

# Evangelical Hymnody and American Christianity

by Albert Mohler

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*Albert Mohler discusses the importance of hymnody and the theological challenges facing American Christianity today.*

**Duration:** 37:55

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Hymnody"

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## Description

In this video, Keith and Kristen Getty discuss the power of music in conveying the truths of the Bible. They believe that putting these truths into a story or journey format helps people remember and understand them better. They also talk about the challenge of applying these truths to everyday life and how hymns can serve as a form of application. The Gettys emphasize the importance of music as a language given to us by our Creator for the purpose of praising and worshiping Him.

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## Transcript

Transcription by CastingWords 1-877-893-TALK. That's 1-877-893-8255. Now, here's your host, Dr. Albert Muller.

Hello America, welcome to the Albert Muller program. I am here in Chicago, Illinois at the Moody Bible Institute, and we appreciate the hospitality of the Moody Radio Network today, and I am here for the Moody Pastors Conference 2008. And I'm glad to be here with so many pastors, about 1,200 here this morning, and I'll be speaking Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings.

I'm speaking on the power of the Word of God in expository preaching. And I'm also thrilled to be here at the conference with Keith and Kristen Getty, two of my very favorite people involved in what I see as a renaissance in Christian hymnody. And many of you are singing their songs, and you will know the tunes, and certainly your hearts will be moved by the words, and you'll recall them.

And today we're going to be talking about exactly what's going on right now, as there's so much confusion in churches about worship, about music, and about what should and can be sung. We'll be talking to Keith and Kristen Getty in just a moment. First, to review some issues in the news, at my website at [albertmuller.com](http://albertmuller.com), I posted a couple of articles in recent days having to do with what's going on in the

world, and there is so much.

For instance, in Great Britain, the Parliamentary vote came this week concerning the authorization for the use of human embryos in stem cell research, and the creation of animal-human hybrid embryos, and the creation through in vitro fertilization of what are known as Savior siblings. And the British Parliament moved rather overwhelmingly to approve all of these, and to shut down efforts to put limitations, even though there was massive opposition from the Roman Catholic Church, from the Church of England, and from even within the Labour government, headed by Prime Minister Gordon Brown. The Prime Minister allowed what is known as a free vote, which in the Parliamentary system meant that members of his own cabinet could vote against the government's policy, and at least three did.

But nonetheless, Gordon Brown, in an article published in the Observer, that's the Sunday version of the Guardian newspaper of London, that's more the left-wing paper associated long-term with the Labour Party, he came out with a statement that he claimed was his argument for why his government would support the creation of animal-human hybrid embryos, and the use of human embryos in human stem cell research. Now, his article said this, he asked the question, should scientists be given the legal framework that they need to pursue new cures and treatments through stem cell research, or will we turn our back on these potential advances? Should children who face death or critical illness find new hope in scientific advances that would allow their new brother or sister to be not just a blessing to their family, but also a saviour sibling to them? And should people be able to approach IVF clinics without fear of discrimination on the grounds of their sexual orientation? My answer to all these questions is an unequivocal yes. Now, I believe in this case, the Prime Minister of Great Britain has offered one of the worst arguments imaginable.

And not only that, but he lacks the cowardice, actually, excuse me, he lacks the courage and demonstrates cowardice in failing to make an argument at all. He claims it's an argument, but it is merely an assertion. When you set up a situation asking should scientists be given the legal framework they say they need to pursue new cures and treatments, or will we turn our back on these potential advances, I can guarantee you you're not going to be answering that no.

You're setting up the question in a dishonest way, which is exactly what he did. But I'll tell you what's most dishonest about the British Prime Minister's approach here. He acknowledges that there are those who have problems.

He says this, I have deep respect for those who do not agree with some of the provisions in the bill because of religious conviction. But I believe that we owe it to ourselves and future generations to introduce these measures, and in particular, to give our unequivocal backing within the right framework of rules and standards to stem cell research. Now, notice a couple of things.

He says that he has respect for those whose convictions would not allow this research. But then he goes on and again insists that his government will offer unequivocal support. Well, if you offer unequivocal support, then you don't have any respect for the arguments against.

And in this case, he doesn't even acknowledge what the arguments are against embryonic stem cell research. He doesn't acknowledge at all. The concern of Christians that every single human being, including the human embryo, is made in the image of God.

There is no acknowledgment of the argument whatsoever. He goes on and he concludes with this as saviors. Excuse me.

The doctors and scientists I speak to are committed to what they see as an inherently moral endeavor that can save and improve the lives of thousands and over time, millions of people. They believe that can combine this work with a deep commitment to the highest ethical standards and sincere respect for religious beliefs. End quote.

Now, the prime minister here speaks of his deep respect for those whose convictions clash with his own, but his respect doesn't even extend to acknowledging what the convictions are. And then he speaks enthusiastically of scientists. He assures us that they are committed to what they see as an inherently moral endeavor, and they'll combine their work with a sincere respect for religious beliefs.

Well, what scientists would say that his work isn't inherently moral? What scientists would make a proposal to the British Parliament for immoral research, claiming and acknowledging that it's immoral. The Nazi doctors who were doing medical experiments on live human beings believed in their hearts that what they were doing was moral. They claimed they were doing it because this would lead to treatments for dreaded diseases.

The same thing is true in other places where you have a routine trampling upon human rights by people who say they're doing it for a greater good. There's no acknowledgement here whatsoever of the seriousness of this issue. And then he adds insult to injury at the very end by saying that the scientists are going to do this work with sincere respect for religious beliefs, which is just manifestly untrue.

If they respected the beliefs, they wouldn't be doing it. They don't respect the beliefs. I would have had more respect for the British prime minister if he had just come out and said, I believe the people who believe that the human embryo is made in the image of God are insane.

That would have made more sense than to say, I sincerely respect their beliefs, but my government will take a position that tramples those beliefs. The Los Angeles Times is on to something we really need to know about having to do with last week's decision by the California Supreme Court striking down California's definition of marriage as the union of a man and a woman. The Los Angeles Times acknowledges that this is going to force every single congregation in the state of California to take a side.

Given just a short amount of time, every single congregation within the state of California is going to have to decide, do we do and do we recognize same-sex unions? It is a fascinating article, and I'll tell you, as you look at it, and I link to it from my article entitled *The Coming Great Divide*, when you look at the phenomenon going on there in California, and of course we do hope and we fervently pray that this situation will be reversed through the opportunity of California voters to amend the Constitution in November. But if that fails, and if there is no stay even between now and the 30 days that was ordered by the court last week to begin handing out same-sex marriage licenses, if this does take place, then just consider this. One avoidable outcome of the legalization of same-sex marriage is that the great divide between conservative and liberal churches and denominations will become glaringly evident in a way that has not yet been the case.

In other words, those who have eyes to see and ears to hear know that there is a tremendous theological divide between liberal and conservatives. With the liberals, what you have is an abandonment of biblical authority, and you have those who treat the Bible as merely a human book. Whereas on the conservative

side, you have those who believe that the Bible is indeed the inerrant and infallible Word of God, and thus we are bound to it.

Nevertheless, when it comes to something like marriage, until now at least, both liberal and conservative churches have been using the same vocabulary. In both liberal and conservative churches, words have made sense such as husband and wife. One inevitable outcome of the legalization of same-sex marriage is that those words will become meaningless.

Furthermore, when liberal churches and conservative churches now will use the word marriage, they no longer mean the same thing. And so the great divide, which is deeply theological, becomes very much apparent with the issue of same-sex marriage, and no congregation is going to be able to hide. Now, the paper, this is the Los Angeles Times, looking at this phenomenon, not only look to Christian congregations, but also to Jewish synagogues and even to a Muslim mosque.

But when you get to the synagogues, something very, very interesting was documented. Rabbi Harold Schulweiss, who heads the conservative Jewish congregation at Valley Beth Shalom in Encino, he said, as he celebrated the decision, that he will now perform these ceremonies. He said, I was really waiting for this decision.

From my point of view, it's very courageous and part of the evolution of religious mores. Now, by the way, when you look at Judaism, conservative Judaism is not conservative. That's a little problem in labeling.

Orthodox Judaism is what evangelicals would call conservative. Conservative Judaism is what evangelicals would call liberal, as is evidenced by Rabbi Schulweiss. But I want you to hear what he says here.

He goes on. This is from the paper cited from Sunday. Schulweiss has been a rabbi for more than half a century and has seen his religion evolve, first allowing women into the full ritual life of the community, then ordaining them as rabbis and cantors and eventually embracing homosexuals.

Quote, It's one of the most exciting parts of seeing religion as not static and inflexible, but is sensitive to different times and different information and different knowledge. What in the world did people in the Bible time know about homosexuals? You see, there's the great divide. If you believe that what the Bible tells us is what the people of the Bible believed and no more, you do not believe that the Bible is the word of God.

If you do believe that the Bible is the word of God, then what we are commanded in scripture is coming from God, not just from people who lived 2000 years ago and more, but from God himself. If you believe that the Bible is just a human book, then you can make marriage or anything else, anything you want it to be. On the other hand, if you believe that the Bible is God's own word, then you are bound to what God says marriage is.

There's no negotiation and no place to hide. We'll be back for a conversation with Keith and Kristen Getty about Christian music and how we can make sure that it is authentically Christian. Coast to coast and with listeners around the world, you're listening to the Albert Moller Program.

The Superior Gold Group, a precious metals firm, is proud to sponsor the Albert Moller Program. You can get more information about buying gold at 866-432-8656. Here you hear Kristen Getty singing the song by her husband Keith Getty and Stuart Talman, and the song, In Christ Alone, I would call it theologically a hymn, has become something for this generation like the song How Great Thou Art Was for a previous

generation of evangelicals, and it has also, I think, become a symbol of a renaissance in new Christian hymn writing, at which Keith and Kristen Getty are standing at the center.

I want to welcome to the Albert Moller Program Keith and Kristen Getty. Thank you very much. You know, that song, Keith, has been sung now by millions and millions of people, and they don't know the story of how it came to be, and that is really a part of what I think helps make hymns meaningful to us when we understand the origin.

How did In Christ Alone come about? Well, in short, I went through a journey as a musician, finishing school, going to university in England. I was from Ireland, and really working through did I believe in Christianity or not. Primarily, many of my friends were Islamic, were theologians who didn't believe in God, and the two central questions for me were both the uniqueness of Christ and then the authority of Scripture.

After about a year of heart-wrenching questions, I came to the conclusion that if Christ was prophesied born, lived, taught, died, and rose again and promised his return, that indeed it offered you no other option in life to either accept or reject. That really helped me then rethink my faith. At the same time, my music was growing, and really struggled to access contemporary worship music, and so for four years wasn't involved in church music at all, then was encouraged to write hymns by the pastor at a little small Baptist church we went to, was introduced to Stuart, and I said, what about writing a hymn on the central life of Christ, explaining what that life, what that means.

And this was the year 2000, most people thought it was, to write a modern hymn was probably right up there with designing a new brand of typewriter, in terms of new things that were, you know, cool, and where the church was. But we decided, let's write a hymn just which explains the life of Christ, and what that actually meant. And it was as simple as really just working, crafting a melody, and then crafting that lyric.

And we tried it in our church of 180 people, and the pastor said he didn't really like it, but it seems to have traveled since. Well, I'd say it sure has, and you know, I was just in a group of several thousand people singing it, and all already knowing it, and there's just such a sense of exultation, and of worship in singing it. You know, we've seen so much in terms of the transformation of Christian worship in recent years, and we have a generation that's never held a hymn book, and for them the musical unit of the hymn is something that is largely foreign.

We went through a phase of a lot of these Christian worship songs, and I remember one person who, I think very cleverly, just identified the form of those songs as two words, three notes, four hours, which is the same thing just over and over and over again, with very little content. What you have brought, and those who are doing this with you, is genuine biblical, theological, Christ-honoring content, and that's what the best hymns have always represented. Yeah, I mean, I think, I'm not a theologian, but it does seem clear that the two core things in corporate congregational worship, there are many things said to us as individuals, but in corporate worship, I think the two things in the Old Testament, New Testament, and indeed in the promise of heaven, are that songs that exalt and teach the great truths of God, on which we live and move and have our beings, and secondly, very simply, are corporate, are something that everybody can sing together, and so, I mean, I think that's the two core things we've tried to put at the heart of what we do, and so we always ask at the end of a song or the end of a service, do these words nourish and build people up in the scriptures, and secondly, can the congregation sing it? It's as simple as

that.

Well, and when you ask the question, can the congregation sing it, you're dealing with congregations whose musical ability, musical knowledge, and musical taste are not what they once were, and I think one of the things you've been able to do is to wed these words, so rich in theological content, to music that is genuinely singable, and that's a pretty significant achievement. Yeah, well, it's something we've worked hard at, and it's something we aim at, and we put everything through that grid, as it were. This has to be congregational, and I mean, if there are millions of people singing in Christ alone in churches this weekend, we also have to accept that that represents, in America, people who have choirs and organs and orchestras.

It represents people who have rock bands, but the vast majority of those millions of people that are singing in Christ alone either have minimal music or no music, and in fact, most of the people who sing it in Russian or in Spanish are small fellowships of believers who have no music at all, and so if we go back to the basic premise that it's got to be words that nourish our souls and melodies that are singable, we've tried to move towards almost like a folk melody, so that if we can have music which does help us in our singing, that's great, but we're global Christians today, and if it doesn't, if we don't have that, then so be it. I think one of the problems I see in so much music is that the music doesn't fit the words. There's not a parallelism, a symmetry, a fit, and if you have a resounding chorus on something that's a minor theme, it just doesn't fit.

I think one of the things I love so much about your hymns is that they reach a resounding point of congregational unity on the biggest things. That has to be by intention. Yeah, gosh, I think Stuart and I have worked in collaboration, and we're both musicians and we're both lyricists, so people say that's usually the worst combination because you both put your fingers in each other's eyes a little bit, but it's actually been very helpful because the two of us have put our heads together in the words and the two of us have put our heads together in the music, and while I consider him a far superior lyricist certainly, it's helped us wed songs that actually work in that sense.

Now how long have you two been married, Keith and Kristen? We've been married, it'll be four years next month, and we met back in Ireland. I was 18, Keith was 24, and we started writing songs together. That's what first brought us together, our interest in music and love of the local church and trying to use our songwriting in that context.

Somewhere along the way it became a different partnership, it became marriage. Well, that's a sweet thing, and it's wonderful to see the two of you together as I have so many times. Your infectiousness helps, I think, people to understand that worship is to be something that's joyful, and that's something you really have helped us to see.

Well, there's so much to sing about, and when you remember it's the truth that sets us free, we can really enjoy the message without having to focus on some sort of emotional experience or anything like that, but just really enjoy the truth of the gospel. One of the interesting things we're going to talk about when we come back is that in this resurgence or renaissance of New Hymn to Thee, there are some musical forms that, well, are really very traditional when you understand them. There's a generation beginning to understand some old things even while singing some new things.

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To get online, call toll-free 1-877-893-TALK. That's 1-877-893-8255 or go to [www.albertmiller.com](http://www.albertmiller.com). Here again is your host, Dr. Albert Miller. Welcome back to the Albert Miller program.

My guest today, Keith and Kristin Getty, and we're having a really fascinating conversation about what's going on in church music, a renaissance of hymnody, at which they are very much at the center. Hymns such as In Christ Alone and See What a Morning. Also, The Power of the Cross, which is one of my favorites.

There are so many of these songs being sung in your churches by those who listen to this program, and you may not know who is behind this, and at least in terms of the composition, you're talking very much Keith Getty and Stuart Townend. Then we've heard so many of these songs sung and been taught to sing them by Kristin Getty as well. Now, it's not subtle that the two of you have an Irish accent, and to an American ear, we pick up on that immediately.

Yet, I want to reach back there and ask this question, not only in terms of Christian hymnody, but in terms of a lot of popular music. Why is Celtic music associated with Ireland so much a part of this renaissance of music in our time? Well, I think Celtic music and Irish music, if you look through every decade, has been popular. It probably peaked slightly in the 90s in the popular world with Riverdance, but I think every decade, Irish music has produced fresh things, and I think for me, between 20 and 25, when I was taking my elongated sabbatical from church worship and studying to be just a successful musician, I guess, my hero was George Gershwin, because he wrote pop songs that went to number one on the charts, that became Broadway hits, that the jazz music world loved and respected above all other composers in the history of music, but also that could fit in between a Tchaikovsky overture and a Schumann symphony and a classical concert, and that was an age way, way before pop's music, pop's concerts.

It was an age where classical music was a much more stuffy and conservative place, and yet a Gershwin song fitted anywhere. So I spent a lot of time just reading everything I could, and Gershwin always said the root of music was folk music, a thing which Stravinsky said the same, but took a different direction, and so I began to think a lot about that, and then, of course, Bernstein began to sort of crystallise some of those ideas when he talked a lot about the fact that folk music itself is modal, it's pentatonic, and it's on a Chinese harp, and you heard a Chinese folk melody on an Irish whistle. Some of them you can tell the difference on, but some of them are actually remarkably similar.

I think it has to do with common grace, by the way. When I read the Elliott lectures, one of the things I thought of is that this is really a demonstration of the fact that music is a language which our creator has given us as his creatures. That's right, and he created the harmonic system out of which we get a pentatonic scale and the modal scales, and so I started to do that, and I noticed three, four years before I wrote In Christ Alone, Stuart wrote a song called He Deepeth The Father's Love, and it seemed to reach the same way, and then I think in the one year I heard six different rock bands record Be Thou My Vision,

which is a fifth-century Irish melody to a seventh-century Irish lyric, and so we began to think, you know, if we could combine these melodies with Stuart's very hymnic style of hymn writing, or indeed Kristen's slightly more poetic hymnic style of hymn writing, and Fugue's sort of classic poetry around these folk melodies, we could create something which would be sung in the cathedrals, that would be sung in the contemporary rock bands, but that would also translate into other languages and be part of the growing church around the world.

I am so encouraged, there are so many projects going back and finding old hymns, the Gadsby hymns, you know, you've got things going on with the recovery of a lot of Charles Wesley's hymns, you know, hundreds and hundreds of them never sung, you know, in recent decades. Sure. And even some of the hymns, as you mentioned, Oh Sacred Head Now Wounded, Be Thou My Vision, you're looking at very old hymns, some of them predating what we would even know as the great age of hymnody after the Reformation.

Some by many hundreds of years as well. And it's just tremendously meaningful, I think, to be singing something that Christians have sung for centuries. There's something deeply spiritually grounding about that.

Yeah, I think whether you're a composer, or whether you're a worship leader, or whether you're just a church leader of responsibility, whose responsibility overlaps with music and worship. I think we all need to take a good dose of humility, in terms of learning that we stand on tall shoulders. Every great preacher I've ever known has gleaned from people who are older than them, and who are in their late years of their life, has gleaned from people of previous generations, has gleaned from the Puritans and the Reformers, and has gleaned from many of the church fathers who go back much further.

And that is not replacing scripture, that is helping and enriching their learning. And I think we need to come to an age where the modern worship music stops trying to reinvent itself unnecessarily for gimmickry, but actually learns from the great rich music tradition that we grow out of. You know, I think when you look at change in music, it's always threatening to people, even as every generation seems to learn a new language.

But if you're really learning a new language, you're assembling it from parts that already exist. And it's really a language that our Creator gave us. And the Creator gave us the language of music for His glory, in order that we would be the only creatures on earth who could consciously self-consciously praise and worship Him.

When we come back, we'll continue our discussion with Keith and Kristen Getty. The Superior Gold Group, a precious metals firm, is proud to sponsor the Albert Moeller Program. You can get more information about buying gold at 866-432-8656.

I am free. Death is crushed to death. Life is mine to live.

Walk through your selfless life. This the power of the cross. Welcome back to the Albert Moeller Program.

You're listening there to Kristen Getty singing the song, The Power of the Cross, written by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend. It's a remarkable piece of music. I wrote an article about it, I don't know, two or three years ago.

And it struck me as one of those hymns that declares the great truths concerning what Christ has done for us in the power of the cross and does so. And when I mentioned earlier that your music finds a way to resound in exactly the right place and to end, I think, resolve. The resolution comes in exactly the right place.

That last line, we stand forgiven at the cross, it's just a beautiful musical resolve there. And, you know, if you really believe that, and when you sing that, you can then go home. You can then go on and live another week until you come back to sing that again.

Yeah, and I sing it about five times every weekend. That's great. And, you know, when you think about the music, so much of hymnody in general, but especially the Renaissance of New Hymnody, is of songs that are basically narrative.

They tell a story. And I think, for instance, of In Christ Alone, because that is probably the most familiar of your songs that people are now singing in churches. And you really go through the story of what God did for us in Christ and about Christ's faithfulness.

You deal with his crucifixion and his resurrection, and then you declare the victory. Why do you think, Kristen, that so much of what speaks to us most deeply comes in the form of a story? I think storytelling really engages our imagination. And the gospel itself is given to us in a story form.

The whole Bible is full of stories. And I think it's a wonderful way to hold people's concentration in a song. It's a wonderful way to clothe the truths and the statements of truth in the story and in a sense of journeying through an idea.

I think it also helps us remember things. I find it very difficult to remember a list of lines or just straight truths like that. But when you put it in a story, it's a wonderful way to remember.

And this was true of children of Israel as well. Yeah. And all through the Psalms, we read many Psalms where we're just remembering Psalm 78 to tell the next generation the wonders of what he has done.

And it basically goes through the wonderful story of the run from Egypt and the liberation of the Jews. And then also in Deuteronomy 31, just reading that recently as we were going through the one-year Bible in our studies, where God tells Moses, tell the Israelites what I want to tell them through this song. And so they might remember what I have done.

And then also add the sobering thought that it might be a witness against them if they actually turn away from the truth that their mouths are declaring. This is something that they know that they're singing, and their lives should echo what it is they know. So we're judged by what we sing.

When we stand every Sunday, we're declaring what we know, and that will testify against us and for us. Keith, let me ask you, when you are thinking about writing for this generation, what do you think is a challenge you face that, for instance, Charles Wesley didn't face? What's different about this generation? Well, I think from a purely musical point of view, you have this split between the contemporary and the traditionals in church. And that has all kinds of unusual theological and ecclesiological dynamics that come along with that.

But when we first started, there was quite a lot of stuff, even a few aggressive things written about what we were trying to do, suggesting that what we were doing was pulling the church backwards, that the

soundbite generation needed songs that were simple in their own language. And we felt that when I talked to the church, I said, I think the story form will be the way to go within Christ Alone. Taking people in a story, they will sing theology till they're blue in the face if it's in a story.

And the same thing was with those who are looking for a more theological approach to singing, who wanted an immortal, invisible, but we knew that the contemporary generation had moved so far. A hymn that looks at 20 characteristics of God in one verse was going to be a tough leap and a tough thing to make. So we started telling the stories.

And of course, great songs from great ballads to great folk songs to great country songs to great Broadway songs are often great stories. And so that was very much a deliberate part of what we were doing. We try to do it in a common vernacular because obviously, some of the older hymns are wonderful, we still sing them.

But I think each generation needs its new music. And it's great to be able to capture some of these stories in a way that is very accessible to people. And I think after then is also catching what it means to live every day.

The last verse of most of our hymns almost is an application of a sermon, the fourth verse in Christ Alone, Power of the Cross and all the rest. And I think that's a challenge. And we spent we spent I think with in Christ Alone came quick, but in the Power of the Cross, we spent really a year writing, we wrote 19 different verses, worked through them, and eventually came down to four.

You're glad that we don't sing all night. But you know, the amazing thing is that a lot of the older hymns would have 13, 14 verses, you start looking at some of Wesley's hymns or Isaac Watts hymns, it's amazing how many verses they originally had. Yeah, but that last line is when we stand forgiven at the cross was actually the last thing that really held us back because I wanted, I wanted the traditional classical approach of forgiven where the big word was the top note, and Stuart wanted we stand because it was a proclamation.

And so we, we come around, you know, as a writer, you have to try and write in a way that actually captures people's emotions. So it's so much more than theology. Indeed, it's so much more than even poetry to try and get words that people sing and emotionally make them reach them in a deeper level, make them stand a quarter of an inch taller in their tiptoes when they sing.

That's one of the good things about artistic collaboration, then there's that artistic tension created as you come from two different approaches to try and create good art essentially in this music. Okay, I have to ask you the question that a lot of people want to know, you're a married couple and you do this. Do you wake up in the middle of the night and say, I got a song? Occasionally we do actually.

When the three of us write together, it's always difficult because Stuart always considers a level of loyalty because he's the oldest one of the three of us by quite a distance we've written for a long time and often he and Kristen clash in words, but Kristen's making the dinner so that that can create a real tension. Well, you know, this is a human endeavor and it's just amazing to me that God has gifted some of his human creatures, some human creatures far more than others with a gift and both of you, Kristen's ability both to write and to sing and Keith's ability to write lyrics and to compose music that is just so moving. I'm just thankful for both of you.

I want you to know that and I want to thank you for the gift that you are and the many gifts you've given to Christ Church in this generation. And I'll be back with final thoughts in just a moment on the Albert Miller program. It is incredibly tragic that in far too many churches, worship music has become a matter of disunity rather than unity of controversy and confrontation rather than of communion together and singing a common confession.

You know, one of the things that amazes me about what God does among his people in worship is that he allows people to sing a song together. For instance, where else are you going to have a 16 year old and a 90 year old singing the same song? Where else are you going to have someone who comes from one sector of our culture sing along with someone that comes from a very different part? People dressed in suits and people, you know, wearing cargo shorts singing the same music that doesn't happen elsewhere in the culture. I believe it happens mostly in the church and it happens because we have something we really do need to sing together.

Keith and Kristen Getty have helped us to learn how to sing many of these great truths together. You must find it very satisfying to see people young and old and from so many different walks of life and so many different cultures singing your music. It's been one of the greatest things.

Every Sunday sings, as you said, different generations gathering together where often they'd maybe be in their own separate rooms doing their own music. There's bound to be a way that musically we can come together and reflect what it means to be the body of Christ. And I want to say a word of appreciation again for the fact you've written music can be played on a pipe organ or a fiddle, you know, or for that matter, an acoustical guitar or an electronic keyboard.

And for all I know somewhere, just a drum and a flute. It works. And that's something important.

We'll leave you another word of thanks, but also a word of encouragement to those who are listening to the program. I think when I imagine the power of hymns back to what Elizabeth Elliot had to say about her experience on the night that Jim Elliot and his compatriots disappeared, and we later know were martyred for the cause of the gospel, as she knew in her heart that her husband must be dead. And as she with her children is there in the middle of a deep, dark jungle and wilderness, she said that she was kept alive through the night by the power of hymns, the hymns she had sung since she was a little girl that came alive in her heart.

And when she couldn't wrap her mind even around the scripture, the way she had memorized so many verses of scripture, simply because of the trauma of the situation. Music has a way of getting through a crack, even in the trauma and reaching the heart. That's why it's important to have it there at that moment.

It's at those times that you really lean on the music. And so you want to feed people with it as much as you can for those moments. Well, and you have fed so much good music because I want people in that moment, when that moment comes for anyone to have music that is going to be genuinely God honoring and Christ proclaiming and centered in the gospel.

You've been listening to the Albert Miller Program. Thanks to my guests, Keith and Kristen Getty. And thanks to the Moody Bible Network for giving us a place today as I'm here for the Moody Pastors Conference 2008.

I'll meet you tomorrow for Ask Anything Wednesday on the Albert Miller Program. Thanks for listening and be sure to visit our website [www.albertmiller.com](http://www.albertmiller.com). You'll find archives of past shows and other important resources. You can also email your questions and comments.

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