

# Hymn Singing and Hymn Writers

by Mack Tomlinson

---

*This sermon delves into the significance of hymn singing, hymn writers, and their application in our lives. It explores the history and impact of hymns written by notable figures like Isaac Watts, Charles Wesley, John Newton, Fanny Crosby, and others. The sermon emphasizes the importance of singing hymns heartily to the Lord, learning the words and tunes, and singing spiritually with a focus on pleasing God. It encourages the congregation to engage in hymn singing both privately and publicly as a form of worship and spiritual growth.*

**Scripture:** Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, Psalm 95:1, Colossians 3:17, Hebrews 2:12, James 5:13, Psalm 100:2, Psalm 147:7, Colossians 3:23

**Topics:** "The Power of Hymn Singing", "Spiritual Growth through Worship"

---

## Description

This sermon delves into the significance of hymn singing, hymn writers, and their application in our lives. It explores the history and impact of hymns written by notable figures like Isaac Watts, Charles Wesley, John Newton, Fanny Crosby, and others. The sermon emphasizes the importance of singing hymns heartily to the Lord, learning the words and tunes, and singing spiritually with a focus on pleasing God. It encourages the congregation to engage in hymn singing both privately and publicly as a form of worship and spiritual growth.

---

## Transcript

We'll read two verses, one from Ephesians 5 and one from Colossians 3, both very familiar on the subject this morning of hymn singing and hymn writers and some application. Hymn singing, hymn writers and some application. Ephesians chapter 5, verses 19 and 20.

Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. So we sing with our voice, but it's coming from our heart, and the object, the audience is the Lord. Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

Giving thanks always for all things unto God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And in Colossians 3, verse 16. Come in the multitudes who are gathering.

Come right in, settle in. Colossians 3, verse 16. Let, this is an admonition, an exhortation and a command, so it becomes a responsibility of us individually.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. So, we're going to think

about this morning, hymn singing and hymn writers and some lessons we can learn and apply. So, hymn singing, the word hymn, the dictionary definition is somewhat secular, but with religious connotations as well.

A hymn is a song in praise, the dictionary says, of the gods or even of heroes or conquerors. They would sing songs to honor. You know, even when David killed Goliath and then Israel made up a song.

Saul is slain as thousands, but David is ten thousands. So, another dictionary definition is a hymn is a sacred song. A sacred song.

Augustine asked this question, what are the necessary elements in a hymn? He gives at least three. Number one, words of praise. Number two, to be sung.

Number three, addressing God. Words of praise that must be sung addressing God. So says Augustine.

A couple of significant examples in the New Testament where you see the practice. First of all, the Lord Jesus and His disciples in the upper room, the observation of the Passover meal and the Lord's Supper in Matthew 26.30 regarding the Lord and His disciples. And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Probably a psalm. We don't know for sure, but the reference clearly is a hymn. In Acts 16.25, Paul and Silas, it's midnight, their backs are bleeding and wounded and fresh beatings have been administered to them.

And Luke says, they were praying and singing what? Hymns. Praying and singing hymns. They weren't in the best mood.

They didn't feel like it. But they weren't going anywhere and weren't going to sleep. Why not pray and praise God? So, I would like to know who started the hymn.

Was it Silas? Was it Paul? They were praying and singing hymns. About 50 years ago, some of us were around. And, yeah, two or three are gathered.

So, in the late 60s, early 70s, the charismatic movement exploded. And the earliest contemporary Christian singers started writing praise choruses. And there were some good ones.

There were some great musicians and great singers who really sang to the Lord. Everybody from Andre Krautz to Love Song to, I'm going to name groups that none of you have heard of. Except maybe a couple.

So, anyway, but it started a wave of a new trend in church music, Christian music. And much of it was good. Much of it was shallow and poor.

But what happened was, the praise choruses and contemporary music came into being in such a powerful way, it was permanent, that hymns began to take a back seat and not be sung, except in dead liberal churches or dead Armenian churches. So, hymns took a back seat, really to be forgotten and not used in any real significant way for years, except by the believers right in there who never gave in to the fad of not singing. But the reform movement in the last 20 years simply has produced a revival of hymn singing.

No question about it. And it's caught on and it's infiltrated. The more the reform movement and contemporary singers and composers and hymn writers have become sound in doctrine, the more hymns

have had a revival.

Old ones to the old tunes, old hymns to new tunes, and new hymns that are phenomenal. And we sing some of those. So, hymns now to a new generation.

They're back and they're going strong. May they never die again or decline. Here's some hymn trivia before we get into really the body of the material.

Here's some hymn trivia. I will buy lunch and dinner this week to anyone who knows this one. I think I'm safe.

The oldest hymn for which the author is known. In other words, there were older hymns, anonymous, we don't know the author, but the oldest hymn ever written as far as we know who the author was. It's not Because He Lives, Bill Gaither, no.

No, good guess though. Shepherd of tender youth, Clement of Alexandria, 200 A.D. Shepherd of tender youth, Clement of Alexandria. First hymn in English used in public worship.

I didn't offer a meal on this one. Behold the glories of the Lamb, Isaac Watts, 1688. First hymn in English that was used in public worship.

Youngest hymn writer. Now, we know there could have been others out in the field writing one, but it never became known. The youngest hymn writer that's known, 15-year-old John Milton, wrote, Led us with a gladsome mind.

Led us with a gladsome mind. I don't think we sing that one. The most prolific, Abby, what does prolific mean? Now you're going to know.

Most productive, most productive. Produced more than all others. Alright, prolific.

Test her on that tomorrow. Who would that be? Most prolific hymn writer. Fanny Crosby, correct.

There were some close to her, but she wrote over 8,000 hymns. Sometimes, when she was on a roll, she would write six or seven in one day, and they were good. One publisher had her produce three hymns per week for their work.

So, she was the most prolific. We'll return to her later. Kenneth Ausbeck, church historian, said this, Throughout church history, great periods of revival and movements of the Holy Spirit were marked by a great reviving of and a great renewal of congregational singing.

And so, you see that when churches are truly alive to truth and the Holy Spirit is at work among them, they love singing. Singing evidences it being from the heart. So, let's look at a few of the great hymn writers in history and then have some lessons and some questions.

Alright. First, Isaac Watts. 1674-1748.

Considered the father of English hymnody. At least the earliest. There were some pretty good hymn writers in England.

A little bit later, right? We'll talk about one of them. Watts is considered the father of English hymnody. 6,000 hymns are attributed to his pen.

Some of which did not get published. Were probably lost. Watts was the oldest of nine children.

And one day as a young man, he complained to his father about the horrible state of congregational singing. So, his father said, well, Isaac, do something about it. So, he did.

That week he started, every Sunday for two years, he wrote a new hymn. And those, whatever that would be, 104 weeks and two years? Good math. That body of hymns that he first wrote became a hymn that was published as Hymns and Spiritual Songs.

You can buy that today. It's reprinted. It's in print.

Hymns and Spiritual Songs were those hymns he wrote for those two years every Sunday. So, you get that and you look at them and you kind of can, it's almost an autobiography of Watts' heart. He was young.

He was writing those for two years. It's a marvelous example. Some of Watts' better known hymns.

Give to our God immortal praise. We sing that once in a while. O God, our help in ages past.

I sing the mighty power of God. Alas, and did my Savior bleed. And joy to the world.

Which he did not write originally to be a Christmas hymn, but it evolved into that. And perhaps his greatest or most loved hymn about which Charles Wesley said, I would give up all my hymns to have written this one. What am I talking about? When I survey the wondrous cross.

Let's just sing it. When I survey the wondrous cross. I guess it will be on the screen.

Alright, so let's sing it to the Lord. You can stand. His hands.

Sorrow and unholy. Word of love. Knowledge grants my soul.

Isaac Watts was a genius at several levels really. In his childhood he learned Latin, Greek and Hebrew. I'm still trying to learn English.

He was unable to attend Oxford and Cambridge. He was turned away. You know why? Guess? You know? Anybody? Because he was an independent.

He was not an Anglican. He was a Congregationalist. Like John Owen.

There's some mystery there because Watts was turned away, but John Owen, a Congregationalist, was the main academic guy at Oxford and was the leading theologian of the English world at the time. So, a little inconsistent, but anyway, Watts was imprisoned two times for his views, like Bunyan, but not near as long. Imprisoned twice.

He preached his first sermon at age 24, and at 30 he began pastoring the Mark Lane Congregational Chapel, and he stayed there 46 years, pastoring the same congregation until his death in 1748. Over 6,000 hymns. Watts was a lifelong bachelor, never married, but he loved children in his congregation.

He would write poetry and hymns even for children. And he said this about his motive. My motive and desire was not to exalt myself as a poet, but to be a servant to the churches and a helper to the lowest or simplest Christian.

Good motive. Alright, next. Another phenomenal English hymn writer.

Anybody take a guess? Charles Wesley. You're right. Charles Wesley.

1707. 1788. 81 years of life.

50 years as a Methodist. He and his brother John founded Methodism. Well, really, Whitefield kind of did, but they got the credit because they organized it.

And so, Charles Wesley, an evangelist, a powerful preacher. You read Dallimore's Life of Whitefield and you see amazing accounts of Charles Wesley preaching. He and his wife rode into a village.

She was 7 or 8 months pregnant. And they rode on horseback into the village. They were ambushed.

Beaten. They pulled her off the horse. Kicked her.

She rode home. She lost the baby. So these were courageous, Gospel-driven Methodists.

If you've never read Ian Murray's book John Wesley and the Men Who Followed, that's a marvelous book to read. So Charles Wesley, 50 years as a Methodist evangelist, church planter and hymn writer. Wrote over 6500 hymns.

He was a lyrical and a musical genius. The quality of his hymns, when you look at them closely, of the Christ-like self-centeredness in who he is and his work of redemption is profound. To look at Wesley's hymns in that way.

He was born in Epworth, England. Charles was the 18th of 19 children. And he was converted at midnight on May 21st, 1738 at the age of 31.

He wrote his first hymn The Next Day, which tradition says was, you got it? I read his lips. And Can It Be? He wrote it the next day. Converted at midnight.

I don't know how late he stayed up. The next day he wrote And Can It Be? More hymns came quickly all the time. Arise, my soul, arise.

Love divine, all love's excelling. You servants of God, your master proclaim. Come, now long-expected Jesus.

Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing. Hark the herald angels sing and rejoice the Lord is King. And in one of his greatest that's sung maybe as much as any of his hymns, Christ the Lord is risen today.

Let's sing it again. Sarah. Christ the Lord is risen today.

Oh, we want to sing of the strength of the Lord to fight for his kingdom in Christ at birth. Oh, we like him most truly. We could have sung just a couple of those, but Charles Wesley would not like that.

They said, sing them all. All that you have, sing them. alright.

Charles Wesley's hymns brought a new dimension that was missing at the time. Deep Christian experience and the expression of personal feelings with Christ and toward Christ. And he's really unsurpassed as a hymn writer in writing hymns about the person of Christ and redemption and atonement

and Christian experience.

I mean, look later at his hymn Arise My Soul Arise. I think it's 223 in the hymn book. The depth of what he expresses there about the work of Christ and the work of the Spirit and the heart is just as rich as you could say it really.

Alright, Tom. Next. John Newton.

His years 1725 to 1807. Born July 24th in London. His mother died when he was six years old and his father, an unbeliever, was a sea captain of merchant ships.

A hard and dangerous life for anyone, but his father took John into life at sea when he was 11 years old and he was in that life for 17 years basically. An extremely wicked life. A slave owner, a slave abuser, a captain of slave ships and horrible experiences.

He himself became a slave in one setting because it was not only blacks that became slaves, there were others of different nationalities and even Englishmen who would sink so low they could sell themselves even into slavery just to survive. The initial change with John Newton, March 10th, 1748, age 23, he recorded in his journal when the ship was in a severe storm and it looked like they were going down, he suddenly cried, Lord have mercy on us. And he was startled by his own prayer.

It came out because he was used to blaspheming, cursing, swearing, vile words, vile language. He was startled by his own prayer but it came out. But, it brought a change.

He gave up profanity, he gave up gambling and drinking, he gave up mistreating slaves. Later, though, he indicated his true conversion didn't happen until a later date. And he said, I cannot consider myself to have been a true believer until a considerable time later.

Well, Newton for a time tried to justify his work in the slave trade because they were immersed in it, it was livelihood and so he had to process things. But he tried to, he did change things. He sought to improve conditions for the slaves that he had or that he carried at sea.

He required slaves by his crew to be treated with kindness. That was unheard of. He, when there was a common habit of packing as many slaves in a ship as possible, they hardly had room.

Newton changed that. He provided more space and even comfort and made it easier for them. On one voyage Newton was able to not lose one single life to death or to the sea.

And that was, he was one of the few sea captains in history that's recorded to be able to do that. He also held public worship services for his crew and for the slaves on a ship every Sunday. Well, he finally gave up the slave trade in 1754, age 29, because his view of the slave trade totally changed.

He fully repented. His full change of mind. He became an abolitionist along with his close friend who, William Wilberforce.

Wilberforce was converted and he wanted to leave his goal of politics and become a pastor and Newton talked him out of it. He said, you're gifted for this. Serve God where you are.

And so, Wilberforce listened and stayed and you know the rest of the story. Some of you do. I'll mention some of it in a moment.

Newton became an abolitionist being convinced that slavery in any level is immoral and wicked and he became completely ashamed the rest of his life or his past life. In 1785, he began preaching sermons on the subject when no political group in Britain would even touch it. Historians credit John Newton for revealing during the time publicly because he later testified before Parliament.

Historians credit Newton for revealing what is came to be known about 18th century slave trade. All right. Newton worked with Wilberforce and for 20 years Wilberforce courageously fought that battle.

Remember, slavery was so common it was such an industry of business that you were cutting right at the heart to take away the business of many, many wealthy families and people. And so God preserved Wilberforce. He could have easily been assassinated.

20 years he fought for it and the year that John Newton died slavery was abolished in England. The very year that Newton died. What a great reality.

Newton's hymns How sweet the name of Jesus sounds Let us love and sing and wonder. That one's been revived in recent years. One there is above all others.

I ask the Lord that I might grow. One you may never have heard of. Amazing grace.

Newton when he got out of the slave trade he became a commissioner working in the district I think approving and releasing ships that would go out. And then he heard and began to admire George Whitefield and John Wesley. And through their influence Newton answered a call to the ministry.

Ordained in 1764 into the Church of England at age 39. Pastored two churches for 43 years. The first was where? Oh Olney not Alney, Texas Alney, England.

And there he met and became lifelong friends with who? William Cowper English American pronunciation Cowper It's Cooper in Britain. So when you go to Britain don't say it wrong among Christians there. The first was in Olney near Cambridge.

Pastored it for 15 years. And there he became close friends and pastor and caregiver to William Cooper who was mentally ill and prone to well given to chronic severe depression. They called it in those days what? Melancholy.

They didn't know how to treat it. So often people that were had this in a severe way had to be cared for either in a home or in a hospital what they would call an asylum. Newton was so close to Cooper and they loved each other so much.

There was a seven year period that Cooper had to be with John Newton every waking hour to maintain. Now think about the Christian love that takes. You're having a person who's mentally weak and depressed severely and you let them be with you every hour of every waking day for seven years.

Newton did that. He and Cooper wrote hymns. Cooper was a genius of a poet wrote many hymns and you know some of them.

They began to write hymns for the young people of the town in Olney which became a hymnal known as what? Olney Hymns. And you can get that hymnal today and again read through it and you'll see hymns majority of which Newton wrote I think out of the 349 Newton wrote 282 of them. And they wrote it for the young people.

They wrote those and they sang them and they taught them. So the second and final church was in London where Newton was for 28 years. St. Mary Woolden Church London an Anglican church until he died at the age of 82.

When he left Olney to go to London he and Cooper never saw each other again. Cooper didn't go. He stayed and died in Olney.

But Newton said this. The purpose of hymns, my hymns, is to promote the faith and comfort of sincere Christians. They weren't seeking to be known as a great musician or hymn writer.

They weren't seeking to have notoriety. They wrote for believers and for churches. And Newton's constant message was that he was living proof that God could save the very worst.

And one of his best hymns is titled Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken. Let's sing that one. Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken By a City of Our God For me, for me is a chain that should not be broken Where all the sinners have sinned For me is a chain that should not sinners sinned For me is a chain that should broken Where all the sinners have sinned For me is a chain that Where me is a chain that For me is a chain that should not be broken Where all the sinners sinned is a that should not be broken For is a Six weeks old, she was blinded by poor medical treatment of an eye infection.

At one year old, her father died. She was raised by a godly mother and grandmother, who grounded her in the Bible and in the Christian faith. She grew and flourished as a blind girl who was a Christian.

She had an amazing memory and an amazing mind. Her landlord, a lady, helped her memorize large portions of the Bible. So she knew by heart, as a young girl, Genesis through Deuteronomy, the four Gospels, the Song of Solomon, all of Proverbs, and many Psalms.

At 15 years old, she enrolled in the New York Institute for the Blind. There she learned to play the guitar and the piano. She later joined the faculty of the school and taught English and history.

She stayed at the school until three days before her wedding, when she married one of the teachers, a blind music teacher at the school, Alexander Van Alstyne, and their only daughter, Frances, died as an infant. At eight years old, Fanny began to write poetry. Her first two stanzas at eight.

Oh, what a happy soul I am, although I cannot see. I am resolved that in this world content I will be. How many blessings I enjoy that other people don't.

So to weep and sigh because I'm blind, I cannot and I won't. Eight years old. Her most well-known hymns.

All the way my Savior leads me. To God be the glory. Pass me not, O gentle Savior.

Praise Him, praise Him. Jesus, our blessed Redeemer. Tell me the story of Jesus.

Now, pause. When you're not a Christian, you don't like these hymns. I grew up in a non-Gospel preaching, legalistic, dead church.

On Sunday night, every Sunday night, we would sing, Tell me the story of Jesus. And I had a wicked heart. I didn't care.

When I'd hear it called out, I'd say, Please don't tell it to me again. This is so boring. And after I became a Christian, I loved to start singing that one.

Tell me the story of Jesus. Right on my heart, every word. Tell me the story most precious.

Sweetest that ever was heard. And then she wrote, What a gathering. I think that's in our hymnal.

I love this stanza from it. On that bright and golden morning, When the Son of Man shall come, In the radiance of His glory we shall see. Danny writes it.

I'm going to see. In the radiance of His glory we shall see. Then the changing in a moment, In the twinkling of an eye, And forever in His presence we shall be.

What a gathering. One of her greatest. Let's sing it.

Blessed Assurance. Let's belt it out. This is my story.

Amen. This is my story. This is my story.

And all the people said, Amen. I would have loved to have had an hour sitting with her over tea. She would have been like Martha Ravenhill was.

Serious minded, tender hearted, sweet, loving, gracious, and godly. Fannie Crosby. Alright.

Other unknown hymn writers. A few just to whet your appetite. And their marvelous hymns.

Helen Lemmel. L-E-M-M-E-L. 1864.

I got the dates wrong. Born in England. She immigrated to the U.S. when she was 12 with her family.

And lived in Wisconsin ultimately. She wrote this hymn. Turn your eyes upon Jesus.

Look full in His wonderful face. And the things of earth will what? Grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace. Only hymn really she's known for, but she wrote others.

George Bernard. Not George Bernard Shaw, but George Bernard. 1873 to 1958.

An American born in Ohio wrote The Old Rugged Cross. It was first sung in a church in Ohio. And the hymn became so popular, D.O. Moody made it widely known.

And at the church where it was first sang, they changed the name of it to The Old Rugged Cross Church. Like Amazing Grace, it's right up there. And people knowing it.

Alright. Charles Gabriel. 1856 to 1932.

Born in Iowa. He wrote himself over 7,000 songs. Charles Gabriel.

Have any of y'all ever heard of him? Sarah probably has. She says she's heard of him. Not all those were hymns necessarily, but he wrote these.

I Stand Amazed in the Presence of Jesus the Nazarene. His Eye is on the Sparrow. And that was popularized in the last 30 years by who? Huh? Ethel Waters.

If you've not heard Ethel Waters sing His Eye is on the Sparrow, you don't know what you're missing. You can hear her online. And then he wrote the hymn Since Jesus Came into My Heart.

It was really popularized later and was treated to be more of a shallow hymn, but it's a hymn of union with Christ and the joy of conversion, so it's not a bad hymn. Alright, here's another one. I Will Buy Your Lunch and Dinner and Breakfast if you can get this one.

Written in the 6th century. See, I'm playing it safe, aren't I? By Dallin Forgale. Forgale, an Irish, the greatest Irish poet in the first 10 centuries.

His years were 530 to 598 A.D. He was martyred by pirates who came to the island where he lived. He had gone blind and he was the one who wrote Be Thou My Vision, O Lord of My Heart. Now that was translated into English a couple of times from Old Irish.

We hear of Old English. We don't hear of Old Irish, but it was not like Irish today. And in 1905, Mary Byrne translated it first into English, but the version that's in our songbooks today, that is known by all, was put into different stanzas by Eleanor Hull in 1912.

Be Thou My Vision. Wrote by a forgotten Irish poet and martyr. Then this one.

William Featherstone was a 16 year old Canadian. And revival was happening in Canada. He went to his house and he took up pen and paper and he wrote this hymn.

My Jesus, I love Thee. I know Thou art mine. For Thee all the follies of sin I resign.

William Featherstone was his name. So the lesson in these examples are behind our hymns there are living people who were triumphing, were in times of revival, were in times of hardship. H.G. Spafford's hymn.

What's the title, Lee? Come on. Somebody give it to me. It is Well With My Soul.

Thank you. Sorry to put you on the spot. I couldn't think of it.

That was written after his daughters had drowned at sea and he had taken a ship to go over and his wife survived. But on the ship the captain told him about where the other ship went down and he wrote It is Well With My Soul. And so these marvelous hymns have a story behind them that's amazing.

And then this one. You ever heard of this one? The Doxology. Written by Thomas Ken, K-E-N, who lived 1637 to 1711.

He was a Church of England bishop. Now the Church of England at the time believed that only Scripture should be sung. And they considered it sinful and even blasphemous to write new lyrics for church singing.

Well, Thomas Ken was one of the first English writers to produce hymns that were not merely psalms set to music. And so he was a profoundly gifted preacher as an Anglican bishop. Even sought out to be heard by British royalty when he was preaching.

But his sermons never survived. The Doxology was actually written for a boys' school for the boys. Winchester College.

He wrote it for the boys to have something simple to sing in private devotion. And it became for 300 years the most frequently used English song in public worship. It was sung at Thomas Ken's funeral at sunrise the day they buried him.

So, we can just sing it a cappella. Let's sing it. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise Him, all creatures there below. Praise Him above. He has praised Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Amen. In closing, let's apply a little bit to our hearts. Number one, more and more learn to read hymns on your own, pray them, and sing them privately as a couple, as a family, as a bunch of single guys at your house.

Sing hymns more in private, in public. I never will forget years ago on a hard drive trip, a bunch of us were driving from Romania 10 hours into Ukraine. It was a cold van.

Cold morning. And so we had some hymnals with us. We broke them out.

We started singing hymns one after another. And I remember distinctly the presence of the Spirit came in on that time. And our hearts were full of joy and singing.

Men began to praise God. Some began to cry. And we sang hymns a long time.

So, sing the hymns. Learn the hymns. John Wesley's admonition to the Methodist congregations and the Methodist evangelists.

Number one, learn the words in tunes. Now, some of us aren't gifted musically. We can't read music.

But we can learn the tunes. Get used to them. Because it helps in singing the praises of God to not only be familiar with the lyrics, the content, the doctrine, the devotion, but to be able to follow the tune well.

Learn the words in the tunes, as John Wesley said. Number two, he said this, sing all the hymns in the meeting. Now what did he mean by that? He didn't mean sing every hymn you could.

He meant every believer in a meeting sing all the hymns that are sung. Sing them all. Don't lay out in silence.

Sing them heartily to the Lord. Don't stand silent thinking or let your mind drift. Number three, all believers in the meeting sing all the hymns.

He said let not weakness or weariness hinder you. If that's a cross you have to bear to be able to sing, then take up that cross and you will find it becomes a blessing. Make yourself sing.

Number three, sing heartily with good courage, John Wesley said. Beware of singing, he said, as if you were half dead or half asleep. Guilty.

We've got to get a hold of ourselves, right? The singing the praises of God, the worship of God is right alongside the ministry of the Word of God and both are biblical and both are important. Your contribution in worship as a sacrifice of praise to God is your singing from the heart. So don't lay out and don't let weakness or weariness hinder you from singing heartily and you'll find that a blessing.

He says don't be afraid of your voice. Don't be afraid of your voice being heard and singing His praises since you weren't hesitant to sing the songs of drunkards or the devil. So sing to Jesus.

Sing for Him. Number four, Sarah will like this one. Sing in time.

He meant don't choose the pace personally. Consciously recognize the pace that the pianist and the congregation is singing it and sing in time with the song. Don't let your voice stand out because you're not following.

Number five, Wesley says above all, sing spiritually. Have your eye toward God in every word you sing. Aim it pleasing Him in your singing.

See that your heart is only focused on the truth that's being sung and so will you please the Lord. Sing heartily to the Lord and your singing will become a sacrifice of praise. For all of us, there's more ground we can be gained if we'll take advantage of using a hymnal.

Using them in our private devotions. Learn them. Sing them to the Lord.

They're full of truth. They're full of theology. They're full of Christian experience.

They're full of encouragement to press on the upward way and thus gain new heights every day. So, I will end. Are there any questions anyone has? Are there things being written today? Well, I think there's things being written today that are phenomenally good and that will be lasting.

The Gettys. Matt Boswell, some of his. There's others.

I don't have time. I don't have the memory to remember them all. But yes, absolutely, marvelous hymn writers today.

You could name some of them that I can't think of right now. Yeah, I mean you think of Isaac Watts. There's guys today whether it's Keith Getty or Matt Boswell or others.

Stuart Talen. How do you say it? Talen? You know who I'm talking about. Phenomenal in Christ alone.

What's one of his other famous ones? Yeah, How Great the Father's Love for Us. So those hymns will endure because they're so biblical. They're so edifying.

And now they're so widely known that I think theirs will last the way those men in the past generation wrote them. It was the same thing. The same spirit inspired Watts and Wesley and Newton and others to write hymns for the church because there was a need and that's what these writers today do.

And we should thank God for them. Isaac Watts. No, and I don't remember if the hymn book addresses.

I think it was just a general term. I don't know how Watts differentiated that at all. I'm sure maybe in some of his writing could find it.

One more question before we break. Now that was a really pitiful book in that hymn book. You know, right.

And that happens in a number of hymnals too. Not just that one. The Trinity Hymnal is phenomenally better.

Grace Hymns, John MacArthur's church did, is phenomenally better. So, anyway, point well taken. Editorial work is not always the best in hymn books.

Well, I did offer one more question. So, is there a question? Or we'll close. Well, thank you for your attention.

Let's pray and we'll be dismissed to get ready for 11 o'clock. Heavenly Father, we do want to thank You with a fresh heart for the heritage of hymns. We thank You for Your servants throughout the ages who were led by You and equipped by You to write hymns that have endured.

We're grateful. Thank You, O Shepherd of Israel. Thank You, Lord Jesus, the head of the church, for producing these marvelous glories for us to sing.

Help us to take it to heart. Help us to become more of a student of hymns and more of a singer of hymns that we might be...

---

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/gCz2epP1khs.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/mack-tomlinson/hymn-singing-and-hymn-writers/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**