousands of sermons, less than 100 have survived.<sup>1204</sup> Observed from his extant works, Whitefield proclaimed Christ as Savior and addressed the need for rebirth and regeneration. Based on his surviving sermons, it does not seem that he prescribed a transactional model of conversion based on opening the 'heart's door' to a 'knocking Christ' described in Revelation 3:20.

Of the most influential 19<sup>th</sup>-century preachers i.e. Charles Finney (1792-1875), Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899) and Billy Sunday (1862-1935), the salvific use of

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<sup>1201</sup> Jonathan Edwards, 'The Manner in Which the Salvation of the Soul Is to Be Sought', <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/edwards/sermons.manner.html>>, accessed 25 October 2008.

<sup>1202</sup> Jonathan Edwards, 'Pressing into the Kingdom of God', <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/edwards/sermons.pressing.html>>, accessed 26 October 2008.

<sup>1203</sup> Jonathan Edwards, 'The Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners', <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/edwards/sermons.justice.html>>, accessed 25 October 2008.

<sup>1204</sup> Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*. 'Whitefield preached more than 18,000 sermons in his lifetime, an average of 500 a year, or ten a week. Many of them were given over and over again. Fewer than 90 of them have survived in any form.'



Revelation 3:20 is not found in their published conversion and salvation messages. Finney's salvation messages 'The New Birth', 'The Way of Salvation', and 'The Conversion of Children' made no reference to the person of Christ knocking at the door of the heart. Two of Moody's sermons on conversion, 'Repentance' and 'What Must I Do To Be Saved?', established salvation principles based on the lives of Noah, Moses, and David. Billy Sunday used the concept of Christ occupying the 'heart's throne',<sup>1205</sup> but nothing of the 'heart's door'. But all these 19<sup>th</sup>-century evangelists used hymns with the directive to respond to Christ knocking at the door of the heart.

### 9.10 Revelation 3:20 in Wesleyan Hymnody

John Lawson, having provided scriptural analysis to a select number of Wesleyan hymns, regarded their hymns as 'scriptural hymns'.<sup>1206</sup> In Lawson's treatment of conversion hymns, he selected three as representative: *Where Shall My Wondering Soul Begin?* (Charles Wesley's personal conversion song), *O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing* (the song commemorating the first anniversary of Charles' conversion), and *And Can It Be That I Should Gain?*<sup>1207</sup> Within these three hymns, Lawson detected almost 200 scripture references. The references are taken from many books of the Bible,<sup>1208</sup> but none of the conversion hymns studied by Lawson include a reference to Revelation 3:20.

Apart from these conversion hymns, Charles Wesley used Revelation 3:20 in four of the hymns analyzed by Lawson. In *What Shall I Do My God to Love?*, Lawson cited Revelation 3:20 in verse seven – particularly the phrase 'Come quickly, gracious Lord, and take possession of thine own'. Other songs such as *Come Sinners to the Gospel Feast*, *Jesu We Thus Obey*, and *Come and Let Us Sweetly Join*, make reference to the fellowship to be enjoyed by those who open their hearts to Jesus.

Teresa Berger emphasized that the Bible 'could nearly be completely reconstructed based on the Wesleyan deposit of hymns alone.'<sup>1209</sup> Though Lawson's work demonstrated the wealth of scriptural references in Wesleyan hymns, of the

<sup>1205</sup> Billy Sunday, 'Why Delay Your Real Conversion?'

<[http://www.biblebelievers.com/billy\\_sunday/sun6.html](http://www.biblebelievers.com/billy_sunday/sun6.html)>, accessed 7 February 2006.

<sup>1206</sup> John Lawson, *The Wesley Hymns: A Guide to Scriptural Teaching* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Francis Asbury Press, 1987) p. 13-15.

<sup>1207</sup> Ibid. p. 124. Lawson also includes *Hymn for the Kingswood Colliers*.

<sup>1208</sup> Lawson identified Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Job, Psalms, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Habakkuk, Zechariah, Malachi, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Hebrews, 1 John and Revelation.

<sup>1209</sup> Berger, p. 101. Berger is paraphrasing Methodist admirers with this statement.

conversion hymns he has chosen as representative, Revelation 3:20 is conspicuous by its absence. I suggest that there are conversion songs written by Charles Wesley that were based, at least in part, on Revelation 3:20.

A hymn by Charles Wesley composed in 1741 was clearly influenced by the scenario of Jesus knocking. That Charles interpreted the apocalyptic text as a vital picture of Christ's invitation of salvation is also clear. Verses two, three and four of *Come Let Us Who in Christ Believe* are heavily dependent upon Revelation 3:20.

He now stands knocking at the door  
 Of every sinner's heart  
 The worst need keep Him out no more  
 Or force Him to depart  
 Through grace we hearken to Thy voice  
 Yield to be saved from sin  
 In sure and certain hope rejoice  
 That Thou wilt enter in  
 Come quickly in, thou heavenly Guest  
 Nor ever hence remove  
 But sup with us, and let the feast  
 be everlasting love<sup>1210</sup>

Though Wesley uses the plural pronoun 'we', his doctrinal use of Christ's knocking identifies the entry of Christ to be the moment of salvation for the individual sinner. As such, his operant hermeneutic interprets Revelation 3:20 as a salvation text. Though the hymn was written in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, its first printing in an American Methodist hymnal may not have been until 1808, when it was printed in *A Selection of Hymns*.<sup>1211</sup> Even though the song did not benefit from distribution until almost 70 years after its composition, it still preceded the many hymns inspired by Revelation 3:20 written by American hymn writers. Perhaps Charles Wesley's hermeneutic served as a precedent for other hymn writers.<sup>1212</sup>

<sup>1210</sup> *Hymns for the Use of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, (New York: Carlton & Lanahan, 1869) p. 8, 9.

<sup>1211</sup> *A Selection of Hymns from Various Authors, Designed as a Supplement to the Methodist Pocket Hymn Book*, (New York: John Wilson & Daniel Hitt, 1808).

<sup>1212</sup> Charles' hermeneutic was likely influenced by his brother's teachings. John Wesley's commentary on Revelation 3:20 suggests a salvific understanding of Revelation 3:20, i.e. 'I stand at the door, and knock - Even at this instant; while he is speaking this Word. If any man open - Willingly receive me: I will sup with him - Refreshing him with my Graces and Gifts, and delighting myself in what I have given. And he with me - In Life everlasting.' See John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament* (Second edn.; London, 1757) p. 693. On one occasion, John shouted the words of Revelation 3:20 as recounted in his journal, 'I stood before a large multitude and cried, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." I never before saw so quiet a congregation on this side the water. There was not only no tumult, but no murmur to be heard, no smile to be seen on any face.' See John Wesley, *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, Enlarged with Notes from Unpublished Diaries, Annotations, Maps, and Illustrations*, ed. Nehemiah Curnock (5; London: Charles H. Kelly) p. 323.

## 9.11 Hymns, Mood, and Transactional Salvation

Songs of transactional salvation based on the image of Christ knocking for reception were presented in a variety of forms. Some lyrics were interrogative and presented the congregational participant with questions. Some lyrics were testimonial in which hymn writers described their own experience. Still others were imperative in which the congregation was exhorted to decision and action. All types were used in evangelism.

## 9.12 Interrogative Hymns

*Shall I Let Him In?* by H. R. Palmer is featured in 41 hymnals printed between the years 1877 and 1944.<sup>1213</sup> The song is targeted toward children. Verse one presents the child in a self-questioning posture. Almost as if there is an audience listening in on the pre-conversion deliberation of the singer's otherwise silent thoughts, the song is set with the pre-convert voicing a rhetorical question.

Christ is knocking at the door of my heart  
 Shall I let Him in?  
 Patiently pleading with my sad heart  
 Oh, shall I let Him in?  
 Cold and proud is my heart with sin  
 Dark and cheerless is all within  
 Christ is bidding me turn unto him  
 Oh! Shall I let Him in?<sup>1214</sup>

Verse three brings the singer to the point of decision. The result, following from an affirmative decision, is the momentous entry of Christ into the heart of the new believer. Identified as 'Blessed Saviour' and 'Blessed Lord', Christ's entrance into the singer's heart is completed through the new believer's decision to open the heart's door.

Yes, I'll open this heart's proud door  
 Yes, I'll let Him in.  
 Gladly I'll welcome Him evermore  
 Oh! Yes, I'll let him in.  
 Blessed Saviour, abide with me  
 Cares and trials will lighter be  
 I am safe if I'm only with Thee

<sup>1213</sup> For a comparison, during the same period, *A Mighty Fortress* by Luther was printed in 22 hymnals.

<sup>1214</sup> Ira D. Sankey (ed.), *Winnowed Song for Sunday Schools* (Chicago: Biglow & Main, 1890) p. 45. If converts were encouraged to sing *Shall I Let Him In?* subsequent to their conversion, an unusual precedent is set. In a sense, they are required to reenact the dilemma leading to their salvation. Singers that had already made the decision to permit the entrance of Christ into their hearts may have found themselves singing these lyrics as if they hadn't.

Oh! Blessed Lord come in.<sup>1215</sup>

Such interrogative songs abound in evangelistic hymnody. *Have You Any Room for Jesus?* is no allusion to the crowded inn in Bethlehem. The first verse describes Jesus at the door of the sinner's heart knocking for admission. The refrain to this late-19<sup>th</sup> century hymn established the heart as receptacle.

Room for Jesus, King of Glory  
 Hasten now His word obey  
 Swing the heart's door widely open  
 Bid Him enter while you may<sup>1216</sup>

*Who at My Door is Standing?* written in the 1870s by Mary Bridges Canedy Slade, is a testimonial song that uses the interrogative structure to cast the salvation message. Within a few years it was published in the *Good News Hymnal*. By the end of the century it had been published in almost thirty hymnals, including those of Southern Methodist Episcopal, Disciples of Christ, and General Conference Mennonite denominations. The four stanzas of this song provide a complete narrative of the salvation decision. From Christ at the door knocking (verse one) to the fear that Christ will soon pass by (verse two), the song assures the patience of Jesus to knock again (verse three), resolving with the sinner's decision to open wide the heart's door to permit Jesus' entry (verse four).

*Knocking, Knocking, Who is There?*, one of the most intriguing interrogative songs of conversion based on Revelation 3:20, comes from the pen of Harriet Beecher Stowe. Best known for her 1852 work *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Stowe crafted a poem based on 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock'.<sup>1217</sup> Her questioning approach sheds light on the one knocking (the 'pilgrim strange and kindly') and describes the dramatic exchange between the soul and the Savior. With poetic ease, Stowe describes a door that has been made hard to open by the entanglement of 'weeds and ivy vine with their dark and clinging tendrils' that have grown around the hinges of the door. Soon after the 1867 publication of her poem 'Knocking',<sup>1218</sup> Stowe's text was adapted as a hymn.

Knocking, knocking, who is there?  
 Waiting, waiting, oh, how fair!  
 'Tis a pilgrim strange and kindly

<sup>1215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1216</sup> *Salvation Army Songs*, (New York: The Salvation Army Trade Dept, 1878?) p. 10.

<sup>1217</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Religious Poems* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1867) p. 10.

<sup>1218</sup> According to the Dictionary of North American Hymnody, Stowe's hymn was printed in the 1870 edition of *Precious Hymns*.

Never such was seen before  
 Ah my soul for such a wonder  
 Wilt thou not undo the door?

Knocking, knocking! Still He's there  
 Waiting, waiting, wondrous fair!  
 But the door is hard to open  
 For the weeds and ivy vine  
 With their dark and clinging tendrils  
 Ever round the hinges twine

Knocking, knocking, - what, still there?  
 Waiting, waiting grand and fair!  
 Yes, the pierced hand still knocketh  
 And beneath the crowned hair  
 Beam the patient eyes, so tender  
 Of thy Savior waiting there<sup>1219</sup>

### 9.13 Testimonial Hymns

*Since Jesus Came Into My Heart* is the personal testimony of hymn writer Rufus H. McDaniel who wrote the hymn in 1914. By 1930 McDaniel's hymn had been published in over 50 hymnals and was a stock hymn in the *Standard Songs of Evangelism* published by Tabernacle Publication Company for revivalist preachers who wanted a signature songbook.<sup>1220</sup> Journalist Grover C. Loud described this hymn as one 'that shook the rafters of William Sunday's tabernacles'.<sup>1221</sup> George W. Sanville claimed, 'what the apostolic preaching of the great evangelist [Billy Sunday] failed to do, this song of personal testimony did', later recounting its success in 'leading more than a hundred policemen to Christ'.<sup>1222</sup> Of soteriological interest, McDaniel's hymn associates forgiveness (or justification) with the act of Jesus entering the heart.

I have ceased from my wandering and going astray,  
 Since Jesus came into my heart!  
 And my sins, which were many, are all washed away,  
 Since Jesus came into my heart!<sup>1223</sup>

<sup>1219</sup> Charles H. Richards (ed.), *Songs of Christian Praise* (New York: Taintor Brothers, Merrill & Co., 1881) p. 147.

<sup>1220</sup> *Standard Songs of Evangelism. Compiled from Editorial Suggestions Submitted by 136 Active Evangelists and Evangelistic Music Directors*, (Chicago: Tabernacle Pub. Co., 1926).

<sup>1221</sup> Loud, p. 124.

<sup>1222</sup> George W. Sanville, *Forty Gospel Hymn Stories* (Winona Lake, Indiana: The Rodeheaver-Hall Mack Co., 1943) p. 32.

<sup>1223</sup> *Revival Echoes: Special Edition of Standard Songs of Evangelism*, (New York: Tabernacle Publishing Co., 1926) p. 8.

Though the image of Christ knocking is not mentioned in the lyrics, it is likely that Revelation 3:20 is at least one of the biblical passages that inspired the writer.<sup>1224</sup> In *A Heart Renewed* Anne Dutton identified Revelation 3:20 as the main biblical source.<sup>1225</sup>

Stirred by the conversion of a man who cried out, 'Come into my heart, Lord Jesus, come in to stay!' Harry D. Clark wrote the song *Into My Heart*.<sup>1226</sup>

Into my heart, into my heart,  
Come into my heart, Lord Jesus;  
Come in today, come in to stay;  
Come into my heart, Lord Jesus.<sup>1227</sup>

Verse three introduces the plea for forgiveness. Based on the hope expressed by the hymn writer, it is evident that the removal of guilt is understood as the immediate effect of Christ entering the heart.

*A Home in My Heart for Jesus* by Lanta W. Smith provides a similar expression. The opening phrase, 'There's a home in my heart for Jesus, in the heart He has cleansed from sin' emphasizes the heart as receptacle of Jesus' forgiveness. With this expression, Smith may not have intended to articulate a doctrinal understanding of salvation and justification. Regardless, the lyrics testify to the perceived reality of Jesus residing within the believer's heart resulting in salvation.<sup>1228</sup>

Of popular hymns based on Revelation 3:20, *Jesus Thou Art Standing* had a highly successful publishing record. Written in 1867 by Anglican minister William Walsham How, it was speedily printed two years later in *Sunday School Songs* by Brown and Bross (Hartford, Connecticut). Soon afterwards it was printed in numerous adult hymnals, youth hymnals, the songbooks of various societies and, by 1892, featured in *The World's Best Hymns* published by Little, Brown & Company in Boston. Cope included it in his list of 100 hymns, as did H. Augustine Smith in *Lyric Religion*.

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<sup>1224</sup> Kenneth Osbeck affiliated the hymn with Psalm 40:2-3. Osbeck reported that the hymn was written before Daniels attended a Billy Sunday-Homer Rodeheaver campaign, but that Daniels gave the text to Charles Gabriel after a revival service. Rodeheaver used it with much success at the next revival meeting. See Kenneth W. Osbeck, *25 Most Treasured Gospel Hymn Stories* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1999) p. 81, 82.

<sup>1225</sup> Anne Dutton, *A Heart Renewed* (Xulon Press, 2008) p. 9.

<sup>1226</sup> Sanville, p. 62.

<sup>1227</sup> *Revival Echoes: Special Edition of Standard Songs of Evangelism*, p. 95.

<sup>1228</sup> The African American spiritual *Something Happened When He Saved Me* (page 151) used similar terminology.

Perhaps the most impressive achievement of this song is its inclusion in a great variety of denominational hymnals. Beginning with Baptists (1871), How's hymn soon spread to the Episcopal Church (1874), the Presbyterian (1872), and United Brethren in Christ (1874) within its first decade. By the turn of the century it had been printed by over twenty denominational publishing houses including the Congregational Christian Church (1880), Reformed Episcopal (1887) and the Moravian Church (1896). Representing ethnic interests, it was printed by the German Reformed Church in the United States (1890) and Reformed Protestant Dutch Church in America (1899). Ultimately this song was to find a place among marginalized groups, printed by the Unitarians (1890) and the Universalist Church of America (1890); its longevity demonstrated by its 1954 printing in the official hymnal of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. This publication record is a remarkable achievement. Though the song was not individualistic and its application broader than conversion, it sustained for American Protestants the image of Christ standing at the heart's door.

### 9.14 Imperative Hymns

As a command or prescriptive, the imperative mood calls for action. In a hymn text, the writer brings to the audience a request or call to response. Such songs are a bit illogical with the audience singing the song and, in effect, commanding itself. Nonetheless, use of the imperative is common in hymnody.

Mrs. C. H. Morris,<sup>1229</sup> the writer of *Let Jesus Come Into Your Heart*, is reported to have derived her inspiration during a Sunday morning church service at Mountain Lake Park, Maryland. At the close of the service, many responded to an invitation to pray at the altar. Mrs. Morris joined a particular woman at the altar who had responded to an invitation to repent at the 'altar'. George W. Sanville provided an account.

Mrs. Morris said, "Just now your doubting give o'er." Dr. H. L. Gilmour, song leader of the camp meeting, added another phrase, "Just now reject Him no more." L. H. Baker, the preacher of the sermon, earnestly importuned, "Just now throw open the door." Mrs. Morris made the last appeal, "Let Jesus Come Into Your Heart."<sup>1230</sup>

<sup>1229</sup> Mrs. C. H. Morris, also identified as Leila Naylor Morris.

<sup>1230</sup> Sanville, p. 28, 29.

Written by Mrs. Morris in 1898, this song was popular enough to be printed in over 50 hymnals within 10 years. While most of those hymnals were nondenominational, Morris' song was published by numerous denominations, including Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist Episcopal (South), Seventh Day Adventist, and Methodist Episcopal (North).

*Behold a Stranger at the Door*, a song about Jesus at the heart's door, is representative of hymns that issued a two-step charge: 1. Turn out sin, 2. Let in the Savior. As described at the outset of this chapter, Mrs. N. F. Mossell used this hymn to illustrate the power of hymns to convert. Mossell's description of a man recalling the hymn from his childhood is of import. Grigg's original version, as printed in *Lyra Britannica*, had eleven verses. Most American hymnals printed four verses, and there was some variation in selection. The *American Sunday School Hymn Book* included the fearsome lyrics of verses four and nine.

Rise! touch'd with gratitude divine  
Turn out His enemy and thine  
That hateful, hell-born monster sin<sup>1231</sup>  
And let the heavenly Stranger in

Admit Him; ere His anger burn  
His feet depart, ne'er to return  
Admit Him; or the hour's at hand  
When at His door denied you'll stand<sup>1232</sup>

If the man Mossell described had sung this Sunday School version as a child, it is not surprising that he hadn't forgotten its images of a hellish monster and the anger of Jesus at being denied entrance to his heart.<sup>1233</sup>

Yet Mossell's account reflects Grigg's original title, *Behold a Stranger at Thy Door*. By the early 1800s, most American hymnals printed the revised title, *Behold the Savior at Thy Door*, (also used by Susan Warner in *Wide, Wide World*). For American Protestants, the knocking guest was no stranger.

<sup>1231</sup> The *American Sunday School Hymn Book* edits this phrase, 'That soul-destroying monster, sin'. See *The American Sunday School Hymn Book*, p. 121.

<sup>1232</sup> Rev. Charles Rogers, *Lyra Britannica: A Collection of British Hymns Printed from the Genuine Texts with Biographical Sketches of the Hymn Writers* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1867) p. 254, 255.

<sup>1233</sup> Such imagery may be the reason that a writer for *The Constitution*, using Dr. William S. Sadler's physiological assessment of music (assessing songs according to the categories of strong and stimulating vs. weak and depressing), assigned *Behold a Stranger at the Door* as depressing. See 'Tonic in a Tune', *The Constitution*, Sunday 4 July 1915.



## 9.15 Fanny Crosby Hymns

As the most prolific hymn lyricist since St. Romanos, and an icon of both laicization and feminization of hymnody, Fanny Crosby deserves privileged consideration. Crosby wrote several songs based on Revelation 3:20 from which she consistently derived a salvation hermeneutic. Though a late arrival among the songwriters whose songs came to dominate in American Protestantism, Crosby has six songs in the list of most printed American Protestant hymns compiled by Stephen Marini.<sup>1234</sup> Collectively, Crosby's hymns reflect her understanding of Jesus' calling (or knocking) role in salvation and the obligation upon the sinner to respond (or open the door).

Crosby songs that directly related the salvific understanding of Revelation 3:20 were numerous. *The Master is Come* is based almost entirely on the scenario of Christ knocking at the door of the sinner's heart.

The Master is come, and calleth for thee,  
He stands at the door of thy heart,  
No friend so forgiving, so gentle as He,  
Oh, say, wilt thou let Him depart?

Patiently waiting, earnestly pleading,  
Jesus, thy Savior, knocks at thy heart,  
Patiently waiting, earnestly pleading,  
Jesus, thy Savior, knocks at thy heart.<sup>1235</sup>

Salvation is presented as punctiliar in the phrase, 'This moment what joy may be thine'.

Crosby's *Behold Me Standing at the Door* mirrors the voice of Christ speaking. Significant to Crosby's lyric is the phrase, 'I bring thee pardon, peace and love'.

Behold Me standing at the door,  
And hear Me pleading evermore:  
Say, weary heart, oppressed with sin,  
May I come in? May I come in?

In his book, *The Christ of Forty Days*, A. B. Simpson may have quoted Crosby's construction, 'Behold me standing at the door' in the midst of his salvation plea.<sup>1236</sup>

<sup>1234</sup> By comparison Reginald Heber, author of *Holy, Holy, Holy* has three and John Newton, author of *Amazing Grace*, has ten.

<sup>1235</sup> John R. Sweney and Wm. J. Kirkpatrick (eds.), *The Ark of Praise: Containing Sacred Songs and Hymns for the Sabbath School, Prayer Meeting, Etc.* (Philadelphia: John J. Hood, 1883) p. 38. Verse one and chorus.

By presenting Christ in a saving role, Crosby's operant hermeneutic of Revelation 3:20 indicates the common salvific interpretation of her era. Rather than seeking a restored fellowship with lapsed or nominal believers (as the address to the Laodicean church suggests) Crosby reinforced the typical salvific usage and soteriological understanding of the passage. *Come in O Blessed One* reinforced the belief that Christ takes residence in the heart. *Close Thy Heart No More* shows the depth of Crosby's passion to bring her audience to the point of critical choice.

Crosby also makes use of the interrogative style hymn. *Shall I Be Saved Tonight?* postures the sinner in conversation with themselves. To Crosby, the moment of Christ knocking is the moment of salvation. In opening the door, the sinner is saved and the transaction is completed.

Quickly I'll open this bolted door  
 Save me O Lord to-night  
 Blessed Redeemer, come in, come in  
 Pity my sorrow, forgive my sin  
 Now let Thy work in my soul begin  
 for I will be saved to-night<sup>1237</sup>

## 9.16 Conclusion

As the evangelistic success of the tent meeting was institutionalized for the church service, revival methods and language used to describe and prescribe the conversion experience became normative. Experiential conversionism took hold and, emboldened by personal witness, the living faith of converts fed into a cyclical pattern of *experience validating testimony* and *testimony validating experience*. Emerging from the cycle was a conversion vocabulary that, in turn, formulated perceptions of salvation. That formula was carved out largely in the domain of hymnody through which it wielded exceptional influence in the faith and praxis of American Protestant conversionism.

The functional role of the Bible diminished in experiential conversionism. Though some biblical passages were heightened, they were not necessarily known through Bible reading or preaching. Further, they were interpreted in line with experientialism. Of the thousands of converts that were 'saved' by the evangelistic

<sup>1236</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Christ of Forty Days* (New York: The Christian Alliance Pub. Co., 1890?) p. 98.

<sup>1237</sup> Geo. D. Elderkin (ed.), *The Finest of the Wheat: Hymns New and Old for Missionary and Revival Meetings, and Sabbath-Schools* (Chicago: R. R. McCabe & Co., 1890) p. 30.

construct of Revelation 3:20 in hymns, how many took the time to read the letter to the Laodicean church as found in the Bible itself? This question is obviously theoretical and beyond the reach of social history but, the counter claim that many took the time to memorize the evangelistic construct of Revelation 3:20 as delivered by hymnody, is clearly established.

Hymns served to shape and perpetuate personal-experiential understandings of the Bible. Where the Bible was without distinct phraseology, hymnody performed a vital function. The directive to 'invite Jesus into your heart' was not found in the Bible, but it became an authoritative phrase for hymn writers and the substance of 'evangelistic theology'. As a primary source the Bible provided ideas but hymn writers took poetic license to elaborate the theological details. In hymnic theology, Jesus knocking at the door of everyone's heart was the marriage of prevenient grace and Arminianist soteriology. The image of 'forcing Jesus to depart' or the fearsome text 'Admit or the hour's at hand when at his door denied you'll stand' juxtaposed irresistible grace. The 'pierced hand that knocketh' to 'wash sin away' confirmed the doctrine of atonement. Sermons may have prompted conviction, but hymns escorted 'the penitent' to conversion. The Bible framed the image of Jesus knocking at the door of the Laodicean church, but hymns filled in the picture, theologizing the moment of Jesus' entry.

The Bible may have been set apart in creedal statements as the 'sole guide to salvation' but, in function, hymns were the *soul's guide to salvation*; as Mossell stated, 'There is power in a hymn to convert souls.' Sizer claimed that post-Finneyism witnessed a hymnal that made 'a claim to ultimacy'. No exaggeration. Hymn collections were virtually universal, out-selling the Bible; hymns were virtually essential in conversion, out-saving the Bible. While propositional theology claimed the supremacy of the Bible, 'evangelistic theology' claimed the soteriological efficacy of the hymnal. Not that the Bible was obsolete, but according to Niebuhr, conversion happened when the hymn was sung.

Hymn texts contributed to 'regulative theology' and 'made faith audible' more than any other medium, the Bible not excepting. As regulative theology, they facilitated the punctiliar experience of justification. As a vital contributor to 'evangelistic theology', hymn texts made conversion audible and promised Jesus' forgiveness. These concepts are not to be found in Revelation 3:20 where, at best, Jesus promises

restored fellowship with lapsed believers. Where the biblical text was lacking an operative expression, the hymn text provided one.

The man described by Mossell remembered the words of *Behold a Stranger at the Door*. The drunken man described by Sankey remembered a hymn long after the sermon had been forgotten. These stories, held to be true, show how adults carried children's hymns into their adult years – 'hiding them in their hearts' as it were. If not true, all the more powerful that the narrators would create salvation legends around hymns.

Developments in theology can be traced through hymnody. As a case study, the numerous hymns based on Revelation 3:20 demonstrate the gradual standardization of transactional salvation language. The salvation invitation offered by Christ to the heart of each person became a universal prescription. On an individual level (which became the normative interpretation of Revelation 3:20) Christ would ultimately and faithfully stand at the door of each person. The respondent's perspective of having prior knowledge and fellowship with Christ (as was the case with the Laodiceans) was foreign to the soteriological application. Rather than a call to those with prior belief, Christ was projected as a Savior-figure pleading with unbelievers to open their heart's door for the first time. Welcoming the person of Christ resulted in salvation.

In expressing their experiences, did hymn writers shape the expectations of converts and the criteria of normative conversion experience? Yes. Whether their versifications articulated their own salvation experience or attempted to describe a conversion they witnessed, the conversion hymnody that emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century shaped the normative understanding of salvation. When different hymn writers utilized the same biblical text, was there a trend toward uniformity of interpretation? Yes. The popular usage of Revelation 3:20 provided a visual picture for the perceived spiritual reality of the salvation experience for hymn writers. In fact, it is unlikely that any other New Testament verse took on such a dominant role of universal interpretation in the hymnology of the era. Hymn writers were drawn to the impacting scenario of Christ's appeal to the church at Laodicea. Conversionism was an essential emphasis of 19<sup>th</sup> century evangelical Protestantism, and Revelation 3:20 emerged as its theme verse, with most hymn writers perpetuating the popular salvation hermeneutic rather than a post-conversion admonishment.

The salvific interpretation by hymnwriters influencing theology is overwhelming. As Revelation 3:20 was presented in hymnody, though the grammatical style is interrogative, testimonial, or imperative, the hymn writers maintained a consistent teaching of transactional salvation. The scenario of Christ ‘knocking’ and the sinner ‘opening’, demonstrates the prevenient grace of God in tandem with a person’s capacity as a free and capable agent. The crisis experience, described as momentary, emphasizes the punctiliar nature of conversion. While Paul alluded to the residence of Christ in the heart,<sup>1238</sup> the salvific usage of Revelation 3:20 prescribed as inevitable the occasion in which Christ approaches each sinner. In this sense, Revelation 3:20 provided an understanding of the conversion-transaction process: Jesus knocks, the sinner opens the door, and Jesus enters. The warnings within hymn lyrics against refusing Christ entry are equally authoritative.

In 1965 Bill Bright of Campus Crusade For Christ fashioned this understanding into a salvation ‘blueprint’ that served as a dogmatic procedure copyrighted as the *Four Spiritual Laws*. Law Four says, ‘We must individually RECEIVE Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know and experience God’s love and plan for our lives.’<sup>1239</sup> Providing instructions to potential converts, Law Four quotes Revelation 3:20.

We Receive Christ by Personal Invitation [Christ speaking] “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him” (Revelation 3:20).<sup>1240</sup>

The *Four Spiritual Laws* is a fairly recent publication, but there is significant precedent in 19<sup>th</sup>-century hymns for its rise to the central place in current evangelical Protestant soteriology, and demonstrate that the authority of the hymnal was particularized in its soteriological efficacy.

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<sup>1238</sup> Ephesians 3:17

<sup>1239</sup> *Have You Heard of the Four Spiritual Laws?*, (Campus Crusade for Christ, 1965).

<sup>1240</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter Ten: Hymns and the Missionary Impulse

In this chapter I will demonstrate that hymns were vital to the American missionary enterprise. First, I will discuss Heber's hymn, *From Greenland's Icy Mountains* as the primary missionary hymn of the period, and perceptions that tie its message to millennialism, imperialism, and heathenism. Second, I will present the Americanization of mission hymnody, and show how missionary hymns illustrate the ethnocentric nature of 19<sup>th</sup>-century American missions. Finally, I will demonstrate the role of hymns in foreign and Native American missions and show how hymns were essential in promoting the missionary enterprise and the transmission of the evangelical message. At times, I will engage the work of Richard Steadman Mauney, who explored the development of American missionary hymnody in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1241</sup>

As I have discussed the Christianization of black slaves in the context of the American Missionary Association and prominent denominations (chapter seven), in this chapter I will focus on foreign missions and home missions to Native Americans. However, I will point out the role of African Americans in supporting the missionary enterprise, especially the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Fisk Jubilee Singers.

### 10.1 Introduction

The miraculous influence of hymns for the success of the missionary enterprise was a theme frequently presented in books, newspaper articles, and sermons. The 1885 *Manual of the Methodist Episcopal Church* narrated the story of Rev. E. P. Scott. While serving in India, Scott and his wife were surrounded by a 'crowd of savages' who pointed spears at their hearts. According to the tradition, Scott closed his eyes and played *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name* on his violin. While singing the stanza, 'Let every kindred, every tribe on this terrestrial ball, Bring forth the royal diadem and crown him Lord of all', the tribesmen dropped their spears and began to

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<sup>1241</sup> Mauney focused on Congregationalists, Baptists, Presbyterians and Methodists and analyzed dominant hymnals published over the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Mauney summarized the purpose of hymnody: missions hymns were used in the world-wide extension of Christ, redemption of the Jews, intercession for missionaries, charging and sending missionaries, ordination of missionaries, training missionaries and soliciting funds for missions and recruitment. See Richard Steadman Mauney, 'The Development of Missionary Hymnody in the United States of America in the Nineteenth Century', (Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1993).

cry.<sup>1242</sup> William Hart of the American Home Missionary Society reported the abduction of Rev. and Mrs. R. W. Porteous while serving in China. Facing certain death from 'an axe-like knife', the missionary couple began to sing *Face to face with Christ my Saviour*, causing the executioner to let them go.<sup>1243</sup>

Not all of the stories of hymns are as spectacular as those described above, yet the corpus of 19<sup>th</sup>-century missions literature is saturated with homage to hymns. Hymns were central to the missionary enterprise and, in the mission field, hymns wielded soteriological efficacy similar to conversion hymns used in American revivals. As a theological device, hymns expressed the religious rhetoric of missions, expressed religio-political ideologies, and communicated the apocalyptic urgency of missions. The hymns of missionaries facilitated meaningful communication with peoples of oral traditions (both home and abroad), and were translated alongside the Bible as a critical source of doctrine.

## 10.2 From Greenland's Icy Mountains

From Greenland's icy mountains  
 From India's coral strand  
 Where Afric's sunny fountains  
 Roll down their golden sand  
 From many an ancient river  
 From many a balmy plain  
 They call us to deliver  
 Their land from error's chain

What though the spicy breezes  
 Blow soft on Ceylon's isle  
 Though every prospect pleases  
 And only man is vile?  
 In vain with lavish kindness  
 The gifts of God are strewn  
 The heathen in his blindness  
 Bows down to wood and stone

Shall we, whose souls are lighted  
 With wisdom from on high  
 Shall we to man benighted  
 The lamp of life deny?  
 Salvation! O salvation!  
 The joyful sound proclaim

<sup>1242</sup> 'That Mighty Name', *Manual of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, (January 1885), 110-111 p. 110, 111.

<sup>1243</sup> Kenneth W. Osbeck, *101 More Hymn Stories* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1985) p. 87, 88.

Till earth's remotest nation  
Has learned Messiah's name

Waft, waft, ye winds, his story  
And you, ye waters, roll  
Till, like a sea of glory  
It spreads from pole to pole  
Till o'er our ransomed nature  
The Lamb for sinners slain  
Redeemer, King, Creator  
In bliss return to reign<sup>1244</sup>

*From Greenland's Icy Mountains* (1819) by England's Reginald Heber, was written four years before he was called to serve in India as Bishop of Calcutta. At the time of writing Heber (1783-1826) was the vicar of Hodnet. J. R. Watson describes the hymn as 'a conspicuous example of that fervent belief in the need to convert the world to Christianity which led Heber and others to lay down their lives in the mission field.'<sup>1245</sup>

Heber's hymn enjoyed remarkable success in the American missionary enterprise. Printed in almost 1300 hymnals between the years 1826 and 1930, its recognition as one of the dominant hymns of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is uncontested. Heber's hymn was included in Thompson's canon of American hymns, *The Best Church Hymns* by Benson, *The Top 100 Hymns* by Cope, and 'World Favorites' by Reeves, giving overwhelming support to its placement as 15<sup>th</sup> in Marini's list.

Various factors contributed to the success of Heber's hymn in America. In 1823 American Lowell Mason wrote a tune to match the text, appropriately entitled *Missionary Hymn*. Its mention of Greenland (a region included in the North American continent) may have heightened a sense of identification among Americans. Greenland figured prominently in later descriptions of the missionary enterprise; the belief that Greenland was the birthplace of the modern missionary enterprise was expressed by Congregationalist pastor and journalist Lyman Abbott (1835-1922).

Protestant missions, in their present form, have only existed from about the beginning of the present century. The Moravians were forerunners and pioneers in this work. In 1733 two of their number went to Greenland, [...] And it was not until 1793 that missions on any extended scale to the heathen were undertaken. Not until 1810 was the first missionary organization in the United States founded - the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign

<sup>1244</sup> J. H. Vincent (ed.), *The Epworth Hymnal* (New York and Cincinnati: Phillips & Hunt and Cranston & Stowe, 1885) p. 175.

<sup>1245</sup> J. R. Watson, *An Annotated Anthology of Hymns* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) p. 243.



Perhaps the main attraction of Heber's hymn was its alignment with American imperialism and Protestant millennialism.

Temple University's Robert A. Schneider recognized in the lyrics an attitude of religious superiority and the implication of world conquest, though he appealed to 'a larger theological context' and millennialism as a likely motivation.<sup>1247</sup> Sandra S. Sizer considered *From Greenland's Icy Mountains* to be 'a prototype of nineteenth-century imperial religion' in which 'mission is equated with ideological conquest.' In her research on the rhetoric of revival and mission hymns, Sizer suggested a shift in the American approach from imperial mission to rescue mission, in which the metaphors shifted from empire to harvest ('bringing in the sheaves') and nautical themes ('throw out the lifeline').<sup>1248</sup> Richard Mouw opposed Sandra Sizer's analysis of American gospel hymns on various fronts (especially Sizer's charge that American Protestants shifted to a passive mode in their 'rescue' rhetoric), but he seems to have conceded the earlier mode of active imperialism.<sup>1249</sup> Jon Michael Spencer, author of *Black Hymnody: A Hymnological History of the African-American Church*, suggested 'Social Darwinism' to be inherent to white missions hymns and cited Sherrodd Albritton's view of 'implicit imperialism' in Heber's hymn.<sup>1250</sup>

But there is a difference to be noted in the contexts of composition and of usage. Some hymns fed into imperialistic attitudes, but the original hymn writers did not necessarily intend such application. Ian Bradley addressed this dynamic in his discussion of Victorian hymn-writers.

A good number of hymns were written to order or specially commissioned for particular reasons. 'Onward, Christian soldiers' falls into this category, having been penned by the young Sabine Baring-Gould for an outdoor Whit Sunday children's procession. Those who object to its supposed militarism are perhaps unaware of the fact that it was never intended for use in church. Those missionary hymns that also cause such unease today because of their perceived racism and imperialism often belonged to a similar category, as in

<sup>1246</sup> Lyman Abbott, 'Christian Missions', *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 50/297 (February 1875), 392-402 p. 395.

<sup>1247</sup> Robert A. Schneider, 'Jesus Shall Reign: Hymns and Foreign Missions, 1800-1870', in Richard J. Mouw and Mark A. Noll (eds.), *Wonderful Words of Life: Hymns in American Protestant History and Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 69-95 p. 84.

<sup>1248</sup> Sizer, p. 43.

<sup>1249</sup> Mouw, "'Some Poor Sailor, Tempest Tossed": Nautical Rescue Themes in Evangelical Hymnody', p. 239. Mouw opposed Sizer's analysis. His motivation in writing on evangelical hymnody was based on his love of hymns and his desire to engage Sizer's interpretations.

<sup>1250</sup> Spencer, *Black Hymnody: A Hymnological History of the African-American Church* p. 169.

the case of 'From Greenland's icy mountains', and were not written to be sung at regular services.<sup>1251</sup>

Other than suggesting that Heber's hymn was not intended for 'regular services', Bradley does not expand on its intended audience.

American writers, emphasizing Heber's purpose to compose the hymn to accompany his father-in-law's Sunday sermon on missions, cast its role within the missionary enterprise of Protestantism. In 'The Missionary' (1888) Rev. Alexander Ransom of the African American Episcopal Church promoted the missionary impulse. Heber's hymn was central to Ransom's campaign.

Let the Church of to-day hand down to [sic] Sabbath school the proper instruction in the great and grand cause of missionary work, both home and foreign, and the day is not far in the distance when "From Greenland's icy mountains, To India's coral strand" every nation will recognize the one God Christ Jesus. [...] But there are millions of our brethren to-day away to the setting sun in the jungles of heathenism and will never be otherwise than so unless we, their brethren, send to them help. I hear now their mournful cry: "Come over, Christians, if there be, And help us, ere we die."<sup>1252</sup>

Ransom's writing indicates active support for Protestant missions by the African American Episcopal Methodist Church and shows the use of hymns (and Heber's in particular) to encourage the missionary enterprise.

Ransom's view was not uncommon. A writer for the *Christian Recorder* who reported on the fundraising successes of The Fisk Jubilee Singers, The Hampton Students, and The Carolina Singers, appealed for a choir to support the missionary cause.

Could not a band of singers be organized as "Missionary Singers" to raise money for missionary purposes, one half for Haiti and one half for Africa? The beautiful missionary hymn "From Greenland's icy mountains' and other stirring songs would arouse a missionary zeal and prompt to liberal gifts.<sup>1253</sup>

Heber's hymn also resonated with the millennialist emphasis associated with missions. Rev. R. C. Shimeall cited John and Charles Wesley, Augustus Toplady, and Bishop Heber, as 'Millenarian authorities'.<sup>1254</sup> Nathaniel West (1826-1906), a

<sup>1251</sup> Bradley, p. 100.

<sup>1252</sup> Alexander Ransom, 'The Missionary', *The Christian Recorder*, (16 August 1888).

<sup>1253</sup> T. S. M., 'Missionary Singers', *The Christian Recorder*, May 1873.

<sup>1254</sup> R. C. Shimeall, *Shimeall's New Work on Christ's Second Coming: The Great Question of the Day. Is It Pre- or Post-Millennial?* (New York: John F. Trow & Co., Publishers, 1866) p. 7.

prominent pastor, speaker, and author of various books on the Second Coming, fixed the millennial message to hymn writers.

Isaac Watts turned his harp to sing the pre-millennial theme, and Charles Wesley woke his muse to the same numbers. Cowper composed a matchless invocation to the Coming King, and Montgomery, Heber, and how many more! all sang in concert, while the bosom of the whole Church thrilled with delight, and ten thousand tongues broke forth into loud hallelujahs, and old men and maid, and young men and matrons, and “babes and sucklings” became pre-millennarians *en masse* without either dogmatics or exegesis. So God works.<sup>1255</sup>

In particular, West discussed Heber’s hymn in light of the missionary movement as ‘the gathering from among all nations’.

Now, it is manifest that this gathering is in order to the Coming of the Redeemer – which Coming is in order to the inbringing of the Millennium. [...] This is the hope that energizes the great Missionary Church of modern times [...] This was the hope that inspired Heber, the great missionary bishop of the English Church, who gave us that glorious missionary hymn, “From Greenland’s Icy Mountains,” and who spent his strength and rested from his labors on “India’s coral strand.”<sup>1256</sup>

Even accolades of Heber’s text and Mason’s tune were laced with millennialist rhetoric. Of Heber’s text admirers on both sides of the Atlantic likened the final verse to ‘the reveille of millennial morning’.<sup>1257</sup> Of Mason’s tune (*Missionary Hymn*) George B. Bacon described its longevity, declaring that it ‘bids fair to last almost till that millennial day when the need of missionary hymns is over’.<sup>1258</sup>

### 10.3 Missions, Millennialism, and Imperialism

As a rubric of theological expression in hymns, Mauney used six points from an ordination sermon by Dr. Leonard Woods delivered on behalf of missionaries appointed by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Mauney summarized Woods’ points.

Wood’s [sic] six “motives” for the spread of Christianity are: 1) the worth of souls, 2) the provision of Christ for the salvation of all, 3) the command of Christ, 4) the example of the apostles and martyrs of the Christian faith, 5) the exclusive nature of Judaism, and 6) insights from biblical prophecies.<sup>1259</sup>

<sup>1255</sup> Nathaniel West, *The Second Coming of Christ: Premillennial Essay of the Prophetic Conference, Held in the Church of the Holy Trinity, New York City*. (Chicago: F. H. Revell, 1879) p. 384.

<sup>1256</sup> *Ibid.* p. 466-468.

<sup>1257</sup> In England, see ‘Heber and His Hymn’, *The Messenger and Missionary Record of the Presbyterian Church in England*, (1873), 181-183 p. 182. In the United States, see ‘The Story of a Hymn’, *The Sailor’s Magazine and Seaman’s Friend*, 54/2 (1882), 40-42 p. 41.

<sup>1258</sup> George B. Bacon, ‘Lowell Mason’, *The Congregational Quarterly*, 15/1 (1873), 1-15 p. 9.

<sup>1259</sup> Mauney, p. 90. Woods’ sermon was dated 6 February 1812.

While Mauney demonstrated the manner in which hymns reflected the theological principles of Dr. Woods' 'six points', he gave considerable attention to the final point, 'insights from biblical prophecies'.<sup>1260</sup> This may suggest that the eschatological interests of missions were influential on hymn writers. First, Mauney confirmed the millennial emphasis in missionary hymns by British and American hymnists.

Many missionary hymns of the nineteenth century express the optimism that the "golden age" of the Church was imminent. Among these are "The morning light is breaking" by Samuel F. Smith, "Yes, we trust the day is breaking" by Thomas Kelly, "Hark! the song of Jubilee" by James Montgomery, and "Wake the song of Jubilee" by Leonard Bacon.<sup>1261</sup>

Secondly, Mauney identified the tendency toward biblical prophecies in missionary hymns, especially texts from Isaiah, Revelation, Jeremiah, and Micah. For Mauney, the sense of urgency for the Church to fulfill biblical prophecy was paramount to missions and therefore paramount to missionary hymnody.

Mauney's research has ramifications for hymnic authority, namely: Mauney gave the impression of a causal relationship between preaching and hymnody. Mauney may not have intended to suggest causality, but his reconstruction of the missionary impulse suggests that homiletics informed hymnody.<sup>1262</sup> Mauney writes,

In this study, therefore, Wood's six "motives" will serve as a basis for the theological principles that stimulated the foreign missions movement in the nineteenth century and found expression in the missionary hymns of the period.<sup>1263</sup>

While Woods' 1812 sermon may have been representative of early-19<sup>th</sup> century 'theological principles', most of 'the missionary hymns of the period' that Mauney used as expressions of Woods' principles were written well before Woods' ordination sermon. Indeed, Isaac Watts, Charles Wesley, Thomas Gibbons and William Williams flourished before Woods was born! This makes it impossible for Woods' theological principles to 'stimulate the foreign missions movement' thereafter reflected in hymnody.

Though a causal relationship cannot be supported, neither can the chronological reality be denied. The rich legacy of English hymnody Mauney referenced existed even before the inauguration of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign

<sup>1260</sup> Mauney demonstrated the first five points on pages 91-99 and the sixth point on pages 99-106.

<sup>1261</sup> Mauney, p. 101.

<sup>1262</sup> Mauney reflects the obstacle (to research) that presupposes hymnic subordination to biblical authority or, in this case, homiletical authority.

<sup>1263</sup> Mauney, p. 90.

Missions (ABC FM) in 1810. The American missionary impulse owed something of its global enterprise to the precedent of British missions. This bears some similarity to the development of Sunday School (sections 6.2 and 6.3). In both of these ministry areas, hymns were critical at an early stage. Hymns reflected existing theology, but their role in articulating theology and shaping ministry, as in the case with the missionary impulse, deserves estimation.

Most of the main denominations in the United States at the outset of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had historical ties to British Protestantism. As such, it is not surprising that British influence was considerable, not only in hymnody as discussed above, but also in the missionary enterprise. In the realm of missions, millennialism came to play a significant role as a motivational factor. Millennialism had established a foothold in Britain since the 17<sup>th</sup> century and, with the eschatological emphasis of evangelicalism gaining momentum, had become one of the key motivators behind the missionary movement by the late-18<sup>th</sup> century. In *The Church Mission Society and World Christianity, 1799-1999*, Kevin Ward described the missionary impulse in the context of evangelicalism in Britain.

The urgency of mission was intimately connected with the hope of a coming millennial age. In those early years, this was mainly understood in terms of the gradual diffusion of the knowledge of Christ through the world and the amelioration of the injustices inherent in systems of world power as a prelude to the inauguration of God's kingdom.<sup>1264</sup>

Andrew Porter substantiated this rendering and furthered its application to the United States.

The association by historians of modern Protestant missions with eschatological speculation and millennial enthusiasm, particularly in the period 1780-1830, is not new. The pervasiveness and importance of these ideas in various forms and at many different levels in British and American society have been extensively studied, and the significance of a powerful eschatological dimension in originating and sustaining the LMS, the BMS, and Scottish societies has been clearly established.<sup>1265</sup>

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<sup>1264</sup> Kevin Ward, "Taking Stock": The Church Missionary Society and Its Historians', in Kevin Ward and Brian Stanley (eds.), *The Church Mission Society and World Christianity, 1799-1999* (Grand Rapids, Michigan and Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 15-42 p. 22. This section is entitled, 'The Origins and Motivation of the Church Missionary Society'. Ward set the CMS within the larger context of 'the evangelical awakening' and noted the influence of the Baptist missionary William Carey.

<sup>1265</sup> Andrew Porter, 'Evangelicalism, Islam, and Millennial Expectation in the Nineteenth Century', in Dana L. Robert (ed.), *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Modern Mission History, 1706-1914* (Studies in the History of Christian Missions: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2007), 60-85 p. 63.

As missions and millennialism were inseparable, so too were missions and hymnody. Syllogistically, the connection between millennialism and hymnody was, perhaps, a foregone conclusion.

There were two major strands of millennialism: premillennialism and postmillennialism. Inspired by Revelation 14:6, postmillennialism idealized the worldwide proclamation of the gospel before the Millennium, *after* which the Second Coming would occur. This prompted the global evangelism effort of many American Protestants to usher in the millennial reign of Christ. Premillennialism held that the Second Coming of Christ would *precede* the Millennium. Buoyed by Jesus' teaching that the fields were 'ripe unto harvest', premillennialists understood the 'heathen world' to be the 'ripe harvest'. Premillennialists supposed that all believers would be saved from the Tribulation by Jesus' Second Coming, and hoped to convert as many souls as they could before the apocalyptic cataclysm occurred. Despite these theological differences, American millennialists held in common 'a sense of urgency and the belief that God had put America in the vanguard'.<sup>1266</sup>

According to David W. Kling, the ABCFM was motivated by 'unabashed millennial optimism'.<sup>1267</sup> In 'The Memoirs of Mrs. Judson' featured in the 1829 *Baptist Missionary Magazine*, Baptists were called to donate funds so that 'the great missionary enterprise be urged forward to a happy consummation', explaining that the 'progress of redemption' was required before the 'millennial reign of the Redeemer shall take place'.<sup>1268</sup> Judson's memoir was in keeping with the Address to the Christian Public Prepared and Published by a Committee of the ABCFM that stated, 'If the Messiah was then the Desired of all nations, his millennial reign is no less so now'.<sup>1269</sup> These publications attest to millennialist missiology at the outset of the American missionary enterprise.

From Francis Wayland's memoir of Adoniram Judson, a case can be made for the theological connection between the missionary enterprise and the premillennial

<sup>1266</sup> Heather A. Warren, *Theologians of a New World Order: Reinhold Niebuhr and the Christian Realists 1920-1948* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997) p. 14.

<sup>1267</sup> David W. Kling, 'The New Divinity and the Origins of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions', in Wilbert R. Shenk (ed.), *North American Foreign Missions, 1810-1914: Theology, Theory and Policy* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Co., 2004), 11-38 p. 15.

<sup>1268</sup> 'Memoir of Mrs. Judson', *The American Baptist Magazine*, 10/4 (1830), 114-118 p. 117.

<sup>1269</sup> Jedidiah Morse, Samuel Worcester, and Jeremiah Everts, 'An Address to the Christian Public Prepared and Published by a Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions', *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine United*, 4/6 (1881), 241-247 p. 244.

mission of 'the Church',<sup>1270</sup> as well as the authoritative role of hymnody to express the connection.

A lady in India, herself a missionary, was remarking with some severity on the character of the missionary gathering common at home, where she said a great crowd of people met to "glorify missionaries, make mutual admiration speeches, and sing millennial hymns." Dr. Judson replied that glorifying, and even mutual admiration, in such a connection, was robbery of God, but that – thanks to his grace! – the day for millennial hymns was dawning.<sup>1271</sup>

Judson's revulsion of missionary glorification was followed by a passionate defense of millennial hymns. For Judson, the merit of hymnody (especially millennial hymns) was deserved, and not at all compromised by the misguided homage paid to missionaries.

Protestants considered themselves God's 'faithful remnant' or 'arm of salvation' that would usher in the millennial reign of Christ. The report of the Methodist Ecumenical Council by the *Methodist Review* reflects this ideology.

We rejoice in the results of the recent Methodist Ecumenical Conference, not only because it has produced an increase of Methodist fervor and power, and lifted the denomination higher in the public estimation, but also because it has done some to prepare the way for that visible Protestant unity which must herald the millennial glory.<sup>1272</sup>

American Protestants learned to sing hymns that assigned them the lead role in the drama of salvation history. The Church became the New Israel, Gentiles were adopted as the seed of Israel's race and heirs of David, and the city of Zion the epicenter of millennialism. This type of thinking could be traced to Protestant hymnody at large where, in the lyrics of worship hymns, the celestial city of Zion (Jerusalem) was understood as an eternal abode.<sup>1273</sup> But in the United States, Zion took on specialized meaning as eternal *and* temporal. In this eschatological view Protestant unity was considered the precursor to Christ's millennial rule over Zion. This type of thinking assigned Protestantism a privileged role that justified the

<sup>1270</sup> References to 'the Church' suggest Protestant exceptionalism or exclusivism, suggesting that traditions outside of Protestantism were not considered equal partners in the missionary enterprise. The robust anti-Catholicism of the times would factor into the Protestant perception as well. This anti-Catholic bias was reflected in Ryder and Proctor (section 7.25).

<sup>1271</sup> Francis Wayland, *A Memoir of the Life and Labors of the Rev. Adoniram Judson, D.D.* (Boston: Phillips, Sampson, and Company, 1854) p. 371.

<sup>1272</sup> A. C. George, 'The Methodist Ecumenical Conference', *Methodist Quarterly Review*, 64 (January 1882), 91-107 p. 107.

<sup>1273</sup> For example, *Chosen Seed and Zion's Children* (Rutstrom) and *Marching to Zion* (Watts). 'Zion' figured heavily into American hymns, such as Crosby's *King of Zion; Awake, O Zion's Daughter*; and *The Lord Reigneth in Zion*. Throughout the period 1830-1939 many hymnals were named after Zion, for example, *Hymns of Zion* (1829) *The Zion Songster* (1853), *Echoes from Zion* (1874), *Zion's Battle Cry* (1895) and *Melodies of Zion* (1926).

transfer of prophetic authority (with Zion as an adopted ideological property) to the American continent. In sum, preoccupation with millennialism coupled with the Americanization of Zion (hearkening back to Dwight, section 2.1) facilitated a new brand of American Protestant apocalypticism. Mary A. Thomson's hymn (c. 1870) *O Zion, Haste* is representative of American missions of the late-19<sup>th</sup> century.

O Zion, haste, thy mission high fulfilling  
 To tell to all the world that God is light,  
 That He who made all nations is not willing  
 One soul should perish, lost in the shades of night<sup>1274</sup>

Though millennialism may not have been a leading theme of English hymns, its expression in missionary hymns was certainly showcased by English hymn writers. Burder's missionary hymn *Rise, Sun of Glory, Rise!*, popular in American hymnals from 1830 to 1860, emphasized key aspects of missions, including the global spread of the Gospel, the enlightenment of 'heathen cultures' and the millennial culmination of Christ's kingdom.

Rise, Sun of glory – rise!  
 And chase those shades of night  
 Which now obscure the skies  
 And hide thy sacred light  
  
 Oh chase those dismal shades away  
 And bring the bright millennial day!  
 Now send thy Spirit down  
 On all the nations, Lord!  
 With great success to crown  
 The preaching of thy word;  
 That heathen lands may own thy sway,  
 and cast their idol-gods away  
  
 Then shall thy kingdom come  
 Among our fallen race  
 And all the earth become  
 The temple of thy grace  
 Whence pure devotion shall ascend  
 And songs of praise, till time shall end<sup>1275</sup>

The millennialist language of conquest was also evident in children's missionary hymns, overtly so in *Battle Hymn of Missions* written by Ray Palmer (though the hymn's popularity did not extend much beyond the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century). Its lyrics of Christ's 'conquering reign' were suggestive of an apocalyptic war.

<sup>1274</sup> *The Hymnal*, (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1937). Hymn no. 382.

<sup>1275</sup> Lowell Mason and David Greene (eds.), *Church Psalmody: A Collection of Psalms and Hymns Adapted for Public Worship Selected from Dr. Watts and Other Authors* (Boston: Perkins, Marvin, & Co., 1834) p. 471.



We wait Thy triumph, Savior, King  
 Long ages have prepared Thy way  
 Now all abroad thy banner fling  
 Set time's great battle in array<sup>1276</sup>

The militarism of missions hymns were systemic of a greater theology, for missions was associated with the millennial reign of Christ, its proponents anticipating their role to usher in the Second Advent.

## 10.4 Heathenism and Hymnody

Heber's hymn would be harnessed for more than millennialist thought. His call to save the heathen from idolatry was emulated in many American mission hymns. In the language of the period, uncivilized persons were commonly regarded as 'heathen'. According to John Julian, the original manuscript of the hymn originally contained the phrase, 'The savage in his blindness'. Heber altered this as 'The heathen in his blindness',<sup>1277</sup> a change that emphasized spiritual depravity and softened judgmentalism of the nonChristian world.<sup>1278</sup>

Protestants from America joined in the imperialistic rhetoric of the period. The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church expressed its African mission as a 'mighty effort to conquer Africa for Christ.'<sup>1279</sup> As a theological device, hymns expressed the imperialistic rhetoric in spiritual language – though this was not necessarily an opportunistic usage of hymns, but reflected a deeply believed conviction that hymn writers were trusted to articulate.

The American missionary movement was, in large part, a civilizing enterprise. Whether at home or abroad, the juxtaposition between the missionary and the heathen was a constant. The missionary was an ambassador of civilization, of religion, and of America. In the critique of missions perceived by some, if not by many, as a 'religious invasion' and a 'constant menace to international relations', Mark Twain

<sup>1276</sup> Chas. H. Gabriel (ed.), *Sifted Wheat: A Collection of Songs for Sunday Schools, Young People's Societies, Devotional and Revival Meetings* (Dayton, Ohio: Lorenz & Company, Publishers, 1898).

<sup>1277</sup> John Julian (ed.), *A Dictionary of Hymnology* (1; New York: Dover Publications, 1957) p. 399.

<sup>1278</sup> In Heber's time, 'heathen' and 'savage' were not synonymous terms. Johnson and Walker's 1828 *Dictionary of the English Language* defines 'heathen' as 'Gentiles, the pagans, the nations unacquainted with the covenant of grace', whereas 'savage' is defined as 'wild, uncultivated, untamed, barbarian'.

<sup>1279</sup> Henry Frederic Reddall, 'Progress of Protestant Missions in the Dark Continent', *The Christian Recorder*, April 16 1885. Reddall's coverage of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was first published in the *Christian Advocate*.

weighed in as an ambassador for 'the heathen'. In his essay, *To the Person Sitting in Darkness* (1901) Twain rebuked imperialism as the cohort of missions.

Shall we? That is, shall we go on conferring our Civilization upon the peoples that sit in darkness, or shall we give those poor things a rest? Shall we bang right ahead in our old-time, loud, pious way, and commit the new century to the game; or shall we sober up and sit down and think it over first? Would it not be prudent to get our Civilization-tools together, and see how much stock is left on hand in the way of Glass Beads and Theology, and Maxim Guns and Hymn Books, and Trade-Gin and Torches of Progress and Enlightenment [...] so that we may intelligently decide whether to continue the business of sell out the property and start a new Civilization Scheme on the proceeds?<sup>1280</sup>

The role of the hymnal is (once again) awarded privileged comment by Twain. In his economy of imperialism and the missionary enterprise, 'Civilization-tools' and 'the Hymn Book' figure prominently, whereas the Bible is absent.<sup>1281</sup> Further, Twain's anaphoric use of the phrase 'Shall we?' seems to be a conscious (and clever) allusion to Heber's hymn.<sup>1282</sup> For Heber, the phrase was a rhetorical question that compelled Protestants to shine 'the lamp of life'; for Twain it was a rebuke of cultural superiority, imperialism, and a theological critique of the assumption that he and his fellow Americans had the right to define other civilizations as 'benighted' and themselves as 'torchbearers of enlightenment',<sup>1283</sup> (his disapproval likely triggered by American imperialism following the Spanish-American War of 1898).

Discussing foreign missions, Robert A. Schneider tied the imperialist message directly to hymns.

As we look at them now, the most conspicuous aspects of these hymns are their expression of belief in the superiority of Christianity and Christian culture to other religions and cultures, and their use of images of conquest to describe global evangelism. There certainly are enough heathen hymns and battle hymns to justify any charges of cultural imperialism.<sup>1284</sup>

In missionary hymnody, heathens were portrayed as culturally backward and spiritually deficient. This definition was applied in both home and foreign missions,

<sup>1280</sup> Mark Twain, *Tales, Speeches, Essays, and Sketches*, ed. Tom Quirk (New York: Penguin Books, 1994) p. 268, 269.

<sup>1281</sup> Twain gained a bird's eye view of the mission field while on assignment with the *Sacramento Union* in Hawaii (the Sandwich Islands). Twain writes, 'about twenty native women dressed in black rose up and sang some hymns like ours, but in the Kanaka tongue'. See Mark Twain, *Mark Twain's Letters from Hawaii*, ed. A. Grove Day (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1975) p. 165.

<sup>1282</sup> I am grateful to my supervisor Kevin Ward for pointing out this allusion and Twain's theological critique.

<sup>1283</sup> Twain may have been inspired by Rudyard Kipling's poem *The 'Eathen* (1896), a parody of Heber's hymn. See Watson, p. 243.

<sup>1284</sup> Schneider, p. 82.

for tribal cultures on the frontier of America were considered as barbaric as tribal cultures in foreign lands.<sup>1285</sup>

Discussing revised understandings of missions (in the United Church of Christ), Roger L. Shinn appealed to *O Zion, Haste, Thy Mission High Fulfilling*. For Shinn, Thomson's hymn was representative of the 'prominent place [given] to converting the heathen',<sup>1286</sup> an attitude since replaced in current missiology.

Today, world missions, while still supporting Christian communities around the world (as partners, not as dependent clients), are more likely to seek interfaith conversations than to proselytize. There are at least two reasons for this change. One is the plain evidence that several world religions are tenacious and resurgent. The more theological reason is the awareness that missions, as in the hymn just quoted [*O Zion, Haste, Thy Mission High Fulfilling*], have too often made judgments that only God can make.<sup>1287</sup>

Shinn's use of hymnody to express 19<sup>th</sup>-century missiology suggests that he recognized in mission hymnody the capacity to express the theological views of the period in which they were written (or to express the theological appropriation of previously written hymns). More importantly, hymns communicated soteriological judgment (defining 'heathen') that, according to Shinn, 'only God can make'.

Among the missionary hymns printed in American hymnals, there was a tendency toward heathenizing rhetoric: *Behold the Heathen Waits to Know*;<sup>1288</sup> *Far, Far Away in Heathen Darkness*; *Far O'er the Sea are Heathen Lands*; *Go Tell the Poor Heathen*; *Souls in Heathen Darkness Lying*; *I Often Think of Heathen Lands*; and *America, America, to Heathen Eyes so Fair*.

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<sup>1285</sup> Yet a shift in the term is noticeable in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century. In American culture, any unbeliever could be considered heathen. This is reflected in *Hark! The Voice of Jesus Calling* by Daniel March written in 1868, notably the second verse, 'If you cannot cross the ocean and the heathen lands explore, You can find the heathen nearer You can help them at your door. See Charles S. Robinson, *Songs for the Sanctuary: Or Hymns and Tunes for Christian Worship* (New York: The Century Co., 1881) p. 483. March's hymn was popular, printed in 334 hymnals between the years 1868 and 1930. Henry P. Haven printed it in *Familiar Hymns* in 1873, but attributed it to Fanny Crosby. See Henry P. Haven, *Familiar Hymns (New Edition) Alphabetically Arranged for the Use of Sunday-Schools, Social Gatherings for Worship, and for Family and Private Devotion*. (New York and Chicago: Biglow & Main, 1873) p. 105. Ian Bradley attributed the lyrics to J. A. Todd under the hymn title *Hark the Voice of Jesus Crying*. For Bradley, this hymn was representative of hymns 'that acknowledged that heathens were not only to be encountered among the dusky natives of far-off lands.' See Bradley, p. 130.

<sup>1286</sup> Roger L. Shinn, 'Faith and Organization in the United Church of Christ', in David A. Roozen and James R. Nieman (eds.), *Church, Identity and Change: Theology and Denominational Structures in Unsettled Times* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2005) p. 513.

<sup>1287</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1288</sup> Written in 1886 by American James McGranahan. Printed in 52 hymnals between the years 1831 and 1924.

*See that Heathen Mother Stand* serves as a prominent example of this heathenizing rhetoric. Written by Phoebe H. Brown (also author of the hymn *I Love to Steal Away*),<sup>1289</sup> *See that Heathen Mother Stand* was printed in 19 hymnals between the years 1835 and 1860 including The American Sunday School Union, Baptist, Protestant Episcopal, Methodist Episcopal (North) and Methodist Episcopal (South), Evangelical Lutheran and Presbyterian.

See that heathen mother stand  
Where the sacred currents flow,  
With her own maternal hand,  
'Mid the waves her infant throw.

Hark, I hear the piteous scream--  
Frightful monsters seize their prey;  
Or the dark and bloody stream  
Bears the struggling child away.

Fainter now, and fainter still,  
Breaks the cry upon the ear;  
But the mother's heart is steel,  
She, unmoved, that cry can hear!

Send, O send the Bible there,  
Let its precepts reach the heart;  
She may then her children spare,  
Act the mother's tender part.<sup>1290</sup>

Brown's hymn was featured in *Dr. Scudder's Tales for Little Readers*, written by Dr. John Scudder and published by the American Tract Society (1849). As a medical doctor Scudder served as a missionary in Madras, and hoped to motivate parents through his writing to send their children to the mission field or promise funds of support. Dr. Scudder drew attention to the ritual of child sacrifice and the hymn written by Brown. Scudder claimed that the hymn moved a little boy to raise money for missions.

If Christians will send it to them, with the blessing of God, the time will soon come when heathen mothers will no more destroy their children. And have you nothing to do in this great work, my dear children? When you grow up, cannot you go and tell them of the Saviour? Here is a very pretty hymn about a heathen mother throwing her child to a crocodile.<sup>1291</sup>

<sup>1289</sup> Phoebe Brown is a respected hymnist. She is included in Reeves' 'Hymns by Inspired Women'. Her hymn *I Love to Steal Away* shares 36<sup>th</sup> place in Marini's list of most printed hymns in American Protestantism and is printed in 519 hymnals between the years 1832 and 1929.

<sup>1290</sup> *Hymns for the Use of the Methodist Episcopal Church: Supplement Hymns for Sunday-Schools, Youth, and Children*, (New York: Carlton & Phillips, 1850) p. 41.

<sup>1291</sup> John Scudder, *Dr. Scudder's Tales for Little Readers About the Heathen* (New York: American Tract Society, 1849) p. 89, 90.

Given the grimness of the hymn text, Scudder's reference to the hymn as 'very pretty' is inexplicable. But Scudder's account of child sacrifice was not unique among 19<sup>th</sup>-century missionary literature. According to historian Lisa Joy Pruitt, 'discussions of ritual child sacrifice pervaded missionary literature', including reports of William Carey and Adoniram Judson.<sup>1292</sup>

*The Mother's Nursery Songs* (1853) also published *See that Heathen Mother Stand*, and provided questions for further study.

What is a heathen mother?  
 What is meant by the sacred current?  
 Why does she throw her infant into the water?  
 What monsters of the deep seize infants?  
 Why is the heathen mother so hard-hearted?  
 What would make her love her child?  
 Would the Bible do her good without reading it?  
 What would make its truths touch her heart?  
 Why would she then spare her child?<sup>1293</sup>

*See that Heathen Mother Stand* was also featured in recent scholarship, demonstrated in Geraldine H. Forbes' article in *Economic and Political Weekly*. Writing in 1986, Forbes sought to show the role of women missionaries in furthering imperialist motives, and begins her article with the irony of children's songs and infanticide.<sup>1294</sup>

In a songbook inspired by missionary tales, "Songs for Little Ones at Home", British and American children learned that Hindu mothers were capable of killing their own children.<sup>1295</sup>

Forbes' use of Brown's hymn suggests that she considered it a representative medium used to communicate the experiences of missionaries in India during the 'heyday of imperialist missions' (1858-1914).<sup>1296</sup>

Even if Protestant missionaries were not pawns of imperialism, the correlation between evangelism and colonialism in missions is hard to overlook. Discussing the theme of Christianity and other religions, Marcus Braybrooke wrote,

<sup>1292</sup> Lisa Joy Pruitt, *A Looking-Glass for Ladies: American Protestant Women and the Orient in the Nineteenth Century* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2005) p. 74. According to Pruitt, some publications also created fictional accounts to encourage financial sponsorship of missions. Pruitt demonstrated this strategy from a story published by the *Mother's Magazine*. See p. 77ff.

<sup>1293</sup> Thomas Hastings, *The Mother's Nursery Songs* (New York: M. W. Dood, 1853) p. 70.

<sup>1294</sup> Forbes permitted the hymn to deliver one more irony: the heathen women, male-oppressed and uneducated, were themselves victims.

<sup>1295</sup> Geraldine H. Forbes, 'In Search of the 'Pure Heathen': Missionary Women in Nineteenth Century India', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 21/17 (26 April 1986), WS2-WS8 p. WS-2.

<sup>1296</sup> Forbes subtitled a section of her article 'Missionary Work during the Heyday of Empire, 1858-1914'.

Although it has become commonplace to think that nineteenth-century missionaries regarded other religions as nothing but the work of the devil, the reality is more complex. Some mission hymns [...] reflected the views of many missionaries, especially those who worked in rural areas and who had no contact with higher forms of Hinduism or Buddhism.<sup>1297</sup>

Braybrooke used the hymns *Trumpet of God, Sound High* and *Rescue the Perishing* by Fanny Crosby to illustrate his point. The classic view of heathenism Braybrooke described was dominant in Protestant missions and its hymnody.<sup>1298</sup> Hymn lyrics were sometimes innovative, and their validation and usage affirmed the hymnal as an independent authority, demonstrated in hymns that beckoned the heathen toward America, narrated of 'the heathen mother' and promoted the ideology 'as goes America so goes the world'.

### 10.5 Americanizing Mission Hymnody

As Isaac Watts had 'Christianized' (and Anglicized) the Psalms,<sup>1299</sup> American writers of missions hymns Americanized mission hymnody (at least in some cases). Mrs. Vokes' hymn *Behold the Expected Time Draw Near* was adapted to an American perspective.

[Original version]

Let us improve the heavenly gale, spread to each breeze our hoisted sail;  
Till north and south, and east and west, Shall be as favour'd Britain blest<sup>1300</sup>

[Edited version]

Let us improve the heavenly gale, spread to each breeze our hoisted sail;  
Till north and south, and east and west, Shall as America be blest<sup>1301</sup>

<sup>1297</sup> Marcus Braybrooke, 'Christianity and Other Religions', in Alan Richardson and John Bowden (eds.), *A New Dictionary of Christian Theology* (London: SCM-Canterbury Press Ltd, 1983), 94-99 p. 96.

<sup>1298</sup> In contrast to those who demonized Hinduism, Braybrooke cast Bishop Reginald Heber (author of *From Greenland's Icy Mountains*) as one who 'appreciated some aspects of Indian culture and renounced the Calvinist view that all Indians were "under sentence of reprobation" from God.'

<sup>1299</sup> English hymnody owed much to Watts' method of adapting the Psalms to Christian worship. Watts believed some words of 'the Royal Author' to be unsuitable for Christian worship. Thus, he replaced 'sharp invectives against his personal enemies', with terms denoting spiritual adversaries. Watts inserted liberally the Christian concepts of church, hell, Christ, etc. Watts also adapted some psalms into the British geographic context, e.g. Psalm 19, 96, and 115. See Isaac Watts, *The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament* (London: printed for J. Clark; R. Ford; and R. Cruttenden, 1719) p. xvii.

<sup>1300</sup> *Three Hundred and Fifty Portions of the Book of Psalms, Selected from Various Versions with a Collection of Six Hundred Hymns*, (London: Seely and Sons, 1830) p. 218.

<sup>1301</sup> John Rippon and C. G. Sommers (eds.), *The Psalms and Hymns of Dr. Watts Arranged by Dr. Rippon: With Dr. Rippon's Selection* (Philadelphia: Clark and Lippincott, 1836) p. 795.

Two distinct versions of *Father is not Thy Promise Pledged?* by English hymn writer Thomas Gibbons (1720-1785) were published in American hymnals. The 1849 *Church Psalmist* used lyrics that emphasized the 'advancement of Empire'.

Ask, and I give the heathen lands  
For thine inheritance,  
And to the world's remotest shores,  
Thine Empire shall advance.<sup>1302</sup>

An alternate version in John Rippon's hymnal, *The Psalms and Hymns of Dr. Watts*, contained lyrics suggestive of opaque theology (in stanza four) and the superiority of America (in stanza seven).

[4] When shall th' untutor'd Indian tribes  
A dark, bewilder'd race  
Sit down at our Immanuel's feet  
And learn and feel his grace?

[7] Asia and Africa abound  
from shore to shore his fame  
and thou, America, in songs  
redeeming love proclaim.<sup>1303</sup>

Abraham Coles emphasized the sense of national empire in his hymn *America*, published in *The Mission Band Hymnal*.

O Beautiful and grand  
My own, my native land!  
Of thee I boast:  
Great empire of the west,  
The dearest and the best  
Made up of all the rest  
I love thee most.<sup>1304</sup>

In his address to the American Home Missionary Society (AHMS), Rev. H. G. O. Dwight described the international impact of all American missions.<sup>1305</sup>

The fact is, it may truly be said, that this Society is a *missionary society for the world*. What sea is there in this wide world, upon whose bosom American ships do not float? What land, in which American influence is not more or less

<sup>1302</sup> *Church Psalmist: Or Psalms and Hymns Designed for the Public, Social and Private Use of Evangelical Christians*, (New York: Mark H. Newman & Co., 1849) p. 15.

<sup>1303</sup> I have not been able to determine which version is the original. The stanza with 'America' was published as early as 1792 in Philadelphia. See *Evangelical Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs; Selected from Various Authors; and Published by a Committee of the Convention of the Churches*, (Philadelphia, 1792) p. 96.

<sup>1304</sup> Emilie S. Coles, *The Mission Band Hymnal* (Newark, N. J.: L. J. Hardham, 1878) p. 70.

<sup>1305</sup> Dwight was raising issues of integrity, accountability and perception of American missions and commerce.

felt? Where can you find a spot of sea and land in all the earth, which may not be reached by your benevolent efforts?<sup>1306</sup>

The 19<sup>th</sup>-century American Protestant mission was part and parcel of American culture; American exceptionalism and manifest destiny were coupled with Protestantism to deliver the gospel to the world. But the expansion of America was part of an apocalypticism that blended imperialism with millennialism. For American Protestants, their missionary enterprise was ordained of God, and hymns were used to promote this belief.

Ina Mae Duley Ogdon (1872-1964), famous for the hymn *Brighten the Corner Where You Are*, also wrote *America, America, to Heathen Eyes so Fair*.

America, America, to heathen eyes so fair  
Thy waters still, thy pastures green, illumine their night of care  
America, America, beneath the morning star  
With pray'rs and sighs, with hopes and fears, they greet thee from afar

America, America, how great the charge to thee  
Oh haste to spread the living word to all from sea to sea  
America, America, let not the call be vain  
But haste to heed that distant cry that sweet and sad refrain

[Refrain]

America, America, All hail the brave and free  
America, America, Our hopes are all in thee<sup>1307</sup>

While 'heathen eyes' might have looked to the United States, mainstream Protestantism did not emulate Brigham Young's missiological strategy by bringing converts to America and mandating them to sing in 'the language of these latter days' (page 224). Protestant missionaries served in the mission field, learned the language of the culture, and translated Protestant hymns accordingly. The Protestant strategy was typified in *Yes, My Native Land, I Love Thee* by Samuel F. Smith. First published in 1832 by the *Missionary Herald* and frequently in hymnals between the years 1840 and 1911, Smith's hymn featured the phrase 'Can I leave you – Far in heathen lands to dwell?' This hymn anchored the sense of leaving America to serve in foreign lands; American missionaries were bound for 'heathen destinations'.

<sup>1306</sup> H. G. O. Dwight, 'Address', *The Home Missionary and American Pastor's Journal*, 11/2 (June 1838), 39-42 p. 39.

<sup>1307</sup> Ira B. Wilson and J. S. Fearls (eds.), *The Junior Choir: A Collection of Easy Anthems and Two-Part Songs for Children's and Young People's and Beginner's Choirs* (Dayton, Ohio: Lorenz Publishing Co., 1908) p. 62, 63.



## 10.6 Religio-Political Ideology of American Protestant Missions

Samuel F. Smith did more than typify the Protestant missions strategy. The dawning of the American missionary enterprise was symbolized in his 1832 hymn *The Morning Light is Breaking*. Smith's missionary hymn articulated the American Protestant conscience of the period: 'Zion's war' was imminent, the 'heathen nations' were submissive to the gospel, the missionary mandate was directed to 'every nation', and tireless evangelists labored precedent to 'The Lord is come'. Smith's national hymn *My Country 'Tis of Thee* was no less significant and frequently graced missions meetings and conferences, most notably the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions in 1900.<sup>1308</sup> America, the 'land of liberty' with its 'holy light' – perhaps inspired by Winthrop's 'city upon a hill' – was believed by American Protestants to have a privileged role in 'liberating' the nations. In the missiology of 19<sup>th</sup>-century American Protestantism, 'America' and 'Protestant' were virtually inseparable. If the hymns of Samuel F. Smith are indicative of mission hymnody in general, the role of hymns was paramount to the missionary enterprise.

In *The Hand of God in History*, Hollis Read<sup>1309</sup> described the American mandate.

The American Church, if she will go forth in the vigour and simplicity of herself, would be like a young man prepared to run a race. She is admirably constituted to be Heaven's almoner to the nations. Pure Christianity is republican. The American soil is peculiarly adapted to produce that enterprise, freedom, and simplicity, suited to extend religion and its thousand blessings to the ends of the earth.<sup>1310</sup>

But the extension of religion is not easily separated out from the extension of nation. In the case of American missions, the act of extending the kingdom of God is not easily distinguished from the act of extending American civilization.

In *Errand to the World*, Harvard professor William R. Hutchison brought both Protestantism and exceptionalism to bear on the missionary enterprise.

Two other elements in this rationale for missions made it especially comprehensive and also explicitly "prophetic" of the missionary enthusiasms that would flourish after the founding of the American commonwealth. One

<sup>1308</sup> Report of the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions: Held in Carnegie Hall and Neighboring Churches, April 21 to May 1, (Religious Tract Society, 1900).

<sup>1309</sup> Hollis Read (1802-1887) was a missionary with the American Board of Missions. He was commissioned to India in 1830. See 'Christian Register: Or Annual View of the Efforts Made for the Diffusion of Christianity Throughout the World', *The Quarterly Register of the American Education Society*, 3 (August 1830), 25-64 p. 41.

<sup>1310</sup> Hollis Read, *The Hand of God in History: Or, Divine Providence Historically Illustrated in the Extension and Establishment of Christianity*. (Hartford: H. E. Robins and Co., 1850) p. 45.

of these was a sense of American exceptionalism that was to become especially strong in the early years of the nineteenth century. The other was the sort of zeal for a reunited Protestantism and for a simple Gospel not divided on sectarian lines, that in the twentieth century would be called ecumenism.<sup>1311</sup>

The synopsis of American Protestant missions is informed further by the ideology of 'manifest destiny', a term attributed to editor John L. O'Sullivan that first appeared in the *Democratic Review* July-August 1845 edition.<sup>1312</sup> O'Sullivan was referring to the right of America to 'possess the whole of the continent', but his wording expressed an idealism of American sovereignty that could be adapted to worldwide expansion. While Christian philanthropy may have been at the heart of American missions in the colonial period (as seen in the efforts of John Eliot, Roger Williams, William Penn, and David Brainerd),<sup>1313</sup> the late-19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a shift: emerging nationalism and the concept of destiny fashioned an expansionist missionary impulse. While various writers articulated the connection, such as Josiah Strong<sup>1314</sup> and John Fiske,<sup>1315</sup> Professor Austin Phelps<sup>1316</sup> may have summarized it best.

The principles of such a strategic wisdom ['our religion has taken possession as by a masterly military genius'] should lead us to look on these United States as first and foremost the chosen seat of enterprise for the world's conversion. Forecasting the future of Christianity, as statesmen forecast the destiny of nations, we must believe that it will be what the future of this country is to be. As goes America, so goes the world, in all that is vital to its moral welfare.<sup>1317</sup>

The phrase 'As goes America, so goes the world' motivated various writers,<sup>1318</sup> notably hymn writer Palmer Hartsough.<sup>1319</sup> A music director and ordained Baptist

<sup>1311</sup> William R. Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993) p. 39.

<sup>1312</sup> Julius W. Pratt, 'The Origin Of "Manifest Destiny"', *The American Historical Review*, 32/4 (July 1927), 795-798.

<sup>1313</sup> See William Gammell, *A History of the American Baptist Missions in Asia, Africa, Europe and North America* (Boston: Gould, Kenall and Lincoln, 1849) p. 2.

<sup>1314</sup> Josiah Strong, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* (New York: The American Home Missionary Society, 1885). For a discussion of Strong's work, see Wendy J. Deichmann Edward, 'Forging an Ideology for American Missions: Josiah Strong and Manifest Destiny', in Wilbert R. Shenk (ed.), *North American Foreign Missions, 1810-1914: Theology, Theory and Policy* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Co., 2004), 163-191.

<sup>1315</sup> 'I believe that the time will come when such a state of things will exist upon the earth, when it will be possible [...] to speak of the United States as stretching from pole to pole, or with Tennyson to celebrate the "parliament of man and the federation of the world." Indeed, only when such a state of things has begun to be realized can civilization, as sharply demarcated from barbarism, be said to have fairly begun. Only then can the world be said to have become truly Christian.' See John Fiske, 'Manifest Destiny', *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 70/418 (March 1885), 578-590 p. 590.

<sup>1316</sup> Austin Phelps (1820-1890), seminary professor and Congregational clergyman.

<sup>1317</sup> Strong, p. vii.

<sup>1318</sup> For instance, 'As goes America, so goes the world. Largely as goes the South, so goes America. And in the South is the Baptist center of gravity of the world.' Attributed to Victor I. Masters. See

minister (late in his life), Hartsough wrote the hymn *As Goes America* to accompany Phelps' slogan.

As goes America, so goes the world  
 Here where the fight for truth is raging  
 As goes America, so goes the world  
 Here where the hosts are now engaging  
 As goes America, so goes the world  
 Here freedom makes her last endeavor  
 As goes America, so goes the world  
 Fails she and all is lost forever

As goes America, so goes the world  
 Here lift we Christ the light bestowing  
 As goes America, so goes the world  
 Here we serve God in rightful doing  
 As goes America, so goes the world  
 Foremost and highest is her station  
 As goes America, so goes the world  
 Leader and guide to ev'ry nation

The refrain of Hartsough's hymn utilized terms associated with manifest destiny.

Stand thou for righteousness, people so blest  
 Win thou the victory greatest and blest  
 Lead forward grand and free  
 Nation of destiny  
 As goes America so goes the world<sup>1320</sup>

Thus far, I have discussed the role of hymns in articulating the mandate of missions, heightening awareness of the mission field (recruitment and support), defining conceptions of the heathen world, and shaping the missiological view that supposed a God-given mantle to the American (Protestant) nation. But the critical role of hymns did not stop at promoting, defining, or theologizing missions; hymns were the lifeblood of Protestant theology on the mission field, a dynamic that I will address next.

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Charles Reagan Wilson, *Southern Missions: The Religion of the American South in Global Perspective* (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2006) p. 17.

<sup>1319</sup> Palmer Hartsough was a prolific hymn writer. According to Paul E. Bierley, Hartsough 'wrote over fifteen hundred hymns, anthems, recitations, children's cantatas and other pieces of church music. Last, but not least, he composed fifty-nine prohibition songs.' See Paul E. Bierley, *Hallelujah Trombone!: The Story of Henry Fillmore* (New York: Carl Fischer, 2003) p. 31.

<sup>1320</sup> *Hymns of Blessing for the Living Church*, (Philadelphia, Pa.: Bentley D. Ackley, 1916).

## 10.7 Use of Hymns in Missions

The use of the hymnal in both foreign and home missions cannot be overestimated. As a vital theological function, hymns were a tool of conversion and doctrinal instruction.

In 'Claiming the Bible: Poetry and Public Discourse 1820-1910', Shira Wolosky attested the hymnal as the dominant medium of evangelism.

Mission records repeatedly refer to the hymnal as one of the earliest and most effective means for reaching a population who could not read, but who could sing with extraordinary talent. [...]Paul Petrvoich Svinin records in his 1811 travel note how holy writ was disseminated in the form of "Watt's [sic] Psalms of David Imitated".<sup>1321</sup>

Hymns facilitated the most meaningful communication with peoples of oral traditions (both home and abroad) and were translated alongside the Bible as a source of doctrine. By the end of the century, translating hymns was normative.

## 10.8 Foreign Missions

To demonstrate the use of hymns in foreign and Native American missions, I have chosen statements that are representative geographically and methodologically. I will provide select commentary on the various mission fields, including Africa, Burma, India, China, Korea, Polynesia, the West Indies, and South America.

The early efforts of the Protestant Episcopal Church focused on the west coast and, in particular, 'the Grain Coast' located in the south. The missionaries reported in the 1880s that 'the Grebo language had been reduced to writing' and that 'some literature in that language had been translated, including 'five of the books of Scripture and the greater part of the Prayer Book, and prepared in the same tongue a hymn-book'.<sup>1322</sup> American Baptist missions in Africa also translated hymns at an early stage. In Cape Palmas, Mr. Crocker translated the Gospels of Matthew and John, and a hymnal.<sup>1323</sup>

Baptist Missionary Rev. Francis Mason, serving in Burma in the early 1830s, translated various writings into the Karen dialect. Though his ongoing translation of

<sup>1321</sup> Shira Wolosky, 'Nineteenth Century Poetry, 1800-1910', in Sacvan Bercovitch (ed.), *The Cambridge History of American Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) p. 206.

<sup>1322</sup> *An Historical Sketch of the African Mission of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U. S. A.*, (New York: Foreign Committee, 1884) p. 33.

<sup>1323</sup> Gammell, p. 255.

the New Testament was his 'most important work', he devoted his initial efforts to a tract that included portions of the New Testament, with commentary and a hymn for every day of the month. According to Mason, this tract served as 'the Bible, hymn-book and body of divinity'.<sup>1324</sup> His next work was similar, including excerpts from the Bible and an appendix of over 50 hymns.

The essential role of hymns in the propagation of the gospel is demonstrated in the report of hymn translations, discussed in the *Report of the American Marathee Mission* (West India).

These hymns have [...] recently been prepared in the native style by the brethren here, and have greatly interested the native audiences. [...] Perhaps it will be found that this kind of poetry is better adapted to the genius of the Marathee language and the tastes of this people, and if so, it will be very easy to prepare more hymns in the same style. It seems plain that the minds of men in this country are much more easily impressed with the truth when presented in the form of poetry, and accompanied with music, and it is important that we should make use of this and every other proper means to extend the knowledge of truth, and to impress it on the hearts of men.<sup>1325</sup>

In missions, hymns evidenced Christian profession, and testified to the certainty of conversion at the time of death.

How different the death of the Christian from that of the heathen. Ahilyabae had been a long time (nearly 20 years) a member of the church, and her conduct was such as became her profession. She died in a good old age, and her death was sweet. The girls of the school came near her a few hours before she died, and sung that precious hymn, "I want to be an angel".<sup>1326</sup>

The first book of hymns in the Marathi language was published in 1819, followed by additional editions in the years 1825 and 1835. Two other hymn books were added in the years 1835 and 1845 – a Psalter with hymns, and a new hymn book published by Rev. H. Ballantine. In comparison, the first Bible written in the Marathi language was not published until 1847.<sup>1327</sup>

In the Chinese mission, the hymnal was considered an essential apparatus.

<sup>1324</sup> 'Mission to the Karens', *The Baptist Missionary Magazine*, 15 (1835), 144-146 p. 144.

<sup>1325</sup> Vishnoo Bhaskar, 'Report of the Ahmednuggur Second Church', *Report of the American Marathee Mission for the Years 1834 and 1835* (Bombay: American Mission Press, 1836) p. 19.

<sup>1326</sup> *Ibid.* p. 18, 19. *I Want to Be an Angel* was sung throughout the foreign mission field. In Burma. See 'Assam Mission: Letter from Mrs. Ward', *The Missionary Magazine*, 43 (1863), 6-7 p. 7. In Turkey. See 'Missionary Concert Exercise', *The Gospel in All Lands*, 7 (12 April 1883), 172-173 p. 173. In India. See Edward Thomson, *Our Oriental Missions: Volume I, India and China* (Cincinnati: Hitchcock and Walden, 1870) p. 102.

<sup>1327</sup> 'Marathi Christian Hymnology', *Memorial Papers of the American Marathi Mission, 1813-1881* (Bombay: Education Society's Press, 1882), 121-141 p. 121-124.

If the world is to be won, it must be by beginning with the children, [...] There is no necessity to speak of the work of translating the Bible and religious books and hymns. But why not extend this work? The young people of China can no more be fed forever on catechism than can the youth of our own land.<sup>1328</sup>

'Inculturation of the Gospel and Hymn Singing in China' by Chen Zemin<sup>1329</sup> provides insight into the role of hymnody in the Chinese mission. Although Christian missionization in China dates back to the 7<sup>th</sup> century and various waves of Catholic influence introduced texted music, Zemin suggested that 'real congregational hymn singing came with the Protestant missionaries in the 19<sup>th</sup> century'.<sup>1330</sup> Zemin set the influence of the hymnal against both the Bible and sermons. While he conceded that the Bible remained the only 'canonical' source, Zemin highlighted the dynamic impact of hymnody.

Hymn singing is that vital part of church life that most convincingly illustrates the possibility, necessity, desirability and multiformity of inculturation of the gospel.<sup>1331</sup>

But next to Scripture reading, and perhaps preaching, which was to some extent rather clumsily adapted, it was hymn singing that distinguished most effectively those early communities as Christian.<sup>1332</sup>

Zemin's modern analysis comports with descriptions provided by 19<sup>th</sup> century writers. Calvin Kingsley, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church who visited numerous foreign conferences and missions, observed the Chinese at worship.

The work was well begun in China, and the type of Methodism of the right kind. I have not heard so much real good old Methodistic singing in a long time as I heard at Foo Chow, both at the sessions of our annual gathering, and also from scholars, in both the boys' and girls' schools. The glorious old hymns, with their glorious old tunes, were the last things to greet my ears at night, and the first in the morning. Associated as these hymns and tunes used to be, and as they still are in China, and as they ought to be everywhere, there is salvation in both.<sup>1333</sup>

<sup>1328</sup> George W. Gilmore, 'The Equipment of the Modern Foreign Missionary', *The American Journal of Theology*, 2/3 (July 1898), 561-573 p. 571. Gilmore advised missionaries to Japan that hymn tunes were negotiable, He [the missionary] must realize that the tune to which an old Samurai can most heartily sing "Nearer, My God, to Thee" is not Bethany, but an air of his own land. And the same is true of every nationality under the sun.' p. 573.

<sup>1329</sup> Chen Zemin is a professor of systematic theology at Nanjing Union Theological Seminary.

<sup>1330</sup> Chen Zemin, 'Inculturation of the Gospel and Hymn Singing in China', *Chinese Theological Review*, 11/2 (1997), 49-57 p. 50.

<sup>1331</sup> *Ibid.* p. 49.

<sup>1332</sup> *Ibid.* p. 51.

<sup>1333</sup> Calvin Kingsley, *Round the World: A Series of Letters by Calvin Kingsley D.D.* (Cincinnati: Hitchcock and Walden, 1870) p. 206.

Giving instruction to missionaries that served in Chinese Sunday Schools, Rev. W. C. Pond, endorsed the use of hymns in preaching.

I will gladly supply, at bare cost, Song Rolls in Chinese, containing familiar gospel hymns translated into Chinese and so conformed in metre to the English original that the time remains unchanged, and the teachers can sing the English words, if desirable, while the Chinese use their own. There is no more effective preaching of the gospel than that in song.<sup>1334</sup>

Paul Varg described the influence of American revivalism in the China mission.

[T]he greatest source of strength of missionary movement as it related to China lay in the fact that its program was in harmony with current fashions of thought and popular attitudes in the United States. Its strongest religious source was the Moody revivals.<sup>1335</sup>

In Korea, the privilege given Protestant hymnody suggests mandatory usage. In his conference paper 'Chanmiga (songs of praise) as a Korean response to Missionaries', Shin Ahn mapped out the development of missions in Korea. According to Ahn, Protestant missionaries translated the Bible and hymns into Korean before they engaged in 'direct evangelistic work'.<sup>1336</sup> The Methodist mission published a Korean hymnal in 1892 that was followed shortly thereafter by a Presbyterian hymnal in 1894. In 1907, Yun Chi-ho printed an indigenous hymnal with Korean songs, but the missionaries rejected it. Ahn summarized the dynamics created by an imposed western hymnal.

Insensibility and arrogance of missionaries towards indigenous culture challenged Yun and other Korean Christians to construct their own theologies by using religious creativity. In this respect, singing was more powerful than speaking and preaching.<sup>1337</sup>

In the Cook Islands (Polynesia), the first hymn book was published in 1828. This was eight years after the ABCFM began its first mission in the Hawaiian islands. Later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, gospel hymns were introduced and, according to Amy Ku'uleialoha Stillman, 'enjoyed overwhelming popularity throughout Polynesia.'<sup>1338</sup> Stillman compared British and American missionary efforts in Polynesia.

In Hawaii, the ABCFM missionaries were seemingly more industrious than their LMS counterparts, for they produced multiple editions of four different

<sup>1334</sup> W. C. Pond, 'Method of Conducting Chinese Sunday-Schools', *The American Missionary*, 43/6 (June 1889), 169-171 p. 170.

<sup>1335</sup> Paul A. Varg, 'Motives in Protestant Missions, 1890-1917', *Church History*, 23/1 (March 1954), 68-82 p. 81.

<sup>1336</sup> Shin Ahn, 'Chanmiga (Songs of Praise) as a Korean Response to Missionaries', *Yale-Edinburgh Group* (University of Edinburgh, 2006) p. 2.

<sup>1337</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10.

<sup>1338</sup> Amy Ku'uleialoha Stillman, 'Prelude to a Comparative Investigation of Protestant Hymnody in Polynesia', *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 25 (1993), 89-99 p. 91.

hymn collections by 1872. The popularity of Sunday School and gospel hymnody is apparent in the publication of eight different tunebooks since 1862, and translations of the first three volumes of Ira Sankey's *Gospel Hymns* near the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>1339</sup>

Using an account related to him by a missionary active in the West Indies, Sankey claimed the hymn *Arise, My Soul, Arise* by Charles Wesley to have exceptional influence in conversion.

In universal use in English countries, and translated into many languages, it has been the direct instrumentality in the conversion of thousands of souls. It has found expression in the exultant cry on the lips of many a dying saint. "I have a record," said a Wesleyan missionary laboring in the West Indies, "of two hundred persons, young and old, who received the most direct evidence of the forgiveness of their sins while singing 'Arise, my soul.'"

S. L. Ginsburg provided a similar testimony of the converting capacity of hymns where, in Baptist missions, hymns served a primary evangelistic and didactic function in missions. Ginsburg's annual report to the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention identified the prominent role of hymns in the Bahia field (South America).

One of the most helpful agents in this great flight has been our new hymn book, and especially the new hymns we occasionally publish. At one of our meetings in the Interior, of twelve that made profession of faith, five attributed their being drawn to Christ through certain hymns they had heard sung.<sup>1340</sup>

## 10.9 Native American Missions

Similar to foreign missions, Native American missions relied heavily on hymnody. Reports on Native American missions by Protestant denominations (Baptist, Methodist, Episcopal and Congregational) indicate that hymnody was essential in communicating the gospel, providing Christian education, and supplying an oral medium to transmit and sustain 'ritualized memory'.

While the Baptist Indian Missions published books in the Otoe language, the first book was a collection of hymns and a small portion of the New Testament.<sup>1341</sup> Baptists also published hymn texts for other tribes; as early as 1833, American Baptist Mission published the Gospel of Matthew and hymnbooks in the languages of the

<sup>1339</sup> Ibid. p. 92.

<sup>1340</sup> S. L. Ginsburg, 'Bahia Field', *Sixty-eighth Annual Report of the Foreign Mission Board Southern Baptist Convention* (St. Louis, Missouri, 1913).

<sup>1341</sup> Isaac McCoy, *History of Baptist Indian Missions Embracing Remarks on the Former and Present Condition of the Aboriginal Tribes; Their Settlement within the Indian Territory, and Their Future Prospects* (Washington: William M. Morrison, 1840) p. 466.



Shawanoes, the Ottawas, and the Delawares.<sup>1342</sup> The Methodist mission among southern Cherokees translated the Gospel of Matthew, the Acts of the Apostles, and a hymn book.<sup>1343</sup> The Choctaw mission translated a hymn book, an abridgement of Gospels, and several school books.<sup>1344</sup>

The first fully Ojibwe hymnbook was published in 1828.<sup>1345</sup> Michael McNally, author of *Ojibwe Singers*, provided a thorough explanation of the 'ritualization of hymns' among the Ojibwe of an Episcopal mission.

The proselytizing spirit of evangelical culture displayed in the revivals found full institutional expression in the great nineteenth-century efforts to convert the world, and the translation and promotion of hymns remained among the more emphatic of institutional missionary endeavors, alongside the urgent task of making biblical truth readily accessible in translated form through the technology of print.<sup>1346</sup>

Hymns were 'forcefully present in mission schools. A disciplined regimen of singing hymns was supposed to kindle indolent minds and effectively teach principles of the Christian life.'<sup>1347</sup> McNally went on to articulate the ways that the hymnal was used in Ojibwe missions: 'to establish Ojibwe-language equivalents for key Christian terms',<sup>1348</sup> to 'awaken among children the passion to learn and to lead a morally upright life'<sup>1349</sup> and, 'incorporated into grieving and burial practices', to sing over bereaved friends.<sup>1350</sup>

Missionary societies were likewise attracted to the possibilities of systematic hymnody for training impressionable minds of the world's non-Christian majority and socializing whole peoples coded as children into evangelical life.<sup>1351</sup>

McNally suggested that the Ojibwe absorbed Christian hymns into 'the cultural repertory of Ojibwe life', evidenced by a fishing party that sang *A Charge to Keep Have I* when a storm threatened.<sup>1352</sup>

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<sup>1342</sup> Gammell, p. 337.

<sup>1343</sup> Samuel Williams, 'American Bible Society', *The Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review*, 17/2 (1835), 459-475 p. 465.

<sup>1344</sup> Sarah Tuttle, *Conversations on the Choctaw Mission* (Second edn.; Boston: Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, 1834) p. 205.

<sup>1345</sup> Michael D. McNally, *Ojibwe Singers: Hymns, Grief, and a Native Culture in Motion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000) p. 44.

<sup>1346</sup> *Ibid.* p. 36.

<sup>1347</sup> *Ibid.* p. 74.

<sup>1348</sup> *Ibid.* p. 52.

<sup>1349</sup> *Ibid.* p. 38.

<sup>1350</sup> *Ibid.* p. 79.

<sup>1351</sup> *Ibid.* p. 41.

<sup>1352</sup> *Ibid.* p. 68.

McNally's historico-ethnomusicological study of hymn singing among the Ojibwe of northern Minnesota is thorough in detail. Not only did he capture the cultural impact of missionary hymns, but he also outlined the theological concepts that hymns carried. These included the concepts of salvation, sin, grace, faith, and the Christian life.<sup>1353</sup> In addition, hymns served theologically as 'ritualized memory' for recalling the past. For instance, *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* provided the means to 'imagine and value the past',<sup>1354</sup> especially the crucifixion and the resurrection. Finally, McNally emphasized that for the Ojibwe, the oral tradition is the more authoritative mode of memory; hymn singing (not Bible reading) was 'rooted firmly in this oral tradition'.<sup>1355</sup>

Nancy Shoemaker commended McNally's contribution to both 'micro and macro levels',<sup>1356</sup> suggestive that McNally's case study of the Minnesota Ojibwe (through missionary archival sources and fieldwork with Ojibwe elders) offered insights representative of other Protestant missions among Native American tribes.

Some of McNally's findings are corroborated by Luke Eric Lassiter's research among the Southwestern Oklahoma Kiowa. An elder described the role of music and hymns.

That's always the way it's been, even before the missionaries came, all songs pertain to God [Daw-Kee]. When the missionaries came, that's where we learned about Jesus, the Son of God. [...] Kiowa singers, whether singing hymns or peyote songs, thus further this relationship through singing; but God also reciprocates by continually giving songs to Kiowa people.<sup>1357</sup>

While the language in song engages a long-established relationship between Kiowa people and the godly, the language surrounding hymns – whether stories told in English or testimonies delivered in Kiowa – help to clarify the emergence of a unique Christian practice in the community since before the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>1358</sup>

McNally's findings are corroborated by Stillman's research of Protestant hymnody in Polynesia. Stillman found that Protestant hymnody [translated in the early-19<sup>th</sup> century] has become 'not only an integral part of contemporary Polynesian musical

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<sup>1353</sup> Ibid. p. 61-68.

<sup>1354</sup> Ibid. p. 183.

<sup>1355</sup> Ibid. p. 184.

<sup>1356</sup> Nancy Shoemaker, 'Ojibwe Singers: Hymns, Grief and a Native Culture in Motion', *Journal of Social History*, 35/4 (summer 2002), 1027-1028 p. 1028.

<sup>1357</sup> Luke Eric Lassiter, "'From Here on, I Will Be Praying to You": Indian Churches, Kiowa Hymns, and Native American Christianity in Southwestern Oklahoma', *Ethnomusicology*, 45/2 (Spring-Summer 2001), 338-352 p. 347.

<sup>1358</sup> Ibid. p. 348.

tradition; it has become accepted by islanders as part of their heritage, as a tradition inherited from elders and passed on to children.<sup>1359</sup>

Finally, the use of hymns in the Congregational mission in Skokomish represents a forceful image of the hymnal's influence in Native American missions. The first twelve years of the Congregational mission in Skokomish (Washington) utilized Sankey's hymns in English until they could be translated into the Chinook language. The 1878 *Indian Hymn-Book* published by the Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing Society was 'a monument of missionary labor [...] in the attempt to Christianize the Indians of America.'<sup>1360</sup> *Jesus Loves Me* was translated word for word so that it could be sung in both languages at the same time. The hymns were also used in prohibition strategies.

More than once a whisky-bottle has been captured from an Indian, set out in view of all on a stump or box, a temperance speech made and a temperance hymn sung, the bottle broken into many pieces and its contents spilled on the ground.<sup>1361</sup>

## 10.10 Conclusion

Hymns were foundational to the missionary enterprise. In both foreign and Native American missions, hymns served in conversion and instruction, exercising soteriological efficacy similar to conversion hymns used in American revivals and catechetical influence similar to the Christianization of slaves. The songs of missionaries facilitated meaningful communication with peoples of oral traditions (both home and abroad) and were translated as a critical source of doctrine. As time afforded, American missionaries translated portions of the Bible, but the first endeavor in most cases was a translation of Protestant hymns. Using McNally's phrase, hymns provided and sustained 'ritualized memory'. In cultural contexts where people relied on oral tradition, hymns were theologically authoritative for faith and praxis.

Critical understandings of 19<sup>th</sup>-century missiology were embedded in hymns. Serving a prophetic-theological function, hymns expressed the soteriological need for missions and promoted the ecclesiological mandate. Hymns captured the imperialist

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<sup>1359</sup> Stillman, p. 97.

<sup>1360</sup> Rev. M. Eells, *Ten Years of Missionary Work among the Indians at Skokomish, Washington Territory 1874-1884* (Boston: Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing Society, 1896) p. 247.

<sup>1361</sup> *Ibid.* p. 67.

spirit of the age and spiritualized it in terms of eschatological hope and exigent apocalypticism. This eschatological emphasis was blended with Winthrop's vision of early America, Tocqueville's 'American exceptionalism'<sup>1362</sup> and O'Sullivan's 'manifest destiny'. Hymns communicated millennialist idealism that spurred missions from both pre-millennialist and post-millennialist camps. Nathaniel West attributed the successful spread of premillennialism to hymnody – in place of dogmatics and exegetics. For Adoniram Judson, millennial hymns deserved full tribute.

Hymns were used in recruiting and sending missionaries, requesting funds, and raising awareness of the mission field. While these are practical contributions not necessarily requiring extraordinary service of the hymnal, hymns appealed to a deep level of the Protestant conscience. *See that Heathen Mother Stand*, used for this end, provided a horrific description for American audiences. As a popular hymn during the formative years of American Protestant missions, it served independently of the Bible in its task of rousing the missionary impulse and defining heathenism. Its publication in hymnals of all major denominations, as well as educational publications such as *The Mother's Nursery Songs* and *Dr. Scudder's Tales*, demonstrates its pervasive role.

By the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, the missionary impulse was integral to the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Fisk Singers raised money to send Fisk missionaries to Africa. Hymns were a signature mark of the missionary enterprise, ignoring divisions caused by slavery and race. In the antebellum period, both northern and southern Methodists were united in mission hymnody, though they were divided on abolition and biblical teaching.

In her work "*I Sing for I Cannot Be Silent*": *The Feminization of American Hymnody 1870-1920*, Jane Hadden Hobbs got it right when she wrote, 'Many hymns interpreted and promoted the Scripture known as the Great Commission'. This is insightful. Rather than a mandatory homiletical-hymn causation order, hymns must be appreciated as a stand-alone source; a homiletical source in their own right. Unlike

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<sup>1362</sup> In 1831 the French historian and political thinker Alexis de Tocqueville had visited America and, in the context of describing democracy and religion, coined the concept of 'American Exceptionalism'. See

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. Francis Bowen, trans. Henry Reeve (Two; Cambridge: Sever and Francis, 1863) p. 42.

conversion hymns in American revivalism that were preceded by sermons, mission hymns were, at times, relied on to carry conversion almost entirely.

The increased leeway in lyric composition was permitted under the umbrella of the missionary impulse and its noble cause. Hymn writers were inspired by cultural imperialism, circumstances in the mission field, the ordination and farewell of missionaries, and recruiting support and volunteers. Their texts were not necessarily tied to the Bible; rather, they were increasingly centric to 'heathenism', individualism, geography, nationalism, and motivational requirements (recruitment and funding). Heber's hymn (that employed an innovative lyrical approach) testifies to the prominent place of hymnody. This was, in part, problematic for Mauney who tried to fix biblical themes to each hymn; even Mauney admitted that Heber's hymn did 'not appear to have any specific scriptural allusions'. In this, Heber's hymn demonstrates that hymn texts could function independent from biblical versification, paraphrase, or inspiration. As such, mission hymns of 'human composure' are among the strongest signifiers of hymns as autonomous sources of truth and inspiration.

America's mission was expressed forcefully through its hymns. Like conversion hymns providing operative phrases that the Bible did not provide, mission hymns blended manifest destiny with millennial apocalypticism, also absent from the Bible. Similar to Watts, who transplanted the British Isles into his metrical psalmody, American authors wrote innovative hymns that reinforced the connection between American exceptionalism and the missionary enterprise. Hymns testified that America was the arm of salvation for the world and, used in this way, hymns demonstrated their deuterocanonical value. To be sure, the ideological-theology of American exceptionalism, millennialism, and manifest destiny, was expressed in hymns because of their authoritative status. In sum, the missionary enterprise owed a tremendous debt to hymnody. Hymns were used to articulate missiology, recruit missionaries, solicit finances, and define heathenism. On the mission field (home and foreign) hymns were used in conversion and doctrinal education. In all of these areas, the hymnal functioned with equal theological authority to the Bible.

## Chapter Eleven: Conclusion

In this dissertation I have examined theological authority in hymns and spirituals of American Protestantism focusing on the period 1830-1930, a cultural era significant to theology and hymnody. I have defined ‘hymns’ as sacred songs (textual), ‘the hymnal’ as a collection of sacred songs (as well as a type of collective noun), and ‘theological authority’ as the capacity to express and affect doctrine in a manner that adjudicates on matters of faith and praxis.

In conclusion, I will summarize my research of hymnic-theological commentary, case studies, and areas of praxis. Additionally, and more substantially, I will provide an analysis of my research findings. I will identify prominent hymns, present theological observations, specify the nature and purpose of the theological authority of hymns, describe the role of hymns in American Protestantism 1830-1930, discuss intellectual issues, and suggest areas for further study.

### 11.1 Research Summary: Hymnic-theological Commentary

In chapters three through five, I discussed hymnic-theological commentary, bringing various academic voices into conversation to probe the intersection of hymnody and theology. I have demonstrated the deuterocanonical status of the hymnal attested in American Protestantism and presented representative listings and rankings of hymns.

In chapter three I discussed the heritage of hymns and psalms in Christianity. I considered the devotional and theological contribution of hymnic sources, and emphasized the capacity of hymns to deliver theology, thereby providing regulative statements of belief. Further, I suggested that doxology may not be adequate for understanding the full theological role and content of American Protestant hymnody, though ‘the doxological margin’ as an avenue in which ‘open theological statements’ are made, supports the axiom *lex orandi lex credendi* applied (in principle) to hymns as shapers and codifiers of theology. In 19th-century American Protestantism, the axiom *lex cantandi lex credendi* may best articulate the role of hymnody as a primary expression of theology.

In chapter four I demonstrated through both academic and devotional sources the deuterocanonical status of the hymnal. In most Protestant denominations, it was

common to refer to hymns as ‘inspired’ and hymnals as ‘authorized’, reflecting intentional description of the hymnal in canonical language. Highly regarded theologians, hymnologists, and preachers of the period were at the centre of hymn discussions, hymnal compiling, and the promotion of hymnody. Recognizing the theological function of hymns, prominent theologians endorsed particular hymns and hymn collections. The hymnal was considered essential to faith formation and approved to function in a mutually constitutive relationship with the Bible.

In chapter five I introduced representative listings of hymns reflecting both ideological and popular rankings, demonstrating the canon-like estimation of hymns generally and of certain hymns in particular. These rankings did not yield a common approach or list, but did yield a consensus conviction: hymns were considered essential to faith and praxis, and evoked deeply rooted allegiance. Two divergent concepts of ranking – one ideological and the other populist – indicate the comprehensive performance of hymnody and its vital theological function. For hymnologists, highly ranked hymns were endowed with canonical value, and deserved setting apart. For laity, hymns were ranked for their edificatory value and esteemed by their emotional and devotional impact. For journalists and historians, hymns were endowed with cultural authority to represent select movements or historical eras. Marini ranked hymns by ‘most printed’ thus establishing a database of hymns from two ‘hymn eras’ for service as primary source texts in the social history of theology. These diverse rankings of hymns demonstrate the ecclesial and congregational influence of hymns, and reflect the perceived benefits of hymnody, such as universality, longevity, edificatory impact, cultural depiction, and theological representation.

## **11.2 Research Summary: Representative Case Studies**

In chapters six through eight, I analyzed hymn texts to explore the role of hymns in representative areas of 19<sup>th</sup>-century American Protestantism, including children’s hymnody of the Sunday School movement, spirituals and improvised hymns of Christianized slaves (the rise of African American Protestantism), and the hymnody of marginalized groups. The theological authority of the hymnal was pronounced in all of these cases.

In the faith formation of children, the Bible and the hymnal were mutually constitutive. Hymns were central to the faith expression of children and, evidenced in the practice of memorizing hymns alongside Bible verses, exerted doctrinal influence and served as a privileged theological authority. The child's worldview was informed and inspired by hymnody; hymns were used to establish and nurture faith, and to provide a moral compass and sense of work ethic. In the Sunday School and home, hymns were 'regulative theology' used to articulate belief and duty and used in community via responsive reading, memorization, worship, devotion, deathbed singing, and funeral services. This fulfilled the 'special function' of theology through which children made their faith 'audible'. In many stories recounting children dying, it was most often their favorite hymns that shaped their last words and defined a lasting memorial for their loved ones. Perhaps the hymnal was a treasure of most children.

Children's hymns were virtually equal to Bible verses in theological authority. From the Sunday School as an ecclesial centre, hymns commanded loyalty and devotion. Doctrinal perspectives, especially anthropology, angelology, demonology, ecclesiology, hamatology, soteriology, and eschatology, were established and nurtured by hymn texts. At times, such hymns developed theological nuances based more on speculation, experience and emotion than the Bible itself, thus showing the hymnal as an autonomous source. Despite the Bible's canonical status, in the real experience of many Sunday School children (scholars), the hymnal was functionally interchangeable with the Bible, '*These hymns have I hid in mine heart that I might Do No Sinful Action against Thee.*'<sup>1363</sup>

Spirituals and improvised hymns served as catechism and creed. Ordained ministers and theologians of the period recognized the theological authority of spirituals and improvised hymns. For John Dixon Long, the hymn book was 'the colored people's only catechism'; for Barrett, 'the most acceptable form of doctrine'; and, for Barton, the richest expressions of 'heart religion'. Both Ryder and Proctor recognized the comprehensive representation of Christian theology in the spirituals, applying systematic theology to demonstrate this, and concluding that the spirituals were orthodox expressions of Christian doctrine. Convinced of their affiliation with Protestant Christianity, both Ryder and Proctor used the spirituals as a theological

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<sup>1363</sup> Adaptation of Psalm 119:11 'Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee.' (KJV) *Do No Sinful Action* is a children's hymn.



weapon against Catholicism. Improvised hymns ('Dr. Watts') show how slave songs were influenced by Protestant hymnody. Written in community, spirituals and improvised hymns were a profound model of theology as 'the community's task'. Though preaching was important, song texts were held in community memory and transmitted orally.

Cone argued for race-liberation theology in the spirituals, but the absence of vengeance and racial discrimination in spirituals suggests otherwise (indictment of Jews aside). The spirituals consistently presented human expression that was without racial distinction. Though black slaves were subjected to racial hatred amidst opaque theology that debased dark skin, slave songs did not polemicize racial religion – at least not obviously. Compared to Garvey whose poetry was highly polemicized, the spirituals communicated determined (and sometimes desperate) expressions of spirituality and piety. Their theological authority is partly attributed to their remarkable universality that is no respecter of race or social class.

The use of hymns by marginalized groups as theologically authoritative textual sources greatly contributes to understanding the role of hymns in American Protestantism. Each of these groups identified themselves in some way with Protestantism by emulating its hymn tradition. In almost all cases, marginalized groups borrowed hymns from American Protestantism. In all cases, hymns of marginalized groups were integral to their doctrinal distinctives. Mainstream Protestants took seriously the theological authority of hymns used by marginalized groups, regarding them as official doctrine.

The short time span between the establishment of a sect and the printing of its hymnal demonstrated the priority of each sect having its own hymnal. These hymnals followed closely behind sectarian literature that supplanted the Bible (such as the *Book of Mormon* and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*) and oftentimes predated Bible revisions, such as in the case of Mormons, Unitarians, and Jehovah's Witnesses. The high profile of people involved in hymnal compilation shows, in most cases, the priority given to hymnic material, such as Richard McNemar (Shakerism), Hosea Ballou (Universalism), Emma Smith and Brigham Young (Mormonism), Samuel Longfellow (Unitarianism), Mary Baker Eddy (Christian Science), and Charles Taze Russell (Jehovah's Witnesses).

Hymnody was an arena of theological debate. Drawing the attention of scholars and theologians, (Hodge, Park, Hicks, Sheldon), the doctrine of atonement was often at the centre of such debates. Protestant writers analyzed hymns of marginalized groups to demonstrate theological error, hymnal printing by sectarian groups implying full assent with the hymnal's doctrinal content. Some groups used hymnody as a voice of self-marginalization, such as Universalists denouncing hell (and its preachers), Mormons denouncing the Federalist government, and Jehovah's Witnesses revising their hymn tradition (by 1944) to exclude all Protestant hymnody. Russell's reference to 'hymn-book theology' demonstrated his perception of hymnody as a distinct theological source, thus verifying that hymnic theology was factored into theological discourse of the period. Of hymns written by marginalized groups, numerous Unitarian hymns were printed in Protestant hymnals; otherwise Protestantism showed no interest in hymns written by marginalized groups (although the Shaker hymn *A People Called Christians* – of ecclesiological import – is noteworthy). As a result, Unitarianism retained a relational link to Protestantism through hymnody even amidst serious doctrinal tensions.

### **11.3 Research Summary: Representative Areas of Praxis**

In chapters nine and ten, I explored the usage of hymns in two representative areas of praxis: conversionism and missions. Bebbington and Noll used the term 'conversionism' to define an essential characteristic of evangelical Protestantism, while I have used the term as an area of praxis. This is not incongruent with Bebbington and Noll as they determined characteristics based on belief and practice.

In conversionism and missions, the hymnal functioned in virtual equality with the Bible. The soteriological efficacy of the hymnal was paramount to revival preachers and missionaries, with the salvific use of Revelation 3:20 in hymnody an essential construction and ubiquitous expression of 'evangelical theology'. Hymns perpetuated experiential salvation and shaped the normative understanding of conversion.

In the evangelistic enterprises of conversionism and missions, the Bible was not the sole guide to salvation. As vital contributors to 'evangelistic theology', hymn texts made conversion audible and regulative: hymns dogmatized Jesus' words of invitation and judgment, and prescribed words of acceptance and testimony for the penitent. Hymns facilitated the punctiliar experience of transactional salvation and

verified the personal reality of redemption; the hymnal an essential tool in communicating 'evangelistic theology' in both home and foreign missions.

In conversionism and missions, 'hymns of human composure' became increasingly detached from biblical paraphrase. Many hymns were based on the writer's interpretation and contextualization of a biblical text (such as *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, *Behold Me Standing at the Door*, *The Prodigal Child*) or they were largely independent of biblical allusion (such as *I Love Thy Kingdom Lord*, *From Greenland's Icy Mountains*, *Beautiful Isle of Somewhere*, *See the Heathen Mother Stand*). Despite independence from biblical sources, lyrics of hymn writers were considered trustworthy, thus the hymnal was entrusted do the work of conviction, soliciting remorse and repentance as an autonomous source. In experiential conversionism, hymns were the main mechanism of transactional salvation. As Niebuhr reported (though perhaps hyperbolically), one couldn't get converted without a hymn.

Conversion and mission hymns became the subject matter of hagiographic literature, such as stories of missionaries and famous hymns. In these stories, the Bible moved into the shadow of the hymnal or was absent altogether. Sankey wrote about his life and the story of gospel hymns, providing numerous accounts that showcased the outstanding ability of hymns to save souls. Sankey toured the world; first on his own steam, and later in the suitcase of every American missionary.

Hymns and the Bible were mutually constitutive to conversionism and missions. Thus, the theological authority of hymns particularized in soteriological efficacy was never questioned. Hymns were fully authorized, with or without formal ecclesial sanction, to serve in a canonical capacity guaranteeing the soul's salvation. Hymns served on God's very turf by defining who was heathen and who was civilized; who was saved and who was damned.

#### **11.4 Research Analysis: Prominent Hymns**

Prominent hymns and spirituals have emerged from this study. I will highlight these hymns and spirituals, and provide commentary linking their status to their theological performance.

In hymn rankings, *Just As I Am* by Charlotte Elliott was featured in seven of eight lists; this included ideological, cultural, and popular rankings. Marini's ranking is particularly informative: *Just As I Am* was ranked in 17<sup>th</sup> place in the top 266 hymns 1737-1960, and 2<sup>nd</sup> place in modern evangelical hymns 1861-1970. Theologically, Elliott's hymn is rich in the language of conversionism and crucicentrism. Its emphasis on personal culpability, individualistic salvation, and substitutionary atonement, suitably fit Elliott's hymn to the 19<sup>th</sup>-century rise of experiential conversionism and Arminianism.

In children's hymnody, *The Beautiful Isle of Somewhere* and *Jesus Loves Me* deserve recognition, but the most cherished children's hymn may have been *I Want to be an Angel* by Sidney Gill. The theme aligns with the emphasis upon angelology in children's hymnody at large. Further, Gill's hymn depicted for children a tangible eschatology (perhaps assisted by the enactment of *Bright Angels* by Sunday School children).

To represent African American spirituals in his treatment of American history, Grant Wacker used *Swing Low Sweet Chariot*. James Weldon Johnson considered *Go Down Moses* as 'one of the strongest themes in the whole musical literature of the world.' Yet the spiritual most printed in slave song collections was *Old Ship of Zion*.<sup>1364</sup> Captained by Jesus, piloted by the Holy Spirit, accompanied by angels, trusted to carry thousands upon thousands, destined for the Promised Land, and each phrase punctuated with 'hallelujah', *Old Ship of Zion* featured the theological themes of Christology, pneumatology, and angelology, in a song of fervent eschatological hope.

In the hymns of marginalized groups, *From all that Dwell Below the Skies* (34<sup>th</sup> on Marini's list) and *Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah* (7<sup>th</sup> on Marini's list) ranked highest. With 'Christ-less' lyrics that focus attention to the Creator, these two hymns resonated with the ecumenical stream of American Protestantism, and demonstrated the dismissal of crucicentrism (deification of Jesus and the doctrine of substitutionary atonement) common to most marginalized groups.

Of conversion hymns, *Behold a Stranger at the Door* by Rev. Joseph Grigg ranked 63<sup>rd</sup> in Marini's list. Rev. Grigg's hymn was featured in Mossell's article on the

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<sup>1364</sup> Included in Barton, Higginson (three different versions), The Jubilee Singers repertoire, and the Allen, Ware and Garrison collection. Note: The Allen, Ware and Garrison collection had two versions, one of them from a source other than Higginson.

power of hymns to convert souls and, in Warner's *Wide, Wide World*, selected for Ella's salvation. Of special note, Warner's novel featured the revised title common to almost all American Protestant hymnals: *Behold the Savior at Thy Door*. The editing of 'a stranger' to 'the Savior' adapted the hymn directly to personal conversionism, and represented the hymnal's authority to define the divine personage in soteriological terms of transactional salvation.

In the missionary enterprise, *From Greenland's Icy Mountains* (ranked 15<sup>th</sup> in Marini's list) dominated among hymns that expressed the mandate of missions. *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name* (ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in Marini's list) gained legendary status in missionary stories, and the children's hymn *I Want to be an Angel* was a favorite throughout the global mission field. The missionary enterprise mirrored the comprehensive ministry of the American Protestant church, including the priority of children's faith formation, the zealous activism expressed through evangelism and societal reform, and the crucicentric appeal of conversionism. In all of these endeavors, hymns played a crucial role in theological education and conversion.

### **11.5 Research Analysis: Theological Observations**

Various theological observations arise from this study. Hymns written by American writers can be situated within the cultural context of American Protestantism while spirituals reflect a subcultural context, both demonstrating the theological force of hymns.

Culturally, American hymns fit within the context of individualism, experientialism, millennialism, revivalism, and exceptionalism. Timothy Dwight's metrical psalm *I Love Thy Kingdom Lord* featured the concepts of 'kingdom', 'church', 'Jesus', and 'atonement', thus rendering Psalm 137 unrecognizable. Further, Dwight presented the Church as synonymous with God's kingdom, a bold ecclesiology. *My Country 'tis of Thee* by Rev. Samuel F. Smith nationalized religion and religionized nationalism. George Duffield marshaled American Protestant militarism in *Stand Up, Stand Up, for Jesus*. Julia Ward Howe contextualized 'the Gospel' to the American Civil War in *Battle Hymn of the Republic*; the new Gospel was 'fiery' and 'burnished in rows of steel'. Crucicentrism was prevalent in American hymnody, Fanny Crosby's *Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross*, and George Bennard's *The Old Rugged Cross* both placing 'the cross' at the centre of American Protestant doxology. Sanford F. Bennett's *In the*

*Sweet By and By* focused on the beautiful shores of the Afterlife, a common fascination in American hymnody following the rise of 'evangelistic theology'. In the context of conversionism, Will L. Thompson's *Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling* and Crosby's *Behold Me Standing at the Door*, reinforced the image of Jesus calling to the sinner. Rufus H. McDaniel's *Since Jesus Came Into My Heart* captured the testimony of 'evangelistic theology'. Knowles Shaw's *Bringing in the Sheaves* focused missiology on reaping and harvesting, while A. B. Simpson's *Missionary Cry* fuelled the belief that Christ would not return until the gospel was preached in every land. *As Goes America* by Palmer Hartsough depicted America at the epicentre of the apocalyptic strategem.

Though I have argued that spirituals and improvised hymns reflected Christianization and Protestantism, the tenor of the theology is decidedly different from American Protestant hymnody. Not surprising, spirituals were devoid of nationalistic millennialism and American exceptionalism. Written anonymously in the context of a suffering community, 'the schoolhouse of slavery' produced a profound corpus of 'psalmody'. God's justice and sovereignty was cherished in the songs *His Name it is Jehovah* and *Didn't my Lord deliver Daniel?* The Son of Man was crucified and the Son of God was the redeemer, themes represented in *Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?* and *Ride on King Jesus*. Slaves shared in American revivalism and celebrated the person and work of the Holy Spirit, *Something on the Inside Working on the Outside* providing a clear testimony of the Spirit's ministry. Emphasizing the human reality of sin and the hope of redemption, *Down in the Valley to Pray* and *Lord Have Mercy* served as representative lamentations. *Long White Robe and Starry Crown* and *The Angels Changed My Name* demonstrate that eschatology and angelology could hardly be separated. For slaves, the church was not a kingdom; a camp meeting the favorite image of the church gathered. But the earthly camp meeting was only a reflection of *A Great Camp-meeting in the Promised Land*. Praise could not be silenced by persecution, and 'hallelujah' and 'glory' were crafted into many spirituals, such as *Hallelujah to the Lamb* and *Glory, Glory! Hallelujah! Since I laid my burden down*. Contrary to the anti-Catholicism of White Protestantism, at least one representative spiritual reflected Marian piety. In solidarity with the loss of her son, *Hail Mary* was a prayer, 'To help me bear de cross'.

Hymns and spirituals articulated beliefs and doctrinal emphases that can be categorized through systematic theology. The hymn *Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah* and the spiritual *His Name it is Jehovah* attest to the sovereignty of God; the holiness and omnipresence of God emphasized in *Rock of Ages* and *Holy, Holy, Holy*. In Christology, *All Hail the Power of Jesus Name* and *Crownd [sic] Him Lord of All*, its counterpart in spirituals, attested to the worship of Jesus as Lord. In pneumatology, African American spirituals pioneered awareness of the Holy Spirit predating the birth of the Pentecostal movement (as associated with the Azusa Street revival in 1906). In bibliology, hymns endorsed the Bible and testified to biblical authority. It is arguable that the Bible was believed as much because of the hymnal's testimony of biblical truth as its own merit, thereby attesting to the theological authority of the hymnal. Conversion hymns informed anthropology, harmatology, and soteriology. Acting as free moral agents, sin-burdened human beings were approached individually by the person of Jesus, each one given the opportunity to welcome him into their heart and receive the pardon and forgiveness of God. Hymns emphasized the eschatological hope of Protestants and were employed to shape understandings of millennialism and propagate its message. Angelology was depicted in children's hymnody and African American spirituals. The children's hymn *I Want to be an Angel* was unequalled in its circulation, but its suggestion that the human being would be transformed to an angelic state was a source of intense debate. In spirituals, the transport to heaven and the appointment of a heavenly name was considered the work of angels. Ecclesiology was influenced by hymns; furthering Protestant dominance, defining the church within an American context, and elevating persons that served in music ministry, such as hymn writers, song leaders, and hymnal compilers. What other medium could Dwight have used to express his love for the Church and declare the sovereignty of God's Kingdom? Protestants of every denomination resonated with Dwight's lyrics and raised the hymns of the Church toward heaven to 'guard the nation from idolatry'. A critical understanding of 19<sup>th</sup>-century missiology is embedded in hymns. Hymns were employed as a dogmatic medium to define the heathen and express the judgment of God, as well as articulate the global mandate of Protestant missions.

In historical theology (how theology performs and develops over the course of time) hymns were influential in the rise of Arminianism, the propagation of millennialism, the definition of evangelical theology, and the standardization of experiential

conversionism. In the latter, the linear model of catechism gave ground to the punctiliar model of crisis experience. Amidst the encroaching liberalism of Unitarianism and Universalism, hymns guarded orthodoxy, especially the doctrine of atonement.

In liturgical theology (how worship defines what Christianity is), conversionism as a Protestant distinctive was brought to the foreground. Conversion hymns and the 'anxious bench' in worship defined public conviction and regeneration as the vital 'Christian experience'. In the Sunday School service, worship was largely an exercise in didactic moralism, conveying Christianity defined by virtue and obedience. 'Praise lyrics' were conspicuous by their absence. Teachings against prodigalism and alcoholism were transformed from parables and proverbs to hymns of creedal fear, thus giving the Sunday School Superintendent a hymnal with teeth.

Though causes are difficult to assess in cultural theology (how culture defines what theology is), there are numerous societal forces that shaped Protestantism. Perhaps the most obvious cultural theology shaped through hymnody was millennialism. The American rendition of this doctrinal system merged American exceptionalism, manifest destiny, missiology, activism, and conversion. America was the land of promise and Protestants were the arm of salvation. Winthrop's 'city on a hill' evolved into 'Protestants on Zion' in hopes of ushering in the apocalyptic reign of Christ. This was a big theology and hymns made it bigger.

The theological authority of hymns dramatically affected ecclesial theology (how a church tradition shapes theology). As Protestant denominations compiled hymnals, they used ecclesial authority to validate hymns as a key source of doctrine. Episcopal conferences exercised control over hymn authorization, endowing hymnals with ecclesial authority and, in turn, endowing hymn compilers and editors with an elevated role. (In Mormonism the hymn compiler was considered a revelatory role.) The use of hymns and professionalization of the song leader created situations where ecclesial authority was shared between preacher and song leader. In ecclesiology, the laicization and feminization of hymnody, the elevated status of the song leader to a place of functional leadership and mass influence, and the nondenominational publication of hymnals, all served to revise the dynamics of ecclesial authority. In Sunday School, the Superintendent's authority was augmented with hymnal in hand.



Hymnic theology (how hymn texts define what Christianity is) was pervasive in 19<sup>th</sup>-century American Protestantism and can be understood and expressed as *lex cantandi lex credendi*. The hymnal was trusted to teach doctrine and moral discernment to children. Spirituals and improvised hymns served in place of catechism and the Bible, and were consulted to measure the orthodoxy of slave theology. Hymns of marginalized groups were provided as evidence of heresy. Temperance hymns defined the drunkard. Conversion hymns defined the substance of ‘evangelistic theology’ and dogmatized transactional salvation. In hymnic theology, Jesus knocking at the door of ‘every sinner’s heart’ forged the union of prevenient grace, Arminianism, and ‘evangelistic theology’.

### **11.6 Research Analysis: The Nature of Theological Authority**

Various terms and phrases denoting theological authority have been used throughout this work. I will discuss these terms, in sequence of ascending importance, articulating the nature and purpose of the hymnal’s theological authority.

I have used the term ‘deuterocanonical’ to denote a secondary canonical source; a distinctive term maintaining the Bible as ultimately and solely canonical. The intentional use of deuterocanonical language for the hymnal demonstrates that it was consciously assessed as an inspirational (textual) source. The terms ‘sacred’, ‘inspired’, and ‘holy’, elevated the hymnal significantly, though doctrinal subordination to the Bible remained constant.

I have used the term ‘functional canonicity’ to denote the canonical performance of the hymnal. Hymns were used to accomplish outcomes usually reserved for the Bible. This was evidenced in song texts that delivered doctrine foundational to the faith community, such as children’s hymnody, African American spirituals and improvised hymns, and conversion hymns.

I have used the term ‘mutually constitutive’ to denote functional equivalence between the Bible and the hymnal. This is demonstrated where the hymnal served alongside the Bible with equitable impact and necessity, such as the use of hymns in faith formation of children, conversion, and missions.

I have used the expression ‘soteriological efficacy’ in tandem with the phrase ‘the sole guide to salvation’, demonstrating that the hymnal displaced the Bible’s distinct

capacity to enlighten human beings toward salvation. This is particularly evident in conversionism and missions where, with the full endorsement of ecclesial authority, the hymnal served as the dominant apparatus in conversion. In function, this represents a doctrinal shift away from the Bible's sovereignty as the exclusive source of salvific truth. In conversion and missions, the hymnal was a legitimate substitute to the Bible and, at times, preferred to the Bible. The timeless 'solutions' of hymns certifying their 'ultimacy' that Sizer applied, in particular, to post-Finney conversion hymns, is applicable to hymns in conversionism generally.

Folkert's categorizations 'Canon I' and 'Canon II' (page 255) are applicable to the hymnal. In both dogmatics and homiletics, the hymnal cannot be designated as Canon II (a sacred text, sufficient to itself). The hymnal was absent from doctrinal statements whereas the Bible's infallibility (and inerrancy) was a hallmark doctrine. Hymn lyrics were declarative of the Bible's supremacy. Herein the prominence of biblicism is evident, thus aligning with the Bebbington-Noll assessment. Hymns pushed the envelope toward biblical equality, but they stopped short in homiletics. Hymn verses were commonly quoted in sermons, but did not become textual replacements for the Bible. Henry Ward Beecher assigned a Bible verse and hymn text for each sermon, but the hymn text was subordinate to the biblical text. Though homiletical resources referred to hymns as sermon sources and preachers of the period gave hymns pride of place within sermons, it cannot be said that a body of homiletical material exists that used hymns as a central text in replacement of the Bible. Therefore, the Bible retained an authority that the hymnal did not dislodge. However, the use of hymns within sermons was more than illustrative. In many cases, hymn texts were used within sermons to complement the biblical text, to encapsulate biblical teaching, or to provide a sentimental source to reinforce biblical propositions.

The hymnal achieved Canon II status in four noticeable ways: catechism, Christianization, conversionism, and missionization. In Sunday School and slave communities, 'the hymnal' was used as an autonomous source of doctrine. In conversion, hymns were a self-sufficient apparatus of transactional salvation; independent of revivals and camp meetings, a parent or slave master could assign the hymnal to instruct a child or slave toward conversion. In the missionary enterprise, missionaries prioritized the translation of hymns. As a source unto themselves, hymns anchored the meaning and memory of cardinal teachings and events, and served as the vehicle of faith expression and Christian identification. Whereas hymns

of human composure in 18<sup>th</sup>-century hymnody were usually derived from the Bible, 19<sup>th</sup>-century hymnody witnessed an increasing detachment from the Bible. 19<sup>th</sup>-century hymn writers oftentimes composed from their own experiences and personal inspirations, yet their hymns gained theological legitimacy.

Various authors compared hymns to creeds. Hobart's tactic in contrasting *I Want to be an Angel* with an early creed of Christendom demonstrates his perception of the hymn's competing creedal function. Benson argued against the inclusion of gospel hymns from hymn rankings based on their rejection by 'the great bodies of Christians', thus suggesting procedural canonization of hymnody. Ryder believed that slave songs functioned as 'the Apostles' Creed', containing the great truths of Christianity.

Infrequently, slave songs paid tribute to and expressed the authority of the Bible. Though biblical allusions were embedded in spirituals, the resulting corpus of texts was comparable to a new book of Psalms. Like Psalm 137, spirituals expressed the faith and lament of a people in exile; unlike Psalm 137 they did not curse their oppressors (though Jews may have been a scapegoat). In Barth's view, it was the work of theology to bring the truth of the canonical text to the attention of the community in the language of the community. In the case of spirituals and improvised hymns, the song lyrics *were* the canonical text, written by the community for the community.

Similarities between the hymn-ranking process and the canonization of the New Testament writings are unmistakable. While biblicism constructs obstacles to considering the evolution of American hymnody in this way, the canon-like valuation of hymns is evident in at least three operations, compelling the consideration of the hymnal in 19<sup>th</sup> century American Protestantism as a canonical text.

1. Many hymn compilations were conducted under the strict supervision of ecclesial authority. This process was not unusual but normative, especially among Methodist, Protestant Episcopal, and Presbyterian denominations. Methodist bishops, for instance, issued an official statement entreating Methodists, out of 'respect for the authority of the Conferences' to purchase no hymn books but those endorsed by the episcopacy.
2. Hymnologists ranked hymns according to authorship. Acknowledging classical hymn writers (especially Watts and Wesley), Reeves proposed that

hymns written by 'inspired men' entitled them 'to have their names written in the book of life'. Watts was considered a trophy by Unitarians who believed his conversion to Arianism endorsed their Christology. Mainstream Protestants (such as Hodge) argued against Unitarian claims of Watts' Arianism and fought to retain Watts among orthodox Trinitarians.

3. Hymnologists ranked hymns according to universal usage. Thompson looked to the leading Protestant denominations, and ultimately the Protestant Episcopal and Lutheran denominations to measure usage. Benson appealed to 'the great bodies of Christians' to reject gospel hymns, thus employing universality of usage to judge hymnody.

While there are inherent limitations imposed on the theological authority of the hymnal, a thorough investigation of hymnic influence reveals that the theological vitality of the hymnal was substitutive for the Bible. Since 2 Timothy 3:15-17 is the principal text most often used by Protestants to substantiate the theological authority of the Bible, I will employ this biblical text to demonstrate the theological authority of the hymnal. I will use the American Revised Version of the Bible pioneered, fittingly, by Philip Schaff.<sup>1365</sup> Where 2 Timothy 3:15-17 refers to 'sacred writings' and 'scripture', I have inserted alongside 'sacred songs' and 'hymn' in squared brackets, thus demonstrating the interchangeability of the hymnal with the Bible.

And that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings [sacred songs] which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every scripture [hymn] inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness. That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.

If biblical authority is particularized as the guide to salvation and the authorized resource for teaching, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness, in 19<sup>th</sup>-century American Protestantism, the Bible's function was not measurably different from that of the hymnal. Where the Bible narrated the story of the Prodigal Son, the hymnal offered songs about the Prodigal Son, the Prodigal Child, and the Prodigal Daughter. Where the Bible narrated the story of Christ knocking at the door of the lapsed Laodicean church, the hymnal offered an abundance of songs that depicted the Saviour knocking at human hearts to offer salvation. Where the Bible contrasted the

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<sup>1365</sup> Philip Schaff compiled *Christ in Song: Hymns of Immanuel* (1868). Hodge appealed to the universal authority of hymns and used Schaff's collection as an authoritative source (page 42). Hodge, along with B. B. Warfield, championed the inerrancy of the Bible.

righteous vs. the wicked, hymns contrasted the redeemed vs. the heathen. In these cases, the hymnal functionally displaced the biblical narrative. Hymn writers interpreted biblical narratives; these interpretations became codified through printing and authoritative through usage. During the period 1830-1930, apart from the occasional polemic against hymns of human composure or the theology of an individual hymn, the hymnal was largely uncontested in its theological authority. Hymns functioned with the capacity to express and affect doctrine that adjudicated matters of faith (such as the view of the Bible, substitutionary atonement, and conversion) and praxis (such as temperance, church and Sunday School attendance, and involvement in missions).

### **11.7 Research Analysis: Hymns in American Protestantism**

The momentum of this dissertation has built toward the pervasive role and vital theological function of hymnody. In American Protestantism of the period 1830-1930, hymns were 'everywhere present', their presence was almost always of consequence, and their affect adjudicated persuasively in matters of faith and praxis. Hymns were taken seriously by theologians, the theological authority of hymns validated as a type of regulative theology. Hymns were taken seriously by hymnologists, the theological authority of hymns validated as a type of canon. Hymns were taken seriously by laity, the theological authority of hymns validated as a type of revelation. Hymns were taken seriously by society at large, the theological authority of hymns validated as a type of pietism. Nothing – absolutely nothing – could compete with hymns as audible faith.

Central to the major denominations of the period 1830-1930, hymns consistently performed vital theological functions. Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians used hymns in conversion, faith formation, worship, moral reform, education, and missions. The Methodist Episcopal Church treated the hymn collection and hymnal compilation almost as if it were a denominational Bible.

Central to the major movements of the period 1830-1930, hymns served as a necessary theological apparatus. This was evident in the Sunday School movement, the temperance crusade, the rise of African American Protestantism, revivalism, anti-Catholicism and the anti-cult movements, Arminianism and experiential

conversionism, foreign and domestic missions, millennialism, moralism, and American exceptionalism.

Hymns were central to biblicism, crucicentrism, activism, and conversionism. Without hymns, biblicism would have been without its greatest ally. The confession of biblical authority – *Holy Bible, Book Divine* – was nowhere more universally expressed than in hymnody. Without hymns, crucicentrism would have been without songs to survey the wondrous cross and to cherish the old rugged cross. Protestantism would have been poor indeed without the spiritual *Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?* According to theologians of the period, hymns guarded the doctrine of substitutionary atonement. Without hymns, activism would have been without the rallying cry of the temperance movement, ‘I’ll sign the temperance pledge’. Without hymns such as *Behold Thy Savior at Thy Door*, the universalization of Revelation 3:20 in evangelistic theology is unthinkable. Hymns were central to conversionism and the language of transactional salvation.

As ‘the’ cultural voice of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Twain’s privileged treatment and critical use of hymnody demonstrates hymnody as a representative and persuasive medium. Observing the mission field, his theological critique of imperialism employed *From Greenland’s Icy Mountains*. Observing the battlefield, his outcry against the religious opportunism of the Civil War employed *Battle Hymn of the Republic* to deliver a prophetic message of anti-theology. Observing the cotton field, Twain found ‘utter beauty’ in the spirituals and testified to their capacity to ‘move him infinitely more than any other music’. Twain heralded the authority of the hymn, his commentary encompassing Methodism, to Christian Science; the Sunday School scholar, to the Civil War soldier; the ‘civilized’, to the ‘heathen’.

## **11.8 Research Analysis: Intellectual Issues**

Various intellectual issues have surfaced in researching this dissertation. Some have been in almost constant stride with this work, such as the hymnal’s Bible-like status, the laicization of hymn writing, and the commodification of hymnody. Other intellectual issues have risen that are more specific to certain interest areas, such as the theological performance of hymns in conversion and missions, apocalyptic and imperialist tropes in missionary hymns, the lyrical independence of hymns, and the edificatory measurement of hymnody. While the seminary and the pulpit were largely

kept under the constant guard of ordination and licensing (some revivalist and slave preachers being the exception), hymn writing became largely deregulated. Outside of the denominations that preferred hymns written by reliable theologians and/or clergy, the jury of popular usage and leanings of sentimentalism determined the worth of lyrics. In this way, hymn writers became autonomous. The theological authority of the medium (hymns) was thus linked to the lyrical source (hymn writer) and the new musical-ecclesial leadership (especially song leaders and prominent hymn writers). In other words, the medium of hymnody as an established authority passed on its theological authority by association to those who wrote hymns and/or used hymns in public ministry.

The laicization of hymn writing and commodification of hymns gave an equal voice to women hymn writers (feminization of hymnody). As a case in point, *I Want to be an Angel*, written by a female Sunday School teacher, became a 'top selling' hymn of the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, extensive in usage throughout American Protestant churches and the foreign mission field, though no writer came close to the prolificacy of Fanny Crosby. In addition, commercialization of hymns spawned popular hymn polls that competed with rankings by hymnologists. Coupled with marketplace demands, hymn writers wrote for popular audiences, thus folk piety influenced theological expression of gospel hymns.

Polemicization both in and through hymnic theology is noteworthy: Mark Twain vs. Julia Ward Howe; Mark Twain vs. Mary Baker Eddy; Mark Twain vs. Christianized Imperialism; Governor Wilson vs. Sunday School hymns; Daniel Kidder vs. Mormonism; Charles Taze Russell vs. Protestant theology; Brigham Young vs. Emma Smith; *I want to be an Angel* vs. *I would not be an Angel*, and so on. Hymns were at the centre of many adversarial exchanges both drawing debate and serving as the mechanism to wage debate, thus demonstrating the tremendous theological investment in hymns.

Anti-Semitism made its way into the corpus of hymns and spirituals. Largely overlooked by scholars, this subject requires examination. Especially pertinent to this subject is the vulnerability at the 'doxological margin' as a place of exploitation where singers may embrace ideologies in an emotional-experiential state. The capacity of hymns and spirituals as regulative theology cannot be underestimated, especially when they are used to perpetuate hatred and discrimination. Displacement

theology and supercessionism may be less vitriolic, but their connections to anti-Semitism and expression in hymnody commands attention.

The hymnal's infringement upon the Bible's sovereignty (*Sola Scriptura*) is of primary doctrinal import. Assumptions of the Bible's sacrosanct place as canonical text and its role as the sole guide to salvation are reasonably challenged by this study. In terms of functional canonicity, the hymnal's realm of influence is considerable. Notably, the hymnal's influence would be in no way a surprise to its users. The hymnal was a cherished and sanctified volume and its users were largely unguarded toward the theological authority of hymns. Though many writers commented on hymns, they were not required to justify their use of hymnic authority; the hymnal's right and place of influence was largely uncontested. The hymnal had an enviable position: it was not the subject of higher criticism as was its counterpart the Bible, yet it enjoyed a high level of admiration and confessional allegiance – even among traditions that were influenced by liberal progressivism or higher criticism (such as Unitarianism, Universalism, and Freemasonry).

### **11.9 Areas for Further Study**

The intersection of theology and hymnody is largely unexplored with many opportunities for further research. Pertaining to the delimitations of this work, further study could be employed to explore the influence of hymn tunes, the role of hymns in specific denominations, or a time period that continues beyond the early-20<sup>th</sup> century. There are various types of hymnals that could be studied for theological content and authority, such as university and college hymnals, abolitionist hymnals, national hymnals, and funeral home hymnals. The theological content and social context of prominent hymns illuminated in this study are worthy of more focused consideration. Various studies on hymn editing have been done, but the increase in modernization of hymn lyrics (and the randomness of this practice) offers the opportunity to investigate the theological ramifications of hymn editing and advise methodology. Though the hymnal's dominance has continued in varied forms and genres, it has continued. This calls for the development of methods that deal with the exegetical-theological task in hymnology. In applied theology, the theological authority of hymns in congregational and liturgical studies demands attention, especially the reciprocal relationship between *lex cantandi lex credendi* and the subordinate role of the Bible.



## Appendix 1: Common Hymns in Anglican Hymnody

By James King in *Anglican Hymnology* (ranked)

Top Ten Hymns from Kings' '105 First Ranked Hymns'<sup>1366</sup>

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Title	Author
1. <i>All praise to Thee, my God, this night</i>	Thomas Ken
2. <i>Hark! the herald angels sing</i>	Charles Wesley
3. <i>Lo! He comes with clouds descending</i>	John Cennick; C. Wesley
4. <i>Rock of Ages, cleft for me</i>	Augustus M. Toplady
5. <i>Abide With Me, Fast Falls the Eventide</i>	Henry F. Lyte
6. <i>Awake, my soul, and with the sun</i>	Thomas Ken
7. <i>Jerusalem the Golden</i>	Bernard of Cluny; tr. Neale
8. <i>Jesus, Lover of My Soul</i>	Charles Wesley
9. <i>Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear</i>	John Keble
10. <i>When I survey the wondrous cross</i>	Isaac Watts

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<sup>1366</sup> Rev. James King, *Anglican Hymnody: Being an Account of the 325 Standard Hymns of the Highest Merit According to the Verdict of the Whole Anglican Church* (London: Hatchards, Piccadilly, 1885) p. 41.

## Appendix 2: The Best Church Hymns

By Louis F. Benson in *The Best Church Hymns*<sup>1367</sup> (a numerical ranking)

Title	Author
1. <i>Rock of Ages, cleft for me</i>	Augustus M. Toplady
2. <i>When I survey the wondrous cross</i>	Isaac Watts
3. <i>Jesus, Lover of my soul</i>	Charles Wesley
4. <i>All Praise to Thee, my God, this night</i>	Thomas Ken
5. <i>Jesus, I my cross have taken</i>	Henry Francis Lyte
6. <i>Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear</i>	John Keble
7. <i>Awake, my soul, and with the sun</i>	Thomas Ken
8. <i>Hark! the herald angels sing</i>	Charles Wesley
9. <i>Abide with me: fast falls the eventide</i>	Henry Francis Lyte
10. <i>Jerusalem, my happy home</i>	James Montgomery
11. <i>How sweet the name of Jesus sounds</i>	John Newton
12. <i>Nearer my God to Thee</i>	Sarah Flower Adams
13. <i>From Greenland's icy mountains</i>	Bishop Reginald Heber
14. <i>Our God, our help in ages past</i>	Isaac Watts
15. <i>Jerusalem the golden</i>	Bernard of Cluny
16. <i>Lo! He comes, with clouds descending</i>	Martin Madan (Wesley/Cennick) <sup>1368</sup>
17. <i>Jesus shall reign where'er the sun</i>	Isaac Watts
18. <i>Glorious things of Thee are spoken</i>	John Newton
19. <i>Hark, the glad sound! the Saviour comes</i>	Phillip Doddridge
20. <i>Come, let us join our cheerful songs</i>	Isaac Watts
21. <i>All hail the power of Jesus' name</i>	Edward Perronet
22. <i>Hail to the Lord's Anointed</i>	James Montgomery
23. <i>O Worship the King all glorious above</i>	Sir Robert Grant
24. <i>Christ the Lord is risen to-day</i>	Charles Wesley <sup>1369</sup>
25. <i>Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah</i>	William Williams
26. <i>Just as I am, without one plea</i>	Charlotte Elliott
27. <i>God moves in a mysterious way</i>	William Cowper
28. <i>Jesus, the very thought of Thee</i>	Bernard of Clairvaux
29. <i>Children of the heavenly King</i>	John Cennick
30. <i>There is a land of pure delight</i>	Isaac Watts
31. <i>Thou, whose almighty word</i>	John Marriott
32. <i>Brief life is here our portion</i>	Bernard (of Cluny)

<sup>1367</sup> Benson, *The Best Church Hymns*.

<sup>1368</sup> Benson recounts the editing process whereby, in 1760, the Martin Madan used verses of hymns by Charles Wesley and John Cennick to create this hymn.

<sup>1369</sup> Benson is vague about the authorship, referring to it as 'part of one of the hymns of Charles Wesley.'

### Appendix 3: Familiar Hymns, First Series

By Louis F. Benson in *Studies of Familiar Hymns: First Series*<sup>1370</sup> (unranked)

Title	Author
<i>O Little Town of Bethlehem</i>	Phillips Brooks
<i>Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus</i>	George Duffield
<i>Sun of My Soul, Thou Savior Dear</i>	John Keble
<i>How Firm a Foundation, Ye Saints of the Lord</i>	K— <sup>1371</sup>
<i>Lord, with Glowing Heart I'd Praise Thee</i>	Francis Scott Key
<i>From Greenland's Icy Mountains</i>	Reginald Heber
<i>My Faith Looks Up to Thee</i>	Ray Palmer
<i>Lead, Kindly Light, Amid the Encircling Gloom</i>	John Henry Newman
<i>My Country 'Tis of Thee</i>	Samuel Francis Smith
<i>Onward Christian Soldiers</i>	Sabine Baring-Gould
<i>Nearer, My God to Thee</i>	Sarah Flower Adams
<i>When I Survey the Wondrous Cross</i>	Isaac Watts
<i>O Still in Accents Sweet and Strong</i>	Samuel Longfellow
<i>Jesus Christ is Risen To-day</i>	Composite <sup>1372</sup>
<i>A Mighty Fortress is Our God</i>	Martin Luther
<i>Abide with Me: Fast Falls the Eventide</i>	Henry Francis Lyte
<i>God Bless our Native Land</i>	attr. to Charles T. Brooks and John S. Dwight
<i>Father of Mercies, in Thy Word</i>	Anne Steele
<i>O Day of Rest and Gladness</i>	Christopher Wordsworth
<i>Take My Life and Let it Be</i>	Francis Ridley Havergal
<i>I Would Not Live Always; I Ask Not to Stay</i>	William A. Muhlenberg
<i>O Help Us, Lord; Each Hour of Need</i>	Henry Hart Milman
<i>Shepherd of Tender Youth</i>	Clement, tr. Henry Dexter
<i>Thine For Ever! God of Love</i>	Mary Fowler Maude
<i>Sunset and Evening Star</i>	Lord Tennyson

<sup>1370</sup> Louis F. Benson, *Studies of Familiar Hymns: First Series* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1926).

<sup>1371</sup> Benson follows Dr. John Rippon's use of 'K—' to indicate the authorship of this hymn. Hymnologists have considered various authors, including Thomas Kirkham, George Keith and R. Keene. Benson seems to favor Keene but leaves the matter without a solution.

<sup>1372</sup> Charles Wesley wrote the fourth stanza of this hymn.

## Appendix 4: Familiar Hymns, Second Series

By Louis F. Benson in *Studies of Familiar Hymns: Second Series*<sup>1373</sup> (unranked)

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Title	Author
<i>All People That on the Earth do Dwell</i>	William Kethe
<i>The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want</i>	Rous's version
<i>There is a Land of Pure Delight</i>	Isaac Watts
<i>Jesus, Lover of My Soul</i>	Charles Wesley
<i>Children of the Heavenly King</i>	John Cennick
<i>Christians, Awake! Salute the Happy Morn</i>	John Byrom
<i>Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah</i>	William Williams
<i>Lord, I Am Thine, Eternally Thine</i>	Samuel Davies
<i>Sweet the Moments, Rich in Blessing</i>	Walter Shirley
<i>Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me</i>	Augustus M. Toplady
<i>God of Our Fathers, Whose Almighty Hand</i>	Daniel C. Roberts
<i>How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds</i>	John Newton
<i>God Moves in Mysterious Ways</i>	William Cowper
<i>All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name</i>	Edward Perronet
<i>O God of Bethel, by Whose Hand</i>	Psalm Book (Scotland)
<i>Hail to the Lord's Anointed</i>	James Montgomery
<i>Just As I Am, Without One Plea</i>	Charlotte Elliott
<i>I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say</i>	Horatius Bonar
<i>There is a Green Hill Far Away</i>	Cecil F. Alexander
<i>Art Thou Weary, Art Thou Languid</i>	John Mason Neale
<i>The Church's One Foundation</i>	Samuel J. Stone
<i>O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go</i>	George Matheson
<i>God be With You Till We Meet Again</i>	Jeremiah E. Rankin

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<sup>1373</sup> Louis F. Benson, *Studies of Familiar Hymns: Second Series* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1923).

## Appendix 5: Hymns by Inspired Women

By Francis B. Reeves In *Evolution of Christian Hymnology*<sup>1374</sup> (unranked)

Title	Author
<i>Father, Whate'er of Earthly Bliss</i>	Anne Steele
<i>Dear Refuge of My Weary Soul</i>	Anne Steele
<i>To Our Redeemer's Glorious Name</i>	Anne Steele
<i>Now I Resolve with All My Heart</i>	Anne Steele
<i>Great God, to Thee My Evening Song</i>	Anne Steele
<i>The Saviour! O What Endless Charms</i>	Anne Steele
<i>He Lives, the Great Redeemer Lives</i>	Anne Steele
<i>Thou Lovely Source of Pure Delight</i>	Anne Steele
<i>Father of Mercies, in Thy Word</i>	Anne Steele
<i>Jesus Calls Us O'er the Tumult</i>	Cecil Frances Alexander
<i>There is a Green Hill Far Away</i>	Cecil Frances Alexander
<i>Once in Royal David's City</i>	Cecil Frances Alexander
<i>Come, Said Jesus' Sacred Voice</i>	Mrs. Anna L. Barbauld
<i>How Blest the Righteous When He Dies</i>	Mrs. Anna L. Barbauld
<i>Praise to God, Immortal Praise</i>	Mrs. Anna L. Barbauld
<i>I Love to Steal Awhile Away</i>	Mrs. Phoebe H. Brown
<i>I Think When I Read that Sweet Story of Old</i>	Mrs. Jemima T. Luke
<i>Call Them In, the Poor, the Wretched</i>	Anna Shipton
<i>The Sands of Time are Sinking</i>	Anna R. Cousin
<i>Father, We Thank Thee for the Night</i>	Kate Douglass Wiggin
<i>Jesus, Tender Shepherd, Hear Me</i>	Mary L. Duncan
<i>Can a Little Child Like Me</i>	Mary Mapes Dodge
<i>One Sweetly Solemn Thought</i>	Miss Phebe Cary
<i>Beneath the Cross of Jesus</i>	Miss Elizabeth C. Clephane
<i>There Were Ninety and Nine</i>	Miss Elizabeth C. Clephane
<i>Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne</i>	Emily Elizabeth Elliott
<i>While Thee I Seek</i>	Helen Maria Williams
<i>Our Blest Redeemer, ere He Breathed</i>	Harriet Auber
<i>Jesus, Tender Shepherd, Hear Me</i>	Mrs. Mary Duncan
<i>The Open Door</i>	Mrs. Urania L. Bailey
<i>We Would See Jesus</i>	Anna B. Warner
<i>Come Unto Me when Shadows Darkly Gather</i>	Frances Ridley Havergal
<i>Standing at the Portal of the Opening Year</i>	Frances Ridley Havergal
<i>Who is On the Lord's Side?</i>	Frances Ridley Havergal
<i>Thy Life was Given for Me</i>	Frances Ridley Havergal
<i>Take My Life and Let it Be</i>	Frances Ridley Havergal
<i>Golden Harps are Sounding</i>	Frances Ridley Havergal
<i>Like a River Glorious</i>	Frances Ridley Havergal
<i>Tarry With Me, O My Saviour!</i>	Caroline L. Smith
<i>Lord, I Hear Showers of Blessing</i>	Mrs. Elizabeth Codner
<i>In Heavenly Love Abiding</i>	Miss Anna L. Waring
<i>I Do Not Ask, O God</i>	Adelaide Ann Procter
<i>My God, I Thank Thee</i>	Adelaide Ann Procter
<i>The Shadows of the Evening Hours</i>	Adelaide Ann Procter
<i>Work for the Night is Coming</i>	Miss Anna L. Coghill



## Appendix 6: World Favorites

By Francis B. Reeves in *Evolution of Christian Hymnology*<sup>1375</sup> (unranked)

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Title	Author
<i>Come, Thou Almighty King</i>	Anonymous, attr. C. Wesley
<i>Sweet the Moments, Rich in Blessing</i>	James Allen
<i>O For a Closer Walk With God</i>	William Cowper
<i>Hark, My Soul, It is the Lord</i>	William Cowper
<i>Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me</i>	Augustus M. Toplady
<i>All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name</i>	Edward Perronet
<i>Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken</i>	John Newton
<i>How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds</i>	John Newton
<i>My Soul, Be on Thy Guard</i>	George Heath
<i>How Firm a Foundation</i>	authorship uncertain
<i>Come, Ye Disconsolate</i>	Thomas Moore
<i>Lift Your Glad Voices in Triumph on High</i>	Henry Ware
<i>From Greenland's Icy Mountains</i>	Reginald Heber
<i>By Cool Siloam's Shady Rill</i>	Reginald Heber
<i>Bread of the World, in Mercy Broken</i>	Reginald Heber
<i>The Morning Light is Breaking</i>	Samuel F. Smith

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<sup>1375</sup> Ibid.

## Appendix 7: Favorite Hymns 1961 National Poll (ranked)<sup>1376</sup>

Title	Author
1. <i>The Old Rugged Cross</i>	George Bennard
2. <i>How Great Thou Art</i>	Stuart K. Hine
3. <i>What a Friend We Have in Jesus</i>	Joseph M. Scriven
4. <i>In the Garden</i>	Charles Austin Miles
5. <i>Amazing Grace</i>	John Newton
6. <i>Rock of Ages</i>	Augustus M. Toplady
7. <i>Sweet Hour of Prayer</i>	William W. Walford
8. <i>Abide with Me</i>	Henry Francis Lyte
9. <i>Beyond the Sunset</i>	Virgil P. Brock
10. <i>Whispering Hope</i>	Septimus Winner
11. <i>Just a Closer Walk with Thee</i>	Anonymous
12. <i>A Mighty Fortress</i>	Martin Luther
13. <i>Nearer, My God, to Thee</i>	Sarah Flower Adams
14. <i>God Will Take Care of You</i>	Civilla Durfee Martin <sup>1377</sup>
15. <i>Have Thine Own Way</i>	Adelaide Addison Pollard
16. <i>Just As I Am</i>	Charlotte Elliott
17. <i>Onward Christian Soldiers</i>	Sabine Baring-Gould
18. <i>Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me</i>	Edward Hopper
19. <i>My Faith Looks Up to Thee</i>	Ray Palmer
20. <i>Blessed Assurance</i>	Fanny Jane Crosby
21. <i>Ivory Palaces</i>	Henry Barraclough
22. <i>I Need Thee Every Hour</i>	Annie Sherwood Hawks
23. <i>Lead, Kindly Light</i>	John Henry Newman
24. <i>The Love of God</i>	Frederick Martin Lehman
25. <i>Near the Cross</i>	Fanny Jane Crosby
26. <i>Jesus, Lover of My Soul</i>	Charles Wesley
27. <i>Faith of Our Fathers</i>	Frederick William Faber
28. <i>Holy, Holy, Holy</i>	Reginald Heber
29. <i>Living for Jesus</i>	Thomas O. Chisholm <sup>1378</sup>
30. <i>Fairest Lord Jesus</i> <sup>1379</sup>	arr. Joseph A. Seiss
31. <i>Beautiful Isle of Somewhere</i>	Jesse B. Pounds
32. <i>When I Survey the Wondrous Cross</i>	Isaac Watts
33. <i>Beautiful Garden of Prayer</i>	Eleanor Allen Schroll
34. <i>Take Time to Be Holy</i>	William D. Longstaff
35. <i>When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder</i>	James Milton Black
36. <i>An Evening Prayer</i>	Charles Hutchinson Gabriel
37. <i>O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee</i>	Washington Gladden
38. <i>The Church's One Foundation</i>	Samuel John Stone
39. <i>Blest Be the Tie That Binds</i>	John Fawcett
40. <i>Are Ye Able?</i>	Earl Bowman Marlatt

<sup>1376</sup> *How Great Thou Art* Is Favorite North Iowa Hymn. *Rugged Cross* Tops National Poll, *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, 11 November 1961, sec. Church Features p. 1-24.

<sup>1377</sup> Fanny Crosby also wrote a hymn by the same title.

<sup>1378</sup> Fanny J. Crosby and Charles F. Weigle also wrote hymns by this title, but Chisholm's received vastly more attention, printed in 96 hymnals between the years 1853-1961, whereas Weigle's version was printed in three hymnals (1915, 1926 and 1931) and Crosby's in only one (1883).

<sup>1379</sup> *Beautiful Savior*, alternate title.



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|-----|---|---------------------------|
| 41. | <i>This Is My Father's World</i>            | Maltbie Davenport Babcock |
| 42. | <i>I Love to Tell the Story</i>             | Katherine Hankey          |
| 43. | <i>In the Sweet Bye [sic] and Bye [sic]</i> | Sanford Fillmore Bennett  |
| 44. | <i>How Firm a Foundation</i>                | John Rippon               |
| 45. | <i>Dear Lord and Father of Mankind</i>      | John Greenleaf Whittier   |
| 46. | <i>O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go</i>       | George Matheson           |
| 47. | <i>My God and I</i>                         | Austris Whithol           |
| 48. | <i>Near to the Heart of God</i>             | Cleland Boyd McAfee       |
| 49. | <i>Be Still, My Soul</i>                    | Katharina A. von Schlegel |
| 50. | <i>Count Your Blessings</i>                 | Johnson Oatman, Jr.       |

**Appendix 8: Hymns listed in *The Wide, Wide World***  
 (listed in order of appearance)<sup>1380</sup>

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Title	Author
<i>God in Israel Sows the Seeds</i>	William Cowper
<i>Behold the Savior at Thy Door</i>	Joseph Grigg
<i>Christ a Redeemer and Friend</i>	John Newton
<i>Poor, Weak, and Worthless, though I am</i>	John Newton
<i>A Charge to Keep I Have</i>	Charles Wesley
<i>Ye Golden Lamps of Heav'n Farewell</i>	Philip Doddridge
<i>How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds</i>	John Newton
<i>Hark My Soul it is the Lord</i>	William Cowper
<i>'Tis My Happiness Below</i>	William Cowper
<i>Jerusalem, My Happy Home</i>	Anonymous (Montgomery)
<i>When One who holds Communion with the Skies</i>	William Cowper
<i>How Firm a Foundation</i>	John Rippon
<i>Jesus Lover of My Soul</i>	Charles Wesley
<i>What are these in Bright Array?</i>	James Montgomery
<i>Hail Columbia</i>	Francis Scott Key
<i>Rock of Ages</i>	Augustus M. Toplady
<i>O Canaan, bright Canaan</i>	Unknown

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<sup>1380</sup> Susan Warner, *The Wide, Wide World* (New York: The Feminist Press, 1987).

## Appendix 9: Hymns in *Evangelized America*

By Grover C. Loud<sup>1381</sup> (arranged in order of chapters)

Ch	Title	Author
1	<i>At the Cross</i> <sup>1382</sup>	Isaac Watts refrain, Ralph Hudson
2	<i>The Morning Light is Breaking</i>	Samuel F. Smith
3	<i>Depth of Mercy</i>	Charles Wesley
4	<i>Come, Holy Spirit, Heav'nly Dove</i>	Isaac Watts
5	<i>There is a Fountain</i>	William Cowper
6	<i>Am I a Soldier of the Cross?</i>	Charles Wesley <sup>1383</sup>
7	<i>A Charge to Keep I Have</i>	Charles Wesley
8	<i>The Son of God Goes Forth to War</i>	Reginald Heber
9	<i>Awake, My Soul, Stretch Evry Nerve</i>	Philip Doddridge
10	<i>Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone?</i>	Thomas Shepherd
11	<i>On Jordans Stormy banks I Stand</i>	Samuel Stennett
12	<i>We are Pilgrims Looking Home</i> <sup>1384</sup>	Old Adventist Hymn
13	<i>Savior! Thy Dying Love</i> <sup>1385</sup>	Sylvanus D. Phelps
14	<i>Just as I Am</i>	Charlotte Elliott
15	<i>Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus</i>	George Duffield, Jr.
16	<i>There Were Ninety and Nine</i>	words, Elizabeth Clephin music, Ira Sankey
17	<i>Sowing in the morning</i> <sup>1386</sup>	Knowles Shaw
18	<i>From Sinking Sand He Lifted Me</i>	words, Charlotte G. Homer music, Chas.H. Gabriel <sup>1387</sup>
19	<i>There's a New Name Written Down</i>	C. Austin Miles
20	<i>Brighten the Corner Where You Are</i>	words, Ina Duley Ogdon music, Chas. H. Gabriel
21	<i>Take My Life and Let it Be</i>	words, Frances Havergal music, William Kirkpatrick
22	<i>Hallelujah! Thine the Glory</i> <sup>1388</sup>	William P. Mackay
23	<i>Blest Be the Tie</i>	John Fawcett

<sup>1381</sup> Loud.

<sup>1382</sup> Loud attributes this hymn to Watts. While Watts wrote the hymn *Alas! and did my Savior bleed*, it was Ralph Erskine Hudson who added the refrain, *At the Cross*, in 1885.

<sup>1383</sup> Loud wrongfully attributes this Watts hymn to Charles Wesley.

<sup>1384</sup> DNAH attributes this hymn to Fanny Crosby.

<sup>1385</sup> Loud identifies this hymn as a Baptismal Hymn.

<sup>1386</sup> *Bringing in the Sheaves*, alternate title.

<sup>1387</sup> Possible discrepancy. Cyber hymnal attributes words and music to Charles H. Gabriel.

<sup>1388</sup> *Revive Us Again*, alternate title.

**Appendix 10: Hymns in *Religion in Nineteenth Century America***  
 by Grant Wacker<sup>1389</sup> (in order of chapter)

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Ch	Title	Author
1	<i>My Country 'Tis of Thee</i>	Samuel F. Smith
2	<i>Just as I Am</i>	Charlotte Elliott
3	<i>Stand Up, Stand Up, for Jesus</i>	George Duffield, Jr.
4	<i>The Spirit of God like a Fire is Burning</i>	W. W. Phelps
5	<i>Swing Low, Sweet Chariot</i>	African American Spiritual
6	<i>Battle Hymn of the Republic</i>	Julia Ward Howe
7	<i>Faith of our Fathers</i>	Frederick W. Faber
8	<i>Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee</i>	Henry Van Dyke
9	<i>O God Our Help in Ages Past</i>	Isaac Watts
10	<i>Onward Christian Soldiers</i>	Sabine Baring-Gould

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<sup>1389</sup> Grant Wacker, *Religion in Nineteenth Century America*, eds. John Butler and Harry S. Stout (Religion in American Life; New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

**Appendix 11: Most Printed Hymns 1737-1960**  
By Stephen Marini in *Wonderful Words of Life*<sup>1390</sup> (ranked)<sup>1391</sup>

Title	Author
1. <i>All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name</i>	Edward Perronet
2. <i>Jesus Lover of My Soul</i>	Charles Wesley
3. <i>Alas and Did My Savior Bleed</i>	Isaac Watts
4. <i>How Firm a Foundation</i>	John Rippon
5. <i>Am I a Soldier of the Cross?</i>	Isaac Watts
6. <i>Come Thou Fount</i>	Robert Robinson
7. <i>Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah</i>	William Williams
8. <i>On Jordan's Stormy Banks</i>	Samuel Stennet
9. <i>Rock of Ages</i>	Augustus M. Toplady
10. <i>When I Can Read My Title Clear</i>	Isaac Watts
11. <i>Joy to the World</i>	Isaac Watts
12. <i>When I Survey the Wondrous Cross</i>	Isaac Watts
13. <i>Blest Be the Tie</i>	John Fawcett
14. <i>There is a Fountain</i>	William Cowper
15. <i>From Greenland's Icy Mountains</i>	Bishop Reginald Heber
16. <i>Amazing Grace</i>	John Newton
17. <i>Jesus, My All to Heaven is Gone</i>	John Cennick
17. <i>Just As I Am</i>	Charlotte Elliot
18. <i>Come We That Love the Lord</i>	Isaac Watts
18. <i>My Faith Looks Up to Thee</i>	Ray Palmer
18. <i>O For a Closer Walk With Thee</i>	William Cowper
19. <i>Blow Ye the Trumpet, Blow</i>	Charles Wesley
19. <i>Come Thou Almighty King</i>	Anonymous
20. <i>O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing</i>	Charles Wesley
21. <i>Jesus Shall Reign</i>	Isaac Watts
22. <i>Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove</i>	Isaac Watts
22. <i>Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken</i>	John Newton
22. <i>Nearer My God to Thee</i>	Sarah F. Adams
23. <i>I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord</i>	Timothy Dwight
23. <i>There is a Land of Pure Delight</i>	Isaac Watts
24. <i>Lord, Dismiss us with Thy Blessing</i>	Anonymous, attr. Fawcett
25. <i>Children of the Heavenly King</i>	John Cennick
25. <i>Christ the Lord is Ris'n Today</i>	Charles Wesley
26. <i>Hark the Herald Angels Sing</i>	Charles Wesley
26. <i>How Sweet the name of Jesus Sounds</i>	John Newton
27. <i>I Know that my Redeemer Lives</i>	Samuel Medley
28. <i>Holy, Holy, Holy</i>	Bishop Reginald Heber
29. <i>O Happy Day That Fixed My Choice</i>	Philip Doddridge
30. <i>Come Ye Disconsolate</i>	Thomas Moore
30. <i>Father of Mercies, in Thy Word</i>	Anne Steele
30. <i>Grace, 'tis a Charming Sound</i>	Philip Doddridge
31. <i>Abide With Me</i>	Henry F. Lyte
32. <i>Before Jehovah's Awful Throne</i>	Isaac Watts, alt. J. Wesley

<sup>1390</sup> Mouw and Noll (eds.), *Wonderful Words of Life: Hymns in American Protestant History and Theology* p. 251-264.

<sup>1391</sup> The list contains 266 hymns. As many hymns have the same number of printings, Marini assigned them the same rank. As a result, the numbering range is 1 to 76.

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|-----|--|-----------------------------|
| 32. | <i>He Dies, the Friend of Sinners Dies</i>     | Isaac Watts, alt. J. Wesley |
| 32. | <i>Jesus, and Shall it Ever Be</i>             | Joseph Grigg, alt. Francis  |
| 33. | <i>God Moves in a Mysterious Way</i>           | William Cowper              |
| 34. | <i>A Charge to Keep I Have</i>                 | Charles Wesley              |
| 34. | <i>From all that Dwell</i>                     | Isaac Watts                 |
| 34. | <i>Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken</i>            | Henry F. Lyte               |
| 35. | <i>Come, Humble Sinner, in Whose Breast</i>    | Edmund Jones                |
| 36. | <i>From Every Stormy Wind that Blows</i>       | Hugh Stowell                |
| 36. | <i>I Love to Steal a While Away</i>            | Phoebe H. Brown             |
| 37. | <i>Jerusalem, My Happy Home</i>                | Anon., attr. Montgomery     |
| 37. | <i>My Soul, Be on thy Guard</i>                | George Heath                |
| 37. | <i>Salvation, O the Joyful Sound</i>           | Isaac Watts, alt. Havergal  |
| 37. | <i>When All Thy Mercies</i>                    | Joseph Addison              |
| 38. | <i>Father, Whate'er of Earthly Bliss</i>       | Anne Steele, alt. Toplady   |
| 38. | <i>How Tedious and Tasteless the Hours</i>     | John Newton                 |
| 38. | <i>Rise My Soul and Stretch Thy Wings</i>      | Robert Seagrave             |
| 39. | <i>I Would Not Live Always</i>                 | William A. Muhlenburg       |
| 40. | <i>How Beauteous are Their Feet</i>            | Isaac Watts                 |
| 40. | <i>Prayer is the Soul's Sincere Desire</i>     | James Montgomery            |
| 41. | <i>Majestic Sweetness Sits Enthroned</i>       | Samuel Stennett             |
| 41. | <i>Stand Up Stand Up for Jesus</i>             | George Duffield             |
| 42. | <i>Hark Ten Thousand Harps</i>                 | Thomas Kelly                |
| 42. | <i>My Country 'tis of Thee</i>                 | Samuel F. Smith             |
| 43. | <i>Love Divine, All Loves Excelling</i>        | Charles Wesley              |
| 44. | <i>Lord in the Morning</i>                     | Isaac Watts                 |
| 44. | <i>Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone?</i>        | Thomas Shepherd             |
| 44. | <i>Sweet Hour of Prayer</i>                    | alt. Charles Beecher        |
| 45. | <i>Awake and Sing the Song</i>                 | William W. Walford          |
|     |  | William Hammond             |
|     |  | alt. George Whitefield      |
|     |  | alt. Martin Madan           |
| 45. | <i>Did Christ o'er Sinners Weep?</i>           | Benjamin Beddome            |
| 45. | <i>Hark, the Glad Sound! The Saviour Comes</i> | Philip Doddridge            |
| 45. | <i>Plunged in a Gulf of Dark Despair</i>       | Isaac Watts                 |
| 45. | <i>I'm Not Ashamed to Own My Lord</i>          | Isaac Watts                 |
| 46. | <i>Why do we Mourn Departing Friends?</i>      | Isaac Watts                 |
| 47. | <i>In the Cross of Christ</i>                  | Sir John Bowring            |
| 47. | <i>Welcome, Sweet Day of Rest</i>              | Isaac Watts                 |
| 48. | <i>Depth of Mercy Can There Be?</i>            | Charles Wesley              |
| 48. | <i>O Beautiful for Spacious Skies</i>          | Katherine L. Bates          |
| 48. | <i>Onward Christian Soldiers</i>               | Sabine Baring-Gould         |
| 48. | <i>Safely Through Another Week</i>             | John Newton                 |
| 48. | <i>While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks</i>    | Nahum Tate                  |
| 49. | <i>Arise, My Soul, Arise</i>                   | Charles Wesley              |
| 49. | <i>Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun</i>        | Bishop Thomas Ken           |
| 49. | <i>He Leadeth Me; O Blessed Thought</i>        | Joseph H. Gilmore           |
| 49. | <i>Lord, We Come Before Thee Now</i>           | William Hammond             |
| 49. | <i>Watchman, Tell Us of the Night</i>          | Sir John Bowring            |
| 50. | <i>Asleep in Jesus, Blessed Sleep</i>          | Margaret Mackay             |
| 50. | <i>Hark from the Tombs a Doleful Sound</i>     | Isaac Watts                 |
| 50. | <i>Show Pity, Lord</i>                         | Isaac Watts                 |
| 50. | <i>Sun of My Soul</i>                          | John Keble                  |

51.	<i>Awake My Soul in (to) Joyful Lays</i>	Samuel Medley
51.	<i>Glory to Thee My God this Night</i>	Thomas Ken
51.	<i>I Love to Tell the Story</i>	A. Katherine Hankey refrain added
51.	<i>The Morning Light is Breaking</i>	Samuel F. Smith
51.	<i>The Spacious Firmament on High</i>	Joseph Addison
52.	<i>Broad is the Road that Leads to Death</i>	Isaac Watts
52.	<i>Come, Let us Join Our Cheerful Songs</i>	Isaac Watts
52.	<i>How Precious is the Book Divine</i>	John Fawcett
52.	<i>Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me</i>	Edward Hopper
52.	<i>Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow</i>	Bishop Thomas Ken
52.	<i>What a Friend We Have in Jesus</i>	Joseph M. Scriven
53.	<i>Sweet is the Work, My God and King</i>	Isaac Watts
53.	<i>'Tis Midnight and On Olive's Brow</i>	William B. Tappan
53.	<i>Work for the Night is Coming</i>	Anna L. Coghill
54.	<i>Come, Let Us Anew our Journey Pursue</i>	Charles Wesley
55.	<i>And Let This Feeble Body Fail</i>	Charles Wesley
55.	<i>I Need Thee Every Hour</i>	Annie S. Hawks refrain, Robert Lowry
55.	<i>My Jesus I Love Thee</i>	William R. Featherston
56.	<i>Awake, My Soul, Stretch Every Nerve</i>	Philip Doddridge
56.	<i>Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross</i>	Fanny J. Crosby
56.	<i>Lead, Kindly Light</i>	John H. Newman
56.	<i>'Mid Scenes of Confusion</i>	David Denham
56.	<i>O Worship the King</i>	Sir Robert Grant
56.	<i>Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior</i>	Fanny J. Crosby
56.	<i>Sinner Turn, Why Will Ye Die?</i>	Charles Wesley
56.	<i>Sweet the Moments Rich in Blessing</i>	Walter Shirley
57.	<i>As on the Cross the Savior Hung</i>	Samuel Stennett
57.	<i>Hark, My Soul, It is the Lord</i>	William Cowper
57.	<i>Not all the Blood of Beasts</i>	Isaac Watts
57.	<i>O for a Heart to Praise My God</i>	Charles Wesley
58.	<i>Blessed Assurance</i>	Fanny J. Crosby
58.	<i>Come, Holy Spirit, Come</i>	Benjamin Beddome
58.	<i>Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessing</i>	Anon., attr. John Hart alt. G. Thring
58.	<i>God Be With You Till We Meet Again</i>	Jeremiah E. Rankin
58.	<i>Lo! He Come With the Clouds Descending</i>	C. Wesley, Cennick alt. Martin Madan
58.	<i>My God, the Spring of All My Joys</i>	Isaac Watts
58.	<i>My Hope is Built on Nothing Less</i>	Edward Mote
58.	<i>My God, My Life, My Love</i>	Isaac Watts
58.	<i>O God, Our Help In Ages Past</i>	Isaac Watts
58.	<i>Savior, Breathe an Evening Blessing</i>	James Edmeston
58.	<i>The Day is Past and Gone</i>	John Leland
58.	<i>We Praise Thee, O God</i>	William P. Mackay
59.	<i>And Must This Body Die</i>	Isaac Watts
59.	<i>Great God Attend, While Zion Sings</i>	Isaac Watts
59.	<i>O Thou in Whose Presence</i>	Joseph Swain
59.	<i>O Where Shall Rest Be Found</i>	James Montgomery
59.	<i>On the Mountain's Top Appearing</i>	Thomas Kelly
59.	<i>Take My Life and Let it Be</i>	Francis R. Havergal

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|-----|--|-----------------------------|
| 60. | <i>How Sweet, How Heavenly is the Sight</i>    | Joseph Swain                |
| 60. | <i>Savior, Visit Thy Plantation</i>            | John Newton                 |
| 60. | <i>When Peace Like a River</i>                 | Horatio G. Spafford         |
| 61. | <i>Hail the Day that Sees Him Rise</i>         | Charles Wesley              |
| 61. | <i>Let Every Mortal Ear Attend</i>             | Anon., Isaac Watts          |
| 61. | <i>O Could I Speak the Matchless Worth</i>     | Samuel Medley               |
| 62. | <i>Almost Persuaded</i>                        | Philip P. Bliss             |
| 62. | <i>Early My God Without Delay</i>              | Isaac Watts                 |
| 62. | <i>Hail, Thou Once Despised Jesus</i>          | John Bakewell               |
| 62. | <i>I Can Hear My Savior Calling</i>            | alt. Madan, Toplady         |
| 62. | <i>I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say</i>          | Ernest W. Blandy            |
| 62. | <i>O That My Load of Sin Were Gone</i>         | Horatius Bonar              |
| 62. | <i>Once More, My Soul, The Rising Day</i>      | Charles Wesley              |
| 62. | <i>One There is Above All Others</i>           | Isaac Watts                 |
| 62. | <i>Our Lord is Risen From the Dead</i>         | John Newton                 |
| 62. | <i>This is the Day That the Lord Hath Made</i> | Charles Wesley              |
| 63. | <i>Angels, Roll the Rock Away</i>              | Isaac Watts                 |
| 63. | <i>Approach, My Soul, the Mercy Seat</i>       | Thomas Scott, refrain added |
| 63. | <i>Behold a Stranger at the Door</i>           | John Newton                 |
| 63. | <i>Sing Them Over Again to Me</i>              | Joseph Grigg                |
| 63. | <i>Father, I Stretch My Hands to Thee</i>      | Philip P. Bliss             |
| 63. | <i>Hail to the Lord's Anointed</i>             | Charles Wesley              |
| 63. | <i>Hark, the Voice of Love and Mercy</i>       | James Montgomery            |
| 63. | <i>Holy Ghost with Light Divine</i>            | Jonathan Evans              |
| 63. | <i>Thus Far the Lord Has Led Me</i>            | Andrew Reed                 |
| 63. | <i>Why Should We Start and Fear to Die?</i>    | Isaac Watts                 |
| 64. | <i>By Cool Siloam's Shady Rill</i>             | Isaac Watts                 |
| 64. | <i>Come, Every Soul by Sin Oppressed</i>       | Bishop Reginald Heber       |
| 64. | <i>Come, Sound His Praise Abroad</i>           | John H. Stockton            |
| 64. | <i>Jesus, I Love Thy Charming Name</i>         | Isaac Watts                 |
| 64. | <i>Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee</i>         | Philip Doddridge            |
| 64. | <i>Give Me the Wings of Faith</i>              | Bernard of Clairvaux        |
| 64. | <i>I'll Praise My Maker While I've Breath</i>  | tr. Edward Caswall          |
| 64. | <i>That Awful Day Will Surely Come</i>         | Isaac Watts                 |
| 64. | <i>The Lord My Pasture Shall Prepare</i>       | Isaac Watts                 |
| 65. | <i>Another Six Days' Work is Done</i>          | Joseph Addison              |
| 65. | <i>Faith of our Fathers</i>                    | Joseph Stennett             |
| 65. | <i>Glory to God on High</i>                    | Frederick W. Faber          |
| 65. | <i>My Dear Redeemer and My Lord</i>            | refrain, James G. Walton    |
| 65. | <i>Rejoice the Lord is King</i>                | James Allen                 |
| 65. | <i>Softly Now the Light of Day</i>             | Isaac Watts                 |
| 66. | <i>Come, Gracious Spirit, Heavenly Dove</i>    | Isaac Watts                 |
| 66. | <i>Holy Spirit, Faithful Guide</i>             | George W. Doane             |
| 66. | <i>How Pleasant, How Divinely Fair</i>         | Simon Browne                |
| 66. | <i>More Love to Thee, O Christ</i>             | Marcus M. Wells             |
| 66. | <i>My Soul, Repeat His Praise</i>              | Isaac Watts                 |
| 66. | <i>O Day of Rest and Gladness</i>              | Elizabeth P. Prentiss       |
| 66. | <i>O'er the Gloomy Hills of Darkness</i>       | Isaac Watts                 |
| 66. | <i>What Various Hindrances We Meet</i>         | Christopher Wordsworth      |
|     |  | William Williams            |
|     |  | William Cowper              |



66.	<i>Ye Servants of God, Your Master Proclaim</i>	Charles Wesley
67.	<i>Glory be to God the Father (Gloria Patri)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup> century doxology
67.	<i>God is Love, His Mercy Brightens</i>	Sir John Bowring
67.	<i>Hasten Sinner to be Wise</i>	Thomas Scott
67.	<i>Lord Jesus, I Long to be Perfectly Whole</i>	James L. Nicholson
67.	<i>My God, How Endless is Thy Love</i>	Isaac Watts
67.	<i>There's a Land that is Fairer</i>	Sanford F. Bennett, ©1910 Joan H. Webster
67.	<i>While I Seek Protecting Power</i>	Helen M. Williams
68.	<i>Go Preach My Gospel, Saith the Lord</i>	Isaac Watts
68.	<i>God is the Refuge of His Saints</i>	Isaac Watts
68.	<i>Mortals Awake, With Angels Sing</i>	Samuel Medley
68.	<i>Take the Name of Jesus With You</i>	Mrs. Lydia O. Baxter
68.	<i>The Heavens Declare Thy Glory, Lord</i>	Isaac Watts
68.	<i>Ye Wretched, Hungry, Starving Poor</i>	Anne Steele
69.	<i>I Am Thine, O Lord</i>	Fanny J. Crosby
69.	<i>Low in the Grave He Lay</i>	Robert Lowry
69.	<i>My Life, My Love I Give to Thee</i>	Ralph E. Hudson
69.	<i>Soldiers of Christ Arise</i>	Charles Wesley
69.	<i>'Twas on that Dark and Doleful Night</i>	Isaac Watts
69.	<i>While With Ceaseless Course the Sun</i>	John Newton
69.	<i>Your Harps, Ye Trembling Saints</i>	Augustus M. Toplady
70.	<i>Eternal Source of Every Joy</i>	Philip Doddridge
70.	<i>How Charming is the Place</i>	Samuel Stennett
70.	<i>Jesus, Thou Art the Sinner's Friend</i>	Richard Burnham
70.	<i>Lord of the World's Above</i>	Isaac Watts
70.	<i>Softly and Tenderly</i>	Will L. Thompson
70.	<i>When Thou My Righteous Judge</i>	Selina Huntington
70.	<i>With Joy We Meditate the Grace</i>	Isaac Watts
71.	<i>Behold the Savior of Mankind</i>	Samuel Wesley, Sr.
71.	<i>Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus</i>	Charles Wesley
71.	<i>Day of Judgment, Day of Wonders</i>	John Newton
71.	<i>How Are Thy Servants Blest, O Lord</i>	Joseph Addison
71.	<i>How Gentle God's Commands</i>	Philip Doddridge
71.	<i>How Happy Every Child of Grace</i>	Charles Wesley
71.	<i>Jerusalem the Golden</i>	Bernard of Cluny, tr. Neale
71.	<i>Life is the Time to Serve</i>	Isaac Watts
71.	<i>My God, My Portion and My Love</i>	Isaac Watts
71.	<i>Shall We Gather at the River</i>	Robert Lowry
71.	<i>Silent Night, Holy Night</i>	Joseph Mohr
71.	<i>Sowing in the Morning</i>	Knowles Shaw
72.	<i>Behold What Wondrous Grace</i>	Isaac Watts
72.	<i>Down at the Cross</i>	Elisha A. Hoffman
72.	<i>How Did My Heart Rejoice to Hear</i>	Isaac Watts
72.	<i>I Hear the Savior Say (Jesus Paid it All)</i>	Elvina M. Hall
72.	<i>Why Should the Children of a King</i>	Isaac Watts
73.	<i>And Will the Judge Descend?</i>	Philip Doddridge
73.	<i>Come Away to the Skies</i>	anon., attr. C. Wesley
73.	<i>How Sad Our State by Nature is</i>	Isaac Watts
73.	<i>Jesus Calls Us; O'er the Tumult</i>	Cecil F. Alexander
73.	<i>Jesus is Tenderly Calling</i>	Fanny J. Crosby
73.	<i>Rescue the Perishing</i>	Fanny J. Crosby

73.	<i>Savior, Thy Dying Love</i>	Sylvanus D. Phelps
73.	<i>Thee We Adore, Eternal Name</i>	Anon., Isaac Watts
73.	<i>When Rising From the Bed of Death</i>	Joseph Addison
74.	<i>And Can I Yet Delay?</i>	Charles Wesley
74.	<i>Bless, O My Soul, the Living God</i>	Isaac Watts
74.	<i>Come My Soul Thy Suit Prepare</i>	John Newton
74.	<i>How Oft, Alas, This Wretched Heart</i>	Anne Steele
74.	<i>Lord, I Hear of Showers of Blessing</i>	Elizabeth Codner
74.	<i>Now Begin the Heavenly Theme</i>	Martin Madan
74.	<i>See Israel's Gentle Shepherd Stand</i>	Philip Doddridge
74.	<i>What Shall I Render to My God</i>	Isaac Watts
75.	<i>Hark! What Mean Those Holy Voices?</i>	John Cawood
75.	<i>I Send the Joys of Earth Away</i>	Isaac Watts
75.	<i>Let Zion's Watchmen All Awake</i>	Philip Doddridge
75.	<i>My Savior, My Almighty Friend</i>	Isaac Watts
75.	<i>Now to the Lord a Noble Song</i>	Isaac Watts
75.	<i>People of the Living God</i>	James Montgomery
75.	<i>Return, O Wanderer, Return</i>	William B. Collyer
75.	<i>Stay, Thou Insulted Spirit, Stay</i>	Charles Wesley
75.	<i>The Lord Jehovah Reigns</i>	Isaac Watts
75.	<i>The Lord My Shepherd Is</i>	Isaac Watts
75.	<i>To Our Redeemer's Glorious Name</i>	Anne Steele
76.	<i>And Am I (only) Born to Die?</i>	Charles Wesley
76.	<i>Let Every Creature Join</i>	Isaac Watts
76.	<i>On a Hill Far Away</i>	George Bennard
76.	<i>To God the Only Wise Our Savior</i>	Isaac Watts

## Appendix 12: Classical Evangelical Hymnody (1737-1860)

by Stephen Marini in *From Classical to Modern:*

*Hymnody and the Development of American Evangelicalism, 1737-1970*<sup>1392</sup> (ranked)

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Title	Author
1. <i>Jesus, My All to Heaven is Gone</i>	John Cennick
2. <i>Come Thou Fount</i>	Robert Robinson
3. <i>Come We That Love the Lord</i>	Isaac Watts
4. <i>Am I a Soldier of the Cross?</i>	Isaac Watts
4. <i>Blow Ye the Trumpet, Blow</i>	Charles Wesley
4. <i>How Firm a Foundation</i>	John Rippon
4. <i>When I Can Read My Title Clear</i>	Isaac Watts
5. <i>On Jordan's Stormy Banks</i>	Samuel Stennet
6. <i>All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name</i>	Edward Perronet
6. <i>Children of the Heavenly King</i>	John Cennick
6. <i>He Dies, the Friend of Sinners Dies</i>	Isaac Watts
7. <i>Jerusalem, My Happy Home</i>	Anonymous attr. to J. Montgomery
8. <i>There is a Land of Pure Delight</i>	Isaac Watts
9. <i>Alas and Did My Savior Bleed</i>	Isaac Watts
10. <i>Hark from the Tombs a Doleful Sound</i>	Isaac Watts
10. <i>O For a Closer Walk With Thee</i>	William Cowper
11. <i>Jesus Lover of My Soul</i>	Charles Wesley
11. <i>Salvation, O the Joyful Sound</i>	Isaac Watts
12. <i>Come, Humble Sinner, in Whose Breast</i>	Edmund Jones
12. <i>God Moves in a Mysterious Way</i>	William Cowper
12. <i>Jesus, and Shall it Ever Be</i>	Joseph Grigg

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<sup>1392</sup> Stephen Marini, 'From Classical to Modern: Hymnody and the Development of American Evangelicalism, 1737-1970', in Edith L. Blumhofer and Mark A. Noll (eds.), *Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land: Hymnody in the History of North American Protestantism* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2004), 1-38.

### Appendix 13: Modern Evangelical Hymnody (1861-1970)

By Stephen Marini in *From Classical to Modern:*

*Hymnody and the Development of American Evangelicalism, 1737-1970*<sup>1393</sup> (ranked)

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Title	Author
1. <i>Jesus Lover of My Soul</i>	Charles Wesley
2. <i>Just As I Am</i>	Charlotte Elliot
3. <i>Alas and Did My Savior Bleed</i>	Isaac Watts
4. <i>Nearer My God to Thee</i>	Sarah F. Adams
5. <i>All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name</i>	Edward Perronet
6. <i>Rock of Ages</i>	Augustus M. Toplady
7. <i>My Faith Looks Up to Thee</i>	Ray Palmer
8. <i>There is a Fountain</i>	William Cowper
9. <i>How Firm a Foundation</i>	John Rippon
10. <i>Come We That Love the Lord</i>	Isaac Watts
11. <i>Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah</i>	William Williams
12. <i>O Happy Day That Fixed My Choice</i>	Philip Doddridge
13. <i>Abide With Me</i>	Henry F. Lyte
14. <i>Am I a Soldier of the Cross?</i>	Isaac Watts
15. <i>Blest Be the Tie</i>	John Fawcett
16. <i>O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing</i>	Charles Wesley
17. <i>Stand Up Stand Up for Jesus</i>	George Duffield
18. <i>When I Survey the Wondrous Cross</i>	Isaac Watts
19. <i>Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone</i>	Thomas Shepherd
20. <i>Sweet Hour of Prayer</i>	William W. Walford

## Appendix 14: The Top Hymns in Hymnals of Marginalized Groups (based on Marini's list)<sup>1394</sup>

Hymn Title	Groups printing the hymn	Total
<i>From all that Dwell Below the Skies</i>	FM, UV, UT, M, SP, CS, JW	7
<i>Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah</i>	FM, UV, UT, M, CS, JW	6
<i>Joy to the World</i>	FM, UV, M, CS, JW	5
<i>Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken</i>	UV, UT, M, CS, JW	5
<i>All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name</i>	FM, UV, M, JW	4
<i>Praise God, from Whom all Blessings Flow</i>	FM, UT, M, JW	4
<i>Come Ye Disconsolate</i>	UT, SP, CS, JW	4
<i>God Moves in a Mysterious Way</i>	UV, UT, M, JW	4

Marginalized Group	Total number of 'Top Hymns' per group
Freemasonry	5
Shakers	0
Universalists	6
Unitarians	6
Mormons	7
Spiritualists	2
Christian Scientists	5
Jehovah's Witnesses	8

Legend	Hymnal
FM = Freemasonry	<i>The Masonic Harp</i> (1858) <sup>1395</sup>
SH = Shaker	<i>A Selection of Hymns and Poems</i> (1833) <sup>1396</sup>
UV = Universalist	<i>A Collection of Psalms and Hymns</i> (1837) <sup>1397</sup>
UT = Unitarian	<i>Hymns of the Spirit</i> (1864) <sup>1398</sup>
M = Mormon	<i>A Collection of Sacred Hymns</i> (1835) <sup>1399</sup> (1841) <sup>1400</sup>
SP = Spiritualist	<i>The Spirit Minstrel</i> (1856) <sup>1401</sup>
CS = Christian Science	<i>The Christian Science Hymnal</i> (1898) <sup>1402</sup>
JW = Jehovah's Witnesses	<i>Hymns of Millennial Dawn</i> (1905) <sup>1403</sup>

<sup>1394</sup> Based on the early stage of hymnal collections.

<sup>1395</sup> Chase.

<sup>1396</sup> McNemar.

<sup>1397</sup> Hosea Ballou, *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for the Use of Universalist Societies and Families* (2 edn.; Boston, Mass.: Benjamin B. Mussey, 1837).

<sup>1398</sup> S. Longfellow and S. Johnson, *Hymns of the Spirit* (Boston, Mass.: Ticknor & Fields, 1864).

<sup>1399</sup> Smith, *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints*.

<sup>1400</sup> Emma Smith, *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints* (Nauvoo, Ill.: E. Robinson, 1841).

<sup>1401</sup> Packard and Loveland, *The Spirit Minstrel; a Collection of Hymns and Music for the Use of Spiritualists, in Their Circles and Public Meetings*.

<sup>1402</sup> *The Christian Science Hymnal*, (Boston, Massachusetts: The Christian Science Publishing Society, 1909).

<sup>1403</sup> *Hymns of Millennial Dawn*.

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