

## SONGS OF FELLOWSHIP

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This hymn book, or book of worship songs and hymns, creates many problems one of which is that it is often trendy and also ecumenical so that one song may have a Catholic slant and another a Pentecost and charismatic slant. That this collection also includes great traditional hymns gives it an air of respectability with such hymns as Abide with me, All hail the power of Jesus' Name, All things bright and beautiful etc.

Some of the songs rightly refer to God as Thee with its cognates of Thou and Thine which is correct whereas You and Your is not correct. You refers to anybody. Thee refers to someone extra special. You would refer to your milkman or paperboy, whereas Thou would be used to the One most special in your life and, to a Christian, that is the Lord Jesus. Referring to the Lord as you means that He is not special. However, most people are unaware of this but should be taught this courtesy.

Many of these songs are boringly repetitive. Number 4 has eight alleluias per verse; number 15 has two choruses in which Give him praise appears a total of twelve times. Number 175 has the word higher 14 times in the opening verse. In number 166 we have the expression He is our peace ten times in 16 short lines. Repetition is used for indoctrination and brainwashing and if people sing the same thing over and over again, often without being aware of what they are singing, they come to accept what they are singing as truth.

There is a stupid song which says, We are going to lift Jesus higher and the word higher is repeated and repeated. We cannot lift Jesus higher. He is seated on high at the right hand of God the Father says the Scripture and the old hymn has it right when it says

The highest place that heaven affords  
Is His by sovereign right  
The King of kings and Lord of lords  
And heaven's eternal light.

And this is number 531 in Songs of Fellowship and some songs seem to contradict each other.

There are, however, some fine songs in this collection. For example number 475 Purify my heart is a wonderful song of sanctification.

Number 46 repeats Blessed be the name of the Lord four times and the words Jesus reigns on high in all the earth appears four times in 16 lines.

Number 56 has 18 lines which all begin with Cause me to...

Many of the songs have ridiculous lines. For example, song number 71 says Let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation, for He is our God and we are His people and that is why we shout and sing. Shouting is for a warning, reprimand or abuse and, remember, God was not heard in the earthquake or the fire but in a still small voice. Shout to the Lord is rudeness and, as a great preacher of the past said, "God is not deaf!" and the clear Biblical instruction to believers is that in quietness and confidence is strength.

There is another fine song in Songs of Fellowship that has got it right:

Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One is here (number 40)

Roman Catholics celebrate Mass and song 73 uses the word celebrate 11 times in two short verses driving home by repetition a Catholic idea.

Song number 57 uses the word celebrate 8 times in 39 words.

The ecumenical stance is taken for example in number 111 which puts words into God's mouth that He has not said.

For I'm building a people of power  
And I'm making a people of praise.

Where does God say that?

Then the ecumenical thrust comes in

Make us one, Lord,  
In your body  
In the Kingdom of your Son.

The prophet answers this with a rhetoric question, "How can two walk together unless they agree?"

The Catholic or High Church position is stated in such hymns as 315

Jubilate everybody  
Jubilate, Jubilate, Jubilate Deo.

What is the point of English speaking Christians singing that? I asked many charismatic believers what jubilate meant and they did not know. They did not know what Deo meant, either.

Songs of fellowship number 5 advocates being myself in the Lord.

When we come to the Lord and are His we are not ourselves but a new creation. All the old things have passed away behold all things are new. Is this song a justification to do what we like in being ourselves? So many have said so.

Young people still get drunk, go to nightclubs, have sex before marriage or are living with someone to whom they are not married, go to the cinema to watch sex and violence and hear bad language.

Be ye holy because I am holy says the Lord.

Number 17 says Come dance with me and we have already dealt with the subject of dance elsewhere.

Number 44 says

I get so excited Lord  
My heart just fills with praise  
My heart starts dancing, my hands raise up

In prayer, praise and worship we have to be in control. The fruit of the Spirit is self-control.

I am troubled by number 38

Have you ever felt you wanted  
To touch the brother next to you.

Number 27 says

Cause I've been drinking at the fountain  
I've been swimming in the sea.

Michael Harper writes, In order for all Christians to be one, we must not take the doctrines of the Bible that seriously since all that matters is love!

That is so utterly ridiculous that it needs no further comment!

Another ridiculous line in another songbook is Praise Him with alleluias for Jesus is Lord. Translate that and it means, praise Him with praise Hims, praise Hims for Jesus is Lord.

Another silly song in another book is Shine Jesus shine with the second verse saying Blaze Spirit blaze, set our hearts on fire. What does this mean? Where is the Scripture to support this? This song has understandably been ridiculed as the heartburn song and that medical condition is not funny. As for Shine Jesus shine the Scripture says that it is us who have to let our light shine before men..

We teach our children rubbish whether it be about Santa Claus or silly songs like If I were a butterfly I'd praise God for my wings... If I was a worm I'd praise God that I could wriggle and so on. Do butterflies and worms pray and praise God? Have they souls? Can they respond to the Gospel and be saved? Look, that worm over there is a Christian believer but that Red Admiral refuses to accept Christ as Saviour.

Notice how many of these so-called worship songs advocate clapping, lifting up hands and dancing features of charismatic and house churches and of the pop music scene. Pop music is worldly because it is of this world and it has influenced Christian worship. The reverence and respect for God has slide to an all time low. He is not longer the Lord to worship in awe, reverence and godly fear but one of the boys. We are told in the New Testament not to love the world or the things of the world.

Mission Praise is also a book with ecumenical bias and errors. Take number 131

Jesus we enthrone You  
We proclaim You our King  
Standing her in the midst of us  
We raise You up with our praise  
And as worship build a throne.

Utter nonsense. How can we build a throne for the Lord? The Bible states Thy throne, O Lord, is established (Hebrews 1. 8). We cannot enthrone Him who is already enthroned with the Majesty on high. Worshipping the Lord is not building a throne for Him. How can we raise Him up? He is already raised to the highest place.

Consider number 48

Spirit we love You  
We worship and adore You.

Where in the Scripture do we find this clearly expressed?

I have just read an article in which Graham Kendrick is described as the inventor of the worship industry in the 1970s.

Industry is the work and process involved in manufacture, a commercial enterprise, something worldly.

Is that what worship is?

There are training schools for would-be worship leaders!

It is true that there are many pop and rock groups who are called Christian bands and they make a lot of money for themselves.

One remembers reading an article by Kendrick about marches for Jesus and he encouraged people on the march to use football rattles, whistles and other noisy objects and to have and burst balloons and dance because that is the ultimate Christian expression of worship and so on. It is the way to praise God, he asserted.

Dancing is worldly and sexual and David's dancing before the Lord was both vile and sexy since he was uncovered and was as a vile fellow displaying his manhood to even young servant girls. His behaviour was utterly despicable and to hear Christians justifying dancing in worship because David did, shows how they do not understand the Scripture.

See my article on David, a man after God's heart.

One of the most inane songs by Graham Kendrick begins

Teach me to dance to the beat of Your Heart  
Teach me to move by the power of Your Spirit.

If you think about this for a moment you will realise it does not make sense and is, therefore, nonsense. What is the Lord's heart rate? 72 a minute? Does that mean 72 steps of dancing per minute? We have already seen that David's example of dancing was vile.

The Spirit is to teach me to move says this song. What does this mean? Many suffer from arthritis and mobility problems. There are Christians who depend on Zimmer frames. Is the Holy Spirit going to teach them how to move?

Don't tell me that I am taking this too literally. How else am I to take it? The words of this song are not clear and are, frankly, nonsense. When I ask people about this song they replied, "It's fun!"

Worship and Sunday are fundays!

As to songs about dancing this one takes the biscuit:

Lord, it is because I worship You  
That my pants dance for You  
Lord, it is because I praise You  
That my pants dance for You.

I was asked to deputise for an organist at short notice and was presented with a song book I did not know. One song was headed 'to be played half-cut'. What did that mean? I thought half-cut was an expression of being drunk.

Another song was headed 'with bounce'. That is not a musical term either. What did it mean?

Another was headed 'heavy rock'.

In my studies, I have visited churches with dancing and most of the dancers were pretty girls. It certainly drew the men in. One dance troupe of pretty girls wore see-through skirts and you could make out their underwear. In another church some attractive young women were wearing jeans and waving flags. In their bending in the dance the back of their jeans revealed the colour of their underwear.

It has been rightly said that dancing is simulated sex and the excuse for people to be close together often very intimately and, because of its sexual context, it attracts people. Can you imagine the Lord returning to the earth and taking part in dancing like this? I heard one charismatic state that if the Lord were here now He would be a drummer in a heavy metal band and be singing pop songs and rock ballads. Another said that He would go down the pub with the people and buy every one a round.

These things are being said to justify the behaviour of these liberal Christians.

These matters may not be as outrageous as those who have said that Jesus visited brothels and was married to Mary Magdalene and had children with her, but these other modern ideas of Him are also offensive.

In some of these worship songs there has come doctrinal error or brainwashing, trendiness and ecumenicalism. If the song has a good tune people will want to sing it and not notice or care about the false theology.

Clapping hands and lifting hands and arms above the head is a product of the pop music scene which is another infiltration into modern worship. The spreading of hands or the 'changing a light bulb position' is unnecessary as the New Testament says that God is not worshipped with hands. Worship is not a physical thing but a spiritual thing. We are to worship God in spirit and in truth. Prayer and praise is not physical either other than the bowing of the head and quietness in the Presence of the Almighty Lord. If only Christians would take their lead from the Scriptures.

The psalms and other Scriptures are full of instructions for prayer, praise and worship which is to bow down, be humble and be still in the Presence of God.

One recalls the advertisements for Christian festivals such as Greenbelt and Spring Harvest in which they asked for vamps, Buster Keaton look-alikes, movie moguls, Marilyn Monroes, trapeze artists, clowns. Greenbelt actually have comedy artists taking part and some of the invited comedians I have seen on the television who are crude, vulgar and have disgusting sexual jokes. See the Greenbelt website for confirmation. Prayer, praise and worship is not entertainment.

As already hinted, some Pentecostal and charismatic churches have changed the name of Sunday to funday. They talk about fellowship as a chat and a cup of coffee which is often a ploy to get to know all about you and pry. Fellowship is sharing the things of Christ and if people argue about this then they do not know the Scriptures and the epistles of John. Fellowship is spiritual not nosiness, interference and the rest.

You have probably met Mr and Mrs Nosey on joining a new church. They pounce on you almost immediately and invite to lunch or tea and at that meal they ply you with questions and want answers. People have a right to privacy and the apostle Paul says that where Christians are concerned we are not to want to know them after the flesh. In other words, we do not poke and prod into private lives and live in their back pockets. And it is sad to record that Christians can be the most intrusive people and appalling gossips.

Modern worship has become worldly and following worldly and secular styles. Some churches have disco lights and rock bands with repetitious drumming, screaming electric guitars and singers who use slang such as: Lord I wanna luv yuh cos yur mine and I gotta tell tell yuh this.

We even have people called worship leaders who choose the songs to sing and get you to sing them over and over and over and over and over and over.

The leader of worship is to be the Holy Spirit and the Scripture tells us that in all things, including worship, everything must be done decently and in order.

There are Pentecostal and charismatic meetings in halls and theatres and these meetings are full of entertainment and so-called Christian celebrities. At the John Wimber meetings it was announced at the end of the three hour meeting that the bar was now open!

We saw many so-called Christians stagger out of these meetings drunk and two such couples were having sex in a nearby alleyway off Hyde Park having been to this so-called Christian meeting followed by refreshments!

Wimber died in 1997.

That fine Christian speaker, Ernest Lloyd, was visiting South Africa and was asked to speak at a particular meeting. He duly arrived at 7.30 and there was singing of worship songs and a testimony for 75 minutes and the singing was getting louder and louder and the audience even more histrionic. The Police arrived and said that they had had complaints about the noise. It was now 8/45 and Mr Lloyd was told it was time for him to speak and he had five minutes!

Graham Scroggie, who died in 1958, was sometimes criticised for his adherence to Biblical teaching and accused of being out of date and taking worship back a few centuries and not 'being with it'. Scroggie replied, "I haven't taken it back far enough. It should have been 2000 years when you could have met the Lord Himself, listened to what He said and obeyed Him".

We need to jettison all this modern worldly, secular and false doctrine nonsense and as the Scripture states, Search for the old ways and walk in them.

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