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**A STUDY OF THE TEACHING MINISTRY OF THE  
CHURCH THROUGH HYMNOLOGY**

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**A Thesis  
Submitted to  
The Department of Christian Education  
Asbury Theological Seminary**

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**In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Religious Education**

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**by  
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Approved by:

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

For some time there has been a difference of opinion as to what type of religious music the church should advocate for the use of its people. The three types of music that are set forth for use are choruses, gospel songs, and hymns. Some churches hold to the opinion that one type must be used to the exclusion of the others while other churches use all three in their services.

#### I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this investigation to make a study of the hymns used in three of the great revival periods in history in order to discover and establish basic principles that can be used in the teaching ministry of the church today. The teaching ministry of the church was and will be confined to the field of hymnology as it relates to the educational program of the church. The three revivals that were investigated were under the leadership of Martin Luther, John and Charles Wesley, and Dwight L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey.

Importance of the study. Music has been and still is a vital part of the Protestant worship service. Music

is used in almost every department of the church; therefore, it can either be an asset or a detriment to the program of the church. The hymns of these revivals not only aided the worshipper, but served as a means of educating the people doctrinally. It was, therefore, important to study their hymnology as an aid and a guide for the teaching ministry of the church today.

## II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

### Hymn.

1. A hymn is a lyrical poem, sung devotionally and reverently, expressing the worshiper's attitude toward God or God's purpose in human life.
2. A hymn centers around deity and embodies the attributes of God and the fundamental tenets of redemption through the God-head. Included in these are the following: repentance, faith, conversion, the church, the ordinances, prayer, and the plan of redemption, including the cross, the blood, the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ.
3. A hymn should be rather simple and metrical in form, marked with a loftiness of tone and style, having the absence of triviality, and marked with a touch of mysticism.
4. A hymn should be concise in thought and expression, spiritual in phraseology, orthodox in doctrine, true to the scriptures either in abstract truth or in spiritual tone and temper, and sometimes in both.
5. A hymn must be permanent and its spirit must be in accord with more than one generation. It must find a place in a stated worship of a great congregation or body of worshipers and must be

recognized and sanctioned by some established organization of Christians.

6. It takes some hymns from 20 to 50 years to win their way to favor and adoption.
7. The greatest hymns are usually born in times of great emotional and deeply spiritual crises.
8. Hymns are not necessarily the greatest literature, musically or poetically speaking, but they present the beliefs and inner soul-stirrings and emotions of the people.
9. A hymn usually does not have a chorus or refrain.<sup>1</sup>

### Doctrine.

According to Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary doctrine is defined as, "that which is taught; a principle, or body of principles, in any branch of knowledge."<sup>2</sup> When the term doctrine was used in this paper it meant the teachings that these authors conveyed to others through their hymns.

### Periods.

Martin Luther was born at Eisleben, Germany, November 10, 1483, and died there on February 18, 1546. As a result of publishing his 95 Theses in 1517, his great work

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<sup>1</sup>Willard R. Hallman, Class lecture notes, of Asbury Theological Seminary, Used by permission.

<sup>2</sup>Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam Co., Publishers, 1949), p. 244.

as a reformer began. It was during this period that his hymns were written and with which this paper has been concerned.<sup>3</sup>

The birth place of both John and Charles Wesley was at the Epworth Rectory in England. John was born in 1703, and Charles on December 18, 1707. Even though they were ministers in the Church of England they both were seeking for a personal experience with Christ.<sup>4</sup> Charles was converted on Whitsunday, May 21, 1738, and John came into his experience on the following Wednesday, May 24, 1738.<sup>5</sup> Although John had translated hymns before this period this was the beginning of their great contribution to hymnology.

The next revival period investigated was under the leadership of Dwight L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey. Moody was the dominant figure of the revival, being the preacher. However, the music of Sankey was used to great advantage by Moody during the revival and as a result these two names are linked together. Sankey was born in Edinburg, Pennsylvania, on August 28, 1840, and died in Brooklyn, New York, August

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<sup>3</sup>John Julian, A Dictionary of Hymnology (London: John Murry, 1892), p. 703.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 1257-58.

<sup>5</sup>Louis F. Benson, The English Hymn Its Development and Use in Worship (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1915), p. 228.

13, 1908. Moody and Sankey met in Indianapolis in 1870, and as a result of this meeting they became associated together in a great evangelistic movement.<sup>6</sup>

### III. ORGANIZATION OF THESIS

Plan. Chapters II, III, and IV attempt to show the teaching ministry of the three revival periods. Chapter II will consider the hymnology of the Lutheran revival, Chapter III the Wesleyan revival, and Chapter IV the Moody-Sankey revival. In order to show what the doctrines were in their hymns, the following factors have been considered in each revival: (1) the factors influencing the author; (2) the contributions of their hymnology; (3) how they used their hymns; and (4) the effect that was produced by their hymns.

Methods of Procedure. Besides the bibliographical research, class lecture notes, and personal interviews were used.

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<sup>6</sup>"Sankey, Ira David," The Encyclopedia Americana (1955 ed.), XXIV, 270.

## CHAPTER II

### MARTIN LUTHER

Much has been written about the Reformation and the activities of Martin Luther as he was connected with it. Out of the Reformation came the Protestant movement, the Bible in the vernacular language, a catechism, and a hymn-book. The hymns that came out of the Reformation were a mighty force in keeping it alive for they served as propaganda for the doctrines of the Reformation. Martin Luther was not the first German hymn-writer but he was largely responsible for making them a part of the worship services.

#### I. FACTORS INFLUENCING MARTIN LUTHER

In making a study of the events that took place in the life of Martin Luther and eventually led to the Reformation it was found that these events focus on four main incidents. A steady progression led from one incident to the next which eventually brought him before the eyes of the world.

In July of the year 1505, Martin Luther was trudging along a parched road near the village of Sotternheim. At this time he was a young university student. It was a sultry day and suddenly there was a shower that turned into a

crashing storm. All at once he was struck with a bolt of lightning that knocked him to the ground. As he struggled to rise, he cried in terror, "St. Anne help me! I will become a monk." Martin Luther kept his vow and did become a monk.

The man who thus called upon a saint was later to repudiate the cult of the saints. He vowed to become a monk was later to renounce monasticism. A loyal son of the Catholic Church, he was later to shatter the structure of medieval Catholicism. A devoted servant of the pope, he was later to identify the popes with Antichrist.<sup>1</sup>

Martin Luther entered the monastery on July 17, 1505. When he had finished his period as a novice he took the solemn vow and became a monk. He had been selected for the priesthood by his superior and commenced his functions by saying his first mass on May 2, 1507. During the saying of the mass he met his second crisis experience. As Luther took his place before the altar he began to recite the introductory portion of the mass until he came to the words, "We offer unto thee, the living, the true, the eternal God." He later related his experience.

At these words I was utterly stupefied and terror-stricken. I thought to myself, "With what tongue shall I address such Majesty, seeing that all men ought to tremble in the presence of even an earthly prince? Who am I, that I should lift up mine eyes

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<sup>1</sup>Roland H. Bainton, Here I Stand (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950), p. 21.



or raise my hands to the divine Majesty? The angels surround him. At his nod the earth trembles. And shall I, a miserable little pygmy, say 'I want this, I ask for that'? For I am dust and ashes and full of sin and I am speaking to the living, eternal and the true God."<sup>2</sup>

"The terror of the Holy, the horror of Infinitude, smote him like a new lightning bolt, and only through a fearful restraint could he hold himself at the altar to the end."<sup>3</sup>

This was the beginning of an inner turmoil within the heart of Martin Luther that finally ended in the abandonment of the cowl, but not until after a long interval. However, he still wore the monastic habit for three years after he was excommunicated. Altogether he was garbed as a monk for nineteen years.<sup>4</sup>

In the fall of 1515, Martin Luther found the answer to inward peace. He had been transferred to the University of Whittenburg where one of his responsibilities was lecturing on the Scriptures. He had just finished his lectures on the book of Psalms which had greatly stirred his thinking. He began a series of lectures on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans and as a result of his study he saw how he could have

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<sup>2</sup>Martin Luther, as quoted by Bainton, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>3</sup>Bainton, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

peace with God and through this he was converted. He saw that justification came by faith. Faith is not an achievement but a gift. Faith comes only through the hearing and study of the Word. In Luther's own words he described what happened.

I greatly longed to understand Paul's Epistle to the Romans and nothing stood in the way but that one expression, "the justice of God," because I took it to mean that justice whereby God is just and deals justly in punishing the unjust. My situation was that, although an Impeccable monk, I stood before God as a sinner troubled in conscience, and I had no confidence that my merit would assuage him. Therefore I did not love a just and angry God, but rather hated and murmured against him. Yet I clung to the dear Paul and had a great yearning to know what he meant.

Night and day I pondered until I saw the connection between the justice of God and the statement that "the just shall live by his faith." Then I grasped that the justice of God is that righteousness by which through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us through faith. Thereupon I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise. The whole of Scripture took on a new meaning, and whereas before the "justice of God" had filled me with hate, now it became to me inexpressibly sweet in greater love. This passage of Paul became to me a gate to heaven. . . .

If you have a true faith that Christ is your Saviour, then at once you have a gracious God, for faith leads you in and opens up God's heart and will, that you should see pure grace and overflowing love, This it is to behold God in faith that you should look upon his fatherly, friendly heart, in which there is no anger nor ungraciousness. He who sees God as angry does not see him rightly but looks only on a curtain, as if a dark cloud had been drawn across his face.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Martin Luther, as quoted by Bainton, Ibid., p. 65.

Not only was this a crisis experience for Martin Luther, but it was the beginning of a series of events that liberated the world from the grasp of the Roman Catholic Church. It brought before the world the Biblical truth that the "Just shall live by faith."<sup>6</sup>

The increased sale of indulgences in Germany brought about the next crisis. Pope Leo X was in the process of building St. Peter's in Rome and needed money to finance the building of this basilica. Albert of Brandenburg did not have the money to pay for the appointment he received from the pope. In order to reimburse himself for what he had sent to Rome, the pope gave him permission to sell indulgences for a period of eight years sending half of the money to Rome and the other half he was permitted to keep to reimburse the Fuggers. These indulgences weren't actually sold in Martin Luther's parish but the vendors came close enough so that Luther's parishioners could go over the border and return with the most amazing concessions. This was too much for Luther and on the eve of All saints, when Frederick the Wise would offer his indulgences, Luther spoke, this time in writing, by posting in accord with current practice on the door of the Castle Church a printed placard in the Latin

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<sup>6</sup>Holy Bible, Romans 1:17.

language consisting of ninety-five theses for debate. He was revolting against Tetzel's sermon in which souls were supposed to be sprung from purgatory when they bought the indulgences.

Luther's Theses differed from the ordinary propositions for debate because they were forged in anger. The ninety-five affirmations are crisp, bold, unqualified. In the ensuing discussion he explained his meaning more fully. The following summary draws alike on the Theses and the subsequent explications. There were three main points: an objection to the avowed object of the expenditure, a denial of the powers of the pope over purgatory, and a consideration of the welfare of the sinner.<sup>7</sup>

In very short order he became the talk of Germany. From this beginning things began to happen which eventually led to his excommunication and the beginning of a strong Protestant church, namely, the Lutheran Church. Not only was it the beginning of the Reformation, but the beginning of a new hymnody in the vernacular which was to be sung freely by all the people.<sup>8</sup>

The German revolt came as a result of the awful conditions that existed in the country and the apostasy of the church.

. . . Papal taxation was oppressive and unequally levied: the vast lands and treasure of the clergy and the monastic houses which brought no wealth to the people were exempted while the hard-working

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<sup>7</sup>Bainton, op. cit., p. 80.

<sup>8</sup>Albert Edward Bailey, The Gospel in Hymns (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), 1950, p. 309.

peasants and enterprising business men paid heavily. Many of the clergy were unworthy examples of Christian morality; the monks were lazy and corrupt. The Church's sale of indulgences by which sins were forgiven in return for cash, without repentance or penance, shocked the moral sense. The Inquisition's stern repression of new ideas that now were coming into northern Europe like a tide--the Humanism resulting from the re-discovery of classical literature--angered the intellectuals; low standards of living and the hopelessness of any relief angered the peasants. These conditions combined with the stirrings of a popular religious awakening called for a leader with the courage of his convictions, one who would bring the smouldering unrest to a focus of action. This leader arose in 1517; people of all ranks flocked to his standard and in an incredibly short time the most gigantic revolution in the history of the Church was under way.<sup>9</sup>

Not only did the church take money away from the people, but deprived them of the privilege of worshipping God in song. The laws of the Catholic Church forbid the vernacular languages in any part of the eucharistic service. The people could put no heart into the singing of Latin. Only on certain occasions were vernacular hymns tolerated and never were they encouraged.<sup>10</sup>

Luther began his hymn writing in 1523, and as it began to catch on it spread among the people. The Catholic Church realized what a tremendous impact it had and the force that was carried with it. They were not content to

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 310.

<sup>10</sup>Edward Dickinson, Music in the History of the Western Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902), pp. 241-42.

just sit by and let it accomplish its work, but they also began to write hymns for the people.<sup>11</sup>

Luther's interest in music began as a child. As a child he had a pleasing alto voice that changed later to tenor. His interest in instruments centered around the lute. His table was often the scene of many table talks. After the meals he would take up the lute and they would sing together. He regarded music as an expression of faith--a gift by the grace of God. He believed that when one believes in salvation that they cannot help but be happy. They will want to sing and tell about it so that others may hear it and come to Christ.<sup>12</sup>

His opinion was that the devil hates and fears music. He said that music and theology alone were capable of giving peace and happiness to troubled souls. Therefore, this plainly proves that the devil, the source of all unhappiness and worries, flees music as much as he does theology.<sup>13</sup> As a result Luther gave to the people a new hymnology through which they could worship God.

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 231.

<sup>12</sup>Paul Nettl, Luther and Music (Philadelphia: The Muhlenberg Press, 1948), p. 18.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

## II. THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF LUTHER'S HYMNOLOGY

In organizing the new churches that began as a result of the Reformation, Luther made some improvements in the form and manner of the services. His improvements were directed to the revision of the liturgy, the introduction of new hymns, and the arrangements of suitable melodies for congregational use.<sup>14</sup>

In noting the accomplishments of Luther he not only gave to the German people the Protestant church known as Lutheran, but he gave to them the Bible in their own tongue, the Catechism, and the hymn-book so that God might speak directly to them in His Word, and that they might directly answer Him in their songs. All of these accomplishments were important, but it was the hymnbook that generated the power. He took the hymn out of a foreign tongue, away from the choir, and gave to it a spontaneity which stemmed from the fact that he required the hymn to be evangelical. He required that other poets make their hymns evangelical. As a consequence a copious stream of hymnody became a never-failing spring of spirituality in people's hearts and lives.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Dickinson, op. cit., p. 245.

<sup>15</sup>Bailey, op. cit., p. 313.

Luther felt that he was inaugurating a new period of song. This new period of song would be a time when the singing of hymns in the worship services would be restored to the congregation. But even more than this, they would be singing as they worked and played. The singing of hymns would become a part of their lives. Singing would be a means by which they could express to God their love and devotion.

When Luther wrote his hymns he dropped the theological style of his scholarship and sought for phrases that were simple and could be easily understood by the people. In doing this he never left any doubt as to what he meant. They had such a simple, homebred, domestic form of expression that they caught the public ear in an instant. "Those who have at all studied the history of popular eloquence in prose and verse are aware of the electrical effect that may be produced when ideas of pith and moment are sent home to the masses in forms of speech that are their own."<sup>16</sup> His hymns are not poetry in the high sense; but they are certainly eloquence, they are popular oratory in verse, put into the mouths of the people by one of their number.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Dickinson, op. cit., pp. 253-54.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.



His hymns were one of the most effective agents of evangelical doctrines and piety. "He himself said, 'Our opponents cannot claim ignorance of the doctrine of the Gospel, since we have preached, written, painted and sung it.'<sup>18</sup> Luther's hymns proved to be one of the most efficient agencies in carrying the doctrines to the hearts of the people. They also contributed powerfully to the enthusiasm which enabled the new faith to maintain itself in the conflicts by which it was tested.<sup>19</sup>

Luther was not the inventor of congregational singing. Although in the Roman Church the clergy as choristers had monopolized the singing function since before 1200 A.D., and since 574 A.D. women had been forbidden to sing in church, wherever reform movements sprang up the tendency was for the people to sing.<sup>20</sup> What Luther did was to encourage the singing of hymns by the congregation in their services. It had been so long since they had done this that they had to be taught how to do it. It was also necessary for Luther to provide hymns for them to sing.

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<sup>18</sup>Martin Luther, as quoted by Carl F. Price (ed.), The Papers of the Hymn Society, Luther D. Reed, "Luther and Congregational Song" No. 12 (New York City: The Hymn Society of America, 1947), [p. 1].

<sup>19</sup>Dickinson, op. cit., p. 226.

<sup>20</sup>Bailey, op. cit., p. 314.

The lasting value of his hymnody comes from the fact that as time went on, all phases of the religious life found expression: the fighting spirit of the Reformation, the misery and penitence of the Thirty Years' War, the inward-looking mysticism of the eighteenth-century pietists, the outward-looking missionary enthusiasms of the Moravians. German hymnody became the most prolific in the world. Its complete output must be near 10,000.<sup>21</sup> The movement that was started during his time forged the way for hymn writers in the future. John Wesley was first influenced by the hymns of the Moravians and from out of this came the great store of English hymns. Today the world's heritage of hymnology is rich because of this beginning in the Reformation.

The Reformation taught the idea of the universal priesthood of believers and introduced the language of the people into public worship. It substituted a vernacular sermon and congregational singing for the Latin Mass and the chanting of priests and choirs.<sup>22</sup> Luther was not opposed to the liturgy of the mass, but he did not feel that they

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<sup>21</sup>Bailey, op. cit., p. 309.

<sup>22</sup>John Julian, A Dictionary of Hymnology (London: John Murray, 1892), p. 414.

could just translate the Latin Mass into German. If they were going to have a German mass then he felt that it would have to be distinctively German. It would, therefore, be necessary to write a German mass that would include the German type of music.<sup>23</sup> He didn't see anything wrong with retaining the order of the mass except where it conflicted with his beliefs. He rejected the parts of the mass that ran counter to his theology of the Lord's supper. "Luther's doctrine of justification takes from the mass the character of an act in itself pleasing to God, and allows it to exist only as a celebration in which a penitent congregation, through no merit of its own, receives divine grace."<sup>24</sup> Gradually the mass went through so many changes that it was doomed to decay.

The new conceptions of the relationship of man to God, which so altered the fundamental principle and the external forms of worship under the Lutheran movement, manifested themselves most strikingly in the mighty impetus given to congregational song. Luther set the national impulse free, and taught the people that in singing praise they were performing a service that was well pleasing to God and a necessary part of public communion with him. It was not simply that Luther charged the popular hymnody with the energy of his world-transforming doctrine,--he also gave it a dignity which it had never possessed before, certainly not since the apostolic age, as a part of

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<sup>23</sup>Nettl, op. cit., p. 75.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 68.

the official liturgic song of the Church. Both these facts gave the folk-hymn its wonderful proselyting power in the sixteenth century,--the latter gives it its importance in the history of church music.<sup>25</sup>

While Luther only composed thirty-seven hymns he made a great contribution to hymnology in that he encouraged others to write hymns and chorales, and to collect, edit and adapt fine church music. He insisted that hymns and music be taught in the schools. He required that all school teachers be able to sing.<sup>26</sup> In encouraging others to write he set down basic principles for them to follow and then let them have a free hand in their writing. These principles can be found in a letter that he wrote to George Spalatin.

. . . I would ask you, however, to avoid new words and the expressions of the court, so that the people may easily understand. Let the words be as simple as possible but at the same time pure and suitable; and see that the meaning be clear and as close as possible to that of the psalms. We must therefore use our own judgment, determine the original meaning, and translate it freely. . . .<sup>27</sup>

### III. LUTHER'S USE OF HYMNS

During the Reformation three conceptions of church music existed. The Calvinists, Zwinglians, and Anabaptists

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<sup>25</sup>Edward Dickinson, Music in the History of the Western Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902), pp. 242-43.

<sup>26</sup>Price, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>27</sup>Martin Luther, as quoted by Nettl, op. cit., pp.38-39.

were very hostile to music. Their indignation was aroused by the Catholic church ceremonial with its sumptuous pomp, its colorful choral brilliance, its palling ecclesiastical concerts, its overpowering incense swinging--all designed to dull reason and consciousness and to keep the faithful tense with dark mysterious emotions. The Lutheran conception came between these two extremes and regarded music as an expression of faith. To them music was a gift of God to be used as a vehicle of prayer and praise.<sup>28</sup>

The hymn became the musical foundation of the church service. Luther felt that it had great pedagogical significance, and decreed that children should in earliest youth be taught the elements of music and above all, of singing.<sup>29</sup> When new congregations were formed, Luther would help them organize after a common pattern, and established an order of worship in which the singing of hymns in German instead of Latin held an important place. In the Protestant services the central feature became preaching instead of the mass.<sup>30</sup>

For nearly three hundred years the people had not been accustomed to singing in church. When Luther first

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<sup>28</sup>Nettl, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>30</sup>Bailey, op. cit., p. 313.

introduced hymns in church the people were rather passive about them because they were unfamiliar with musical notes. However, Luther taught the hymns to the children and as they sang them in church they became the music teachers of the grown-ups.<sup>31</sup> The Lutheran hymn was written to carry a uniform thought and in order to get this thought across they sang the entire hymn as a response. The response would be carried on between the congregation and the choir.<sup>32</sup>

Luther's use of music served two vital functions. First, it restored the universal priesthood to the people and gave them an active part in the worship services. Secondly, it served as a means of teaching the doctrinal statements of the Reformation. The very fact that it recognized the believer as a priest undermined the underlying structure of the Roman Catholic Church. The people no longer needed a human priest to intercede for them for now they could commune with God directly. Luther believed that his opponents could not claim ignorance of the doctrine of the gospel because they had sung it.<sup>33</sup> Little by little the doctrines were assimilated by the people as they heard

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<sup>31</sup>Nettl. op. cit., pp. 82-83.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 92.

<sup>33</sup>Martin Luther, as quoted by Price, op. cit., [p. 1].

them preached and sung. The children were not only taught hymns in the church but also in the schools, and they in turn taught them to their parents. To know the hymns was part of their education.

#### IV. THE EFFECT PRODUCED BY LUTHER'S HYMNS

When the hymns were first printed they were just placed in the hands of the congregation for reading while the choir sang; since the congregation was not used to joining in the public service, and they could not at once adopt the new practice. It was around four or five years before Luther taught the people in his own parish church of Wittenburg to sing in church, but then the custom spread very swiftly.<sup>34</sup>

During the years when he was composing most of his hymns, four printers in Erfurt alone were entirely occupied in printing and publishing them. When his hymns began to take hold of the people they penetrated even into the places where his printed works were carefully excluded. Wandering students and peddlers carried them about the country distributing them as they went from place to place.<sup>35</sup> His hymns were contagious and as a result hymn writers sprang

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<sup>34</sup>Catherine Winkworth, Christian Singers of Germany ([n.p.]: Macmillan & Co. Pub., [n.d.]), p. 109.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

up all over Germany. They were writers that were filled with his spirit, and taking his hymns as models they kept the presses busy. At the time of Luther's death no less than sixty collections of hymns had been published.<sup>36</sup>

"The whole people," writes a Romanist of that day, "is singing itself into this Lutheran doctrine."<sup>37</sup> Another indignant Jesuit declared that "Luther's songs have damned more souls than all his books and speeches."<sup>38</sup> The editor of a German hymn-book published in 1565 said that he had no doubt that through one song of Luther, "Nun Freut Euch, Lieben Christen G'mein," many hundred Christians were brought to the faith who otherwise would not have heard of Luther.<sup>39</sup> The hymns carried such a tremendous effect that they even found their way into the Catholic Churches. These hymns carried the truths for which their souls had been thirsting, in language of extraordinary force, clothed in melodies which they had long known and loved.

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<sup>36</sup>Dickinson, op. cit., pp. 249-50.

<sup>37</sup>Winkworth, op. cit., p. 109.

<sup>38</sup>Dickinson, op. cit., pp. 255-56.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.



V. A STUDY OF THE DOCTRINAL TEACHINGS  
OF LUTHER'S HYMNS

Only four of Luther's hymns were original. The rest of his thirty-seven hymns had their origin in several different sources. The thing that characterized most of his hymns was the scriptural foundation. Luther required simplicity of language in hymns so that the meaning would be clear. As a result many of his hymns are mostly scripture that has been organized in simple poetic form.

The primary subject of his hymns was the doctrine of the God-head. He believed in the unity of the trinity.

Thou who art three in unity,  
True God from all eternity,  
The sun is fading from our sight,  
Shine thou on us with heavenly light.

Let God the Father be adored,  
And God the Son, the only Lord,  
And equal adoration be,  
Eternal Comforter, to thee.<sup>40</sup>

However, in most of his hymns he deals with the trinity in its separate offices. The greatest example of the doctrine of the trinity comes from a hymn based on the Nicene Creed. In the first verse of the hymn he sets forth the doctrine of the Father. The doctrines found in the verse are:

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<sup>40</sup>James F. Lambert, Luther's Hymns (Philadelphia: General Council Publication House, 1917), p. 140.

1. God was the maker of the earth and heaven.
2. God has given men the power to become his sons.
3. He takes care of his children in every phase of their lives.
4. He governs the entire universe.

We all believe in one true God,  
 Maker of the earth and heaven,  
 The Father who to us the power  
 To become his sons hath given.  
 He will us at all times nourish,  
 Soul and body, guard us, guide us,  
 'Mid all harms will keep and cherish,  
 That no ill shall ever betide us.  
 He watches o'er us day and night;  
 All things are governed by his might.

In the second verse of the hymn the doctrine of the Son is considered.

1. He has been with the Father from the beginning.
2. He is possessed of the same power and glory as the Father.
3. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and was born of the virgin Mary.
4. He becomes the Saviour and brother of all who believe on Him.
5. He was crucified for the sins of the world.
6. He rose from the grave.
7. Through his death and resurrection he has power to save.

And we believe in Jesus Christ,  
 Lord and Son of God confessed,  
 From everlasting days with God,

In like power and glory blessed.  
 By the Holy Ghost conceived,  
 Born of Mary, virgin mother,  
 That to lost men who believed  
 He should Saviour be and brother;  
 Was crucified, and from the grave,  
 Through God, is risen, strong to save.

In the last verse of the hymn he dealt with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

1. He reigns with the Son and Father.
2. He is the Comforter.
3. He witnesses to the heart of the believer that they have been saved.

We in the Holy Ghost believe,  
 Who with Son and Father reigneth,  
 One true God, He, the Comforter,  
 Feeble souls with gifts sustaineth.  
 All his saints, in every nation,  
 With one heart this faith receiving,  
 From all sin obtain salvation,  
 From the dust of death reviving.  
 These sorrows past, there waits in store  
 For us, the life evermore.<sup>41</sup>

A large section of his hymns are devoted to the life and ministry of Christ. They are primarily concerned with the birth and resurrection of Christ. He stresses strongly the thought that salvation comes to man as a result of Christ's vicarious death on the cross. He often refers to Christ as the Paschal lamb that was sacrificed. Another

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 83.

thing that he emphasized very strongly was the virgin birth of Christ.

While the hymn "Christ lag in Todesbanden," is second only to his unequalled "Ein feste Burg," the hymn "Nun komm der Heiden Heiland" will be quoted because it shows Luther's concept of the entire ministry of Christ. The other hymn is an Easter hymn showing the death and resurrection of Christ. In the study of the hymn, "Nun komm der Heiden Heiland," the following doctrines are set forth.

1. The virgin birth was ordained of God.
2. Christ was not the offspring of flesh and blood but was conceived of the Holy Spirit.
3. He was born of the virgin Mary.
4. God made his earthly dwelling place in a human body.
5. Christ left heaven to come and live and dwell with men.
6. He was crucified, dead, and buried.
7. He rose from the dead.
8. He returned to the Father from whence he came.
9. He descended into hell.
10. He ascended to God's throne.
11. As a result of this he has conquered sin for the human race.
12. Because he conquered sin man can also be victorious through Jesus Christ.

Saviour of the heathen, known  
 As the promised virgin's Son;  
 Come thou wonder of the earth,  
 God ordained thee such a birth.

Not of flesh and blood the Son,  
 Offspring of the Holy One,  
 Born of Mary ever-blest,  
 God in flesh is manifest.

Cherished is the Holy Child  
 By the mother undefiled;  
 In the virgin, full of grace,  
 God has made his dwelling-place.

Lo! he comes! the Lord of all  
 Leaves his bright and royal hall;  
 God and man, with giant force,  
 Hastening to run his course.

To the Father whence he came  
 He returns with brighter fame;  
 Down to hell he goes alone,  
 Then ascends to God's high throne.

Thou, the Father's equal, win  
 Victory in the flesh o'er sin;  
 So shall man, though weak and frail  
 By the indwelling God prevail.<sup>42</sup>

Many of the hymns were forged in the battle for existence. An existence by which they would be able to teach the doctrine of justification by faith. The battle was so great at times that it almost seemed to them that they were wrestling with the devil and the powers of hell. Even in their hymns they called on God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit to help them defeat the powers of the enemy. From out of this atmosphere came one of the greatest hymns

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<sup>42</sup>Lambert, op. cit., pp. 85-86.

of all Christendom, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God." It has been said of this hymn that it was the "Marsailles" of the Reformation for through the power generated in it they went on to win the battle.<sup>43</sup> As this hymn so vividly portrays, they knew that their strength rested in the God-head and by trusting in God they would be victorious. They rested in the fact that God had power over Satan and by just speaking one word he would be defeated. The battle was rough then, but they were confident that God's kingdom would endure forever.

A mighty fortress is our God,  
 A bulwark never failing;  
 Our helper He, amid the flood  
 Of mortal ills prevailing:  
 For still our ancient foe  
 Doth seek to work us woe;  
 His craft and power are great,  
 And, armed with cruel hate,  
 On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide,  
 Our striving would be losing;  
 Were not the right Man on our side,  
 The Man of God's own choosing;  
 Dost ask who that may be?  
 Christ Jesus, it is He;  
 Lord Sabaoth, His name,  
 From age to age the same,  
 And He must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled,  
 Should threaten to undo us,  
 We will not fear, for God hath willed  
 His truth to triumph through us:  
 The Prince of Darkness grim

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<sup>43</sup>Heine, as quoted by Bailey, op. cit., p. 316.

We tremble not for him;  
 His rage we can endure,  
 For, lo, his doom is sure,  
 One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly powers,  
 No thanks to them, abideth;  
 The Spirit and the gifts are ours  
 Through Him who with us sideth;  
 Let goods and kindred go,  
 The mortal life also;  
 The body they may kill:  
 God's truth abideth still,  
 His kingdom is forever.<sup>44</sup>

The hymn, "Nun Freut Euch, Lieben Christen G'mein," was said to have been instrumental in winning hundreds to the Lord that would never have heard of Martin Luther. This hymn was actually a personal testimony of Martin Luther's life; and as one reads it the way of salvation is clearly seen. Many parts of it almost become a personal testimony to every Christian. He tells how he was seeking for God and when God found him He had compassion on him. God told him that it was not necessary for him to wrestle for salvation, but to believe in the provisions that Christ's death and resurrection provided for all mankind. God did have mercy on his soul and he found the peace that he had sought for so long. After a careful study of the teachings of this hymn

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<sup>44</sup>Hymns of the Living Faith, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" (Winona Lake, Ind.: Light and Life Press, 1951), no. 415.

it is little wonder that thousands were converted through  
its influence.

Dear Christians, one and all rejoice,  
With exultation springing,  
And with united heart and voice  
And holy rapture singing,  
Proclaim the wonders God hath done,  
How his right arm the victory won;  
Right dearly it hath cost him.

Fast bound in Satan's chains I lay,  
Death brooded darkly o'er me;  
Sin was my torment night and day,  
Therein my mother bore me,  
Deeper and deeper still I fell,  
Life was become a living hell,  
So firmly sin possessed me.

My good works could avail me naught,  
For they with sin were stained;  
Free-will against God's judgment fought,  
And dead to good remained.  
Grief drove me to despair, and I  
Had nothing left me but to die,  
To hell I fast was sinking.

God saw, in his eternal grace,  
My sorrow out of measure;  
He thought upon his tenderness--  
To have was his good pleasure.  
He turned to me a Father's heart--  
Not small the cost--to heal my smart  
He gave his best and dearest.

He spake to his beloved Son:  
'Tis time to take compassion;  
Then go, bright jewel of my crown,  
And bring to man salvation;  
From sin and sorrow set him free,  
Slay bitter death for him, that he  
May live with thee forever.



The Son delighted to obey,  
 And born of Virgin mother,  
 Awhile on this low earth did stay  
 That he might be my brother.  
 His mighty power he hidden bore,  
 A servant's form like mine he wore,  
 To bind the devil captive.

To me he spake; cling fast to me,  
 Thou'lt win a triumph worthy;  
 I wholly give myself for thee;  
 I strive and wrestle for thee;  
 For I am thine, thou mine also;  
 And where I am thou art. The foe  
 Shall never more divide us.

For he shall shed my precious blood,  
 Me of my life bereaving;  
 All this I suffer for thy good;  
 Be steadfast and believing.  
 My life from death the day shall win,  
 My righteousness shall bear thy sin,  
 So art thou blest forever.

Now to my Father I depart,  
 From earth to heaven ascending;  
 Thence heavenly wisdom to impart,  
 The Holy Spirit sending.  
 He shall in trouble comfort thee,  
 Teach thee to know and follow me.  
 And to the truth conduct thee.

What I have done and taught, do thou  
 To do and teach endeavor;  
 So shall my kingdom flourish now,  
 And God be praised forever.  
 Take heed lest men with base alloy  
 The heavenly treasure should destroy.  
 This counsel I bequeath thee.<sup>45</sup>

Although quotes will not be made, it will be found in his hymns that he attacks two doctrines of the Roman Catholic

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<sup>45</sup>Lambert, op. cit., pp. 75-76.

Church, namely, purgatory and the traditions of the church that are accepted in place of the Word of God. He showed that the belief in purgatory is scripturally wrong and that a person can have their sins forgiven now and can have hope of eternity in heaven. He placed the Bible in its rightful place above tradition. He believed that every man should study it for himself and let God speak to him through His Holy Scriptures.

Martin Luther used the Word of God as the frame work of several of his hymns. Two outstanding illustrations were his hymns on the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer. In each verse a commandment was given and then an explanation of how it applied in their daily living. He followed this same pattern with the Lord's Prayer.

Although Martin Luther was not the originator of congregational singing he was largely responsible for the reviving and promotion of it during the Reformation. He felt that it should be more than just an outlet of emotion for the people, but that it should be an expression of the heart as they worshipped God. He recognized in addition to giving the people an active part in the worship services and thus restoring the universal priesthood of man that it had tremendous possibilities as a teaching agent. To him it was to serve an educational ministry. It was to be used as a

means of educating the people in the doctrines of the Reformation. He held to the idea that their opponents could not claim ignorance as to their doctrines because they had preached it, painted it, and sung it to them.<sup>46</sup> But all the time they were doing it their doctrinal hymns were reaping results; and men and women were being won not only to the Lutheran Church but to the Lord Jesus Christ. This was Luther's purpose in his ministry and his hymns to tell the people that, "the just shall live by faith."<sup>47</sup> The people experienced this, and as a result one of the greatest religious movements that history has known was under way. This movement is known today as the Reformation.

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<sup>46</sup>Martin Luther, as quoted by Price, op. cit., [p. 1].

<sup>47</sup>Romans 1:17.

## CHAPTER III

### JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY

Even though there was a lapse of two hundred years between the Luther and Wesley revivals, and two different countries were represented there were several things found common in these revivals. Both Martin Luther and the Wesleys were members of the clergy with no intention of withdrawing from their church and starting another denomination. Both the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England were in a state of apostasy and these men had a desire to see their churches revived. In both churches the singing had been taken away from the people and during these revivals congregational singing was returned to the people.

#### I. FACTORS INFLUENCING JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY

Family life. One of the things that made a deep impression upon John was his narrow escape with death at the age of six. He came so close to being consumed by the flames when the rectory was set on fire that this experience remained very vivid to him during his entire life.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>John Wesley, Wesleyana: A Complete System of Wesleyan Theology (New York: Carlton & Porter, [1840]), p. II.

The parents of John and Charles played a vital part in molding their character. Mrs. Wesley was unquestionably the central figure in the family. However, their father was responsible for their background in the field of poetry. Not only did John and Charles write poetry but their father, a brother, and a sister were also poets.

. . . Though the admirable wife and mother was unquestionably the central figure of the group, and perhaps the ruling spirit of the household, yet from the stand-point of this work, the father holds the more prominent place, because it was he and not Mrs. Wesley who both set the example of writing poetry himself, and transmitted the taste to his children. To him also, no less than to Mrs. Wesley, may be traced some of the characteristics which are more or less common to all the family. The chief of these characteristics were clear, vigorous, common-sense, a high standard of faith and morals, an acuteness of intellect sharpened to the finest possible point by education, a certain manliness and robustness of character, which is as conspicuous in the females as in the males, and an outspokenness and even brusqueness of manner which, did we not know the affectionate relationship which always subsisted between all the members, we might have expected to have led to ruptures between them. . . .<sup>2</sup>

Moravian Influence. In October 1735, John and Charles along with Mr. Benjamin Ingham left London for the colony of Georgia. As John said in his Journal, "Our end in leaving our native country was not to avoid want, nor to gain

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<sup>2</sup>John Julian, A Dictionary of Hymnology (London: John Murray, 1892), p. 1255.

the dung or dross of riches or honour; but simply this,--to save our souls; to live wholly to the glory of God."<sup>3</sup> On board the ship were a group of Moravians. In order to converse with them John began to learn German. Through their contacts with these Moravians a series of circumstances began that brought about an entire change in their lives. The Moravians' calmness and peace in God during the very stormy crossing greatly impressed John. On Sunday the twenty-fifth he relates an incident that happened during their third storm.

At seven I went to the Germans. I had long before observed the great seriousness of their behaviour. Of their humility they had given a continual proof, by performing those servile offices for the other passengers, which none of the English would undertake; for which they desired, and would receive no pay, saying, "it was good for their proud hearts," and "their loving Saviour had done more for them." And every day had given them occasion of showing a meekness which no injury could move. If they were pushed, struck, or was thrown down, they rose again and went away; but no complaint was found in their mouth. There was now an opportunity of trying whether they were delivered from the spirit of fear, as well as from that of pride, anger, and revenge. In the midst of the psalm wherewith their service began, the sea broke over, split the mainsail in pieces, covered the ship, and poured in between the decks, as if the great deep had already swallowed us up. A terrible screaming began among the English. The Germans calmly sung on. I asked one of them afterwards, "Was you not afraid?" He answered,

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<sup>3</sup>Nehemiah Curnock (ed.), John Wesley's Journal (New York: The Philosophical Library Inc., 1951), p. 7.

"I thank God, no." I asked, "But were not your women and children afraid?" He replied mildly, "No; our women and children are not afraid to die."<sup>4</sup>

John had begun the study of their hymns earlier, but as a result of their calmness during the storm his interest in their hymns was greatly intensified. He saw that through their hymns they were able to draw comfort and help in time of need. He began to translate their hymns and later in Georgia introduced them into his services for the English societies.<sup>5</sup> The hymns took such a strong grip upon his heart and mind that a great deal of his time in Georgia was spent in studying them. However, his fervor in putting them into use in the services in Savannah and Frederica did not meet with approval; and as a result, when the list of grievances were drawn up against him, his use of their hymns was on the list.

. . . In the list of grievances against Wesley presented by the Grand Jury for Savannah in August, 1737, the first was his alterations of the authorized metrical psalms, and the second his "introducing into the church and service at the Altar

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>5</sup>Frederick John Gillman, The Evolution of the English Hymn (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1927), p. 215.

compositions of psalms and hymns not inspected or authorized by any proper judicature."<sup>6</sup>

They had gone to America for the purpose of saving their souls but both of them returned to England defeated in their souls and in their ministry. John tells in his journal that he had not found the peace of soul that he hoped he would find in America.

"I went to America, to convert the Indians; but oh! who shall convert me? who, what is he that will deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief? I have a fair summer religion. I can talk well; nay, and believe myself, while no danger is near; but let death look me in the face, and my spirit is troubled."<sup>7</sup>

They returned to England after two years absence defeated for how could they convert the Indians for they themselves had not been converted. After their return to England they again came into contact with the Moravians and as a result they both were converted. Charles' conversion came during a long period of illness. During his illness Peter Böhler made repeated visits to his sick-bed where Charles was earnestly seeking peace of soul. On Whitsunday,

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<sup>6</sup>John Wesley's Journal, as quoted by Louis F. Benson, The English Hymn Its Development and Use in Worship (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1915), pp. 225-26.

<sup>7</sup>Curnock, op. cit., p. 35.



May 21, 1738, Charles was converted.<sup>8</sup> Peter Böhler also had great influence over John and through him John began to attend some of the Moravian services. It was during one of their services on the following Wednesday, May 24, 1738, that John was converted. John describes his conversion in his journal.

In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me, that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.<sup>9</sup>

Of all the influences on their life their conversion was the greatest, for it meant not only a new beginning spiritually for them but for thousands throughout England. It was the beginning of a new type of ministry for them. The doors of the Church of England were closed to them and they had to go to the fields to preach the gospel to the people. It also marked the beginning of their hymnology.

The "conversion" of Charles released within him his gift of song. On the very next day he wrote his first hymn, "Where shall my wandering soul begin."

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<sup>8</sup>Louis F. Benson, The English Hymn Its Development and Use in Worship (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1915), p. 228.

<sup>9</sup>Curnock, op. cit., p. 51.

Thereafter hardly a day or an experience passed without its crystallization into verse. Charles composed in his study, his garden, on horseback--anywhere. The result, 6500 hymns on hundreds of Scripture texts and on every conceivable phase of Christian experience and Methodist theology. . . .<sup>10</sup>

Condition of the country and church. "In the fifty years preceding the rise of the Wesleys and Whitefield, England reached its lowest pitch of moral degradation."<sup>11</sup> The Church of England and the country were in a state of great apostasy. The higher offices of the Church were all for sale. Many rectors held several parishes, drawing from each of them a good salary and giving little in return. They would hire a curate to look after the duties of each parish paying him very little. John and Charles' father was a rector in one of the churches and received so little that he spent several months in prison because he was in debt. Among the curses of the land were harlotry, drunkenness, ignorance, and illiteracy. During the eighteenth century there was a high rate of death among the children. It was into this picture that the Wesleys came. "Nevertheless, the Established Church of their day would have none

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<sup>10</sup>Albert Edward Bailey, The Gospel in Hymns (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), p. 84.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 76.

of them. All these men were forbidden to preach in any church; their "enthusiasm" was condemned as an excitation of the devil."<sup>12</sup>

The condition of England during the opening decades of the eighteenth century has often been painted in dark colours by our national historians. The moral temperature was depressed. There were hardly any schools. Politics were corrupt. Literature was unclean. Sanitation was neglected. Intemperance was a fashionable weakness, and men were known to blush for being suspected of chastity. The prisons were full and unspeakably loathsome. Thousands attended the frequent public execution. Highway men infested the country roads. Labour was regarded with starvation wages. Christian men carried on a trade in slaves. As for religion, Green estimates that it was never at a lower ebb. Puritanism had spent its force, and no dynamic faith possessed the souls of men. Nonconformity, worn out by its long struggle for existence, had lost its virility. Inside the churches fervour was frowned upon, and the preaching was frigid, formal and argumentative.<sup>13</sup>

## II. THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE WESLEYAN HYMNOLOGY

It is not sufficiently realized, though it will be evident to the reader, that John Wesley and not Charles stands at the fountain-head of Methodist hymnody. He was the first in the field, and his directing and controlling hand was never withdrawn. He saw, more clearly than any man since Luther, the propangandist value of song as an aid to the evangelist. The acquaintance which he had made in Georgia with the hymnody of the Moravians quickened

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>13</sup>Frederick John Gillman, The Evolution of the English Hymn (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1927), pp. 214-15.

his desire to know more of them, and this was accentuated by the friendship which, on his return home, he formed with Peter Böhler. . . .<sup>14</sup>

John's contribution to hymnology falls into four categories: (1) translating, (2) editing, (3) organizing, and (4) publishing hymns.<sup>15</sup> As was stated by Gillman, John was first to enter the field of hymnology. It cannot be determined exactly what John's contribution was to the large number of hymns that were written because most of them just list the author's name as Wesley. It is felt that John did write some hymns, but his bigger contribution came from the translations of the German hymns that he had learned from the Moravians. His biggest contribution came through his critical oversight of the hymns that Charles wrote. After editing and organizing Charles' hymns he would then publish them.<sup>16</sup> Their contribution to hymnology comprised over 6,500 hymns. Charles wrote hymns constantly and it is little wonder that he needed someone to edit and organize his hymns.

Through the great number of hymns that Charles wrote the store of English hymns was greatly enriched. Not only

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<sup>14</sup>ibid., pp. 217-18.

<sup>15</sup>Bailey, op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>16</sup>Gillman, op. cit., p. 219.

was there a numerical contribution, but the ideal of the English hymns was modified. There was a new evangelistic note in their hymns. "They aimed to bring the unchurched and unsaved within the sound of the gospel, and to use song as a means of his conversion and upbuilding."<sup>17</sup> Their hymns embodied the idea of Christian experience. They lifted the level of hymnology giving to the church a churchly or Liturgical Hymnody. They also set up a new standard in hymnody on its literary side. "Their hymns are in line with the earlier devotional poets rather than with Watts. They controverted Watts' canon of hymn writing and laid down a new one,--a hymn should be a poem."<sup>18</sup> Watts insisted that a hymn be stripped of any poetic suggestiveness while the Wesleys insisted that hymns be poems. In addition to a real message they wanted the hymn to have the beauty and inspiration of poetry.<sup>19</sup>

A summary of the Methodist theology. "Charles Wesley's hymns are a textbook of Methodist theology. . . ." <sup>20</sup> During the time of the Wesleys the people of England followed the

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<sup>17</sup>Renson, op. cit., p. 248.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 252.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., pp. 247-53.

<sup>20</sup>Bailey, op. cit., p. 88.

Calvinistic theology. The Wesleys rejected this theology and followed Arminius. The main point of difference between these two theologians was the matter of "election." Isaac Watts followed Calvin believing that God had chosen certain men to be saved and others were doomed to be lost and there was nothing that they could do about it. The Wesleys rejected this idea and believed that man is free and can make a choice whether he will be lost or saved. They believed that Christ died for the sins of everyone and in order to be saved one must accept the provision that has been made for him by Christ.<sup>21</sup> This theological controversy reached into both the hymns of Watts and Wesley. Wesley's hymns revealed the love of God to man and he used them to proclaim the power of Christ to save to the uttermost. Watts emphasized the eternal decrees for the saved and the unsaved. "Watts is awed into reverence by the cross of Christ; Wesley feels for the Saviour a warm and personal love."<sup>22</sup> Even though they had this controversy they still had a great appreciation for some of the hymns that were written by each other. Wesley

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>22</sup>Benjamin Brawley, History of the English Hymn (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1932), p. 97.

even used some of Watts' hymns in his hymnal. As Rattenbury stated: . . . The Methodist Revival was needed even to popularize Dr. Watts. . . .<sup>23</sup>

The hymns that the Wesleys wrote and used were the beliefs of the Methodist revival. They were almost the constitution and discipline of this new movement.

It is evident that a place must be given to the Wesleyan hymnody in the history of religion itself. The Wesleys inaugurated a great spiritual revival; and their hymns did as much as any human agency to kindle and replenish its fervor. They conducted the propaganda of a new theology; we can scan Wesley's sermons to discover its contents, but in the hymns it was sung by multitudes; and of the two media of its dissemination, the song was probably the more effective. John Wesley led an ecclesiastical revolt, and, failing to conquer his own Church, established a new one of phenomenal proportions; the hymns prefigured the constitution of the new Church and formed the manual of its spiritual discipline. The Wesleyan Hymns are thus deeply written into the religious history of English-speaking peoples. We might sum up the Wesleys' work in Hymnody by saying that they perceived the spiritual possibilities of hymns and of hymn singing, and that they realized them, apparently to the full.<sup>24</sup>

Hymn tracts. In order that the hymns might become a part of the lives of the people it was necessary for them to be circulated among the people. Charles Wesley wrote his

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<sup>23</sup>Ernest J. Rattenbury, The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns (London: The Epworth Press, 1949), p. 33.

<sup>24</sup>Louis F. Benson, The English Hymn Its Development and Use in Worship (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1915), p. 244.

hymns out of his own experiences, the experiences of the people, and their needs. In the beginning of this revival they did not have a hymnal; therefore, they printed hymn tracts that would contain hymns along a certain theme such as: "Hymns for Times of Trouble and Persecution," "Thanksgiving, graces, the Trinity, the "Nativity" of Christ, his "Resurrection," "Ascension Day," "Whitsunday," "New-Year's Day," and "Watchnights."<sup>25</sup> Two things had to be taken into consideration in their circulation. First, the cost of the tract, and secondly, they had to be printed quickly so they could be circulated rapidly. These hymn tracts were the beginning of the Methodist hymnal which was published later. The tracts were written for the people and as a result played a considerable part in the revival.<sup>26</sup>

The lasting value of their hymns came through the fact that the hymns became an instrument for fixing the doctrines of the revival into the minds and hearts of the people. They weren't great formal theological documents, but heart-felt songs of personally experienced doctrine and aspirations.<sup>27</sup> The people not only heard the sermons of the

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<sup>25</sup>David Creamer, Methodist Hymnology: Comprehending Notices of the Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley (New York: Published for the author, 200 Mulberry-street, Joseph Longking, Printing, 1848), pp. 131-42.

<sup>26</sup>Benson, op. cit., p. 234.

<sup>27</sup>Rattenbury, op. cit., p. 60.



evangelists but left the meetings with a hymn on their lips and a song in their heart. ". . . The democratic note of the evangelist was put on the lips of thousands who for the first time had a reason for living and a God who in Christ was concerned for the least of them."<sup>28</sup>

The Industrial Revolution. In section one of this chapter, the corruptness of the country and church at the time of the Wesleys was described. Into this apostasy John and Charles Wesley took the message of salvation to the people and as a result saved England from a bloody revolution that would have come to the country even as it came to France in order that the lower classes might be liberated.

Into such a world, from the pure atmosphere of Epworth parsonage, John and Charles Wesley came with cleansing fire, and the religious Revival which they initiated, perhaps more than any other factor, saved the soul of England. The impact of the Revival, both directly and indirectly, upon our national life was immensely powerful. The Country was hurrying on to one of the most critical periods in its history, and the shadows of the approaching industrial revolution were already darkening the people's life. The Revival furnished the nation with a moral backbone and a religious faith which enabled it to meet the crisis without enduring the agonies that overtook France. But more, it so raised the moral temperature of the nation that a whole range of reforms became possible. It 'gave the first impulse to our popular

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<sup>28</sup>James Rawlings Sydnor (ed.), The Papers of the Hymn Society, Alfred Burton Haas, "Charles Wesley" No. 22 (New York City: The Hymn Society of America, 1957), p. 7.

education'; it hastened on sanitary reform, poor law reform, prison reform, the care of the sick, and the abolition of slavery. 'For in the light of the new humanity, poverty, vagrancy, disease and vice had to be fought rather than endured.' As for the Churches, it pulled many of them out of their stagnation; but it went beyond them, out beyond highways and hedges, the market-places and village greens, the prisons, and even Tyburn itself, with a boundless enthusiasm and an illimitable love for men. And at the heart of it all was a hymn book.<sup>29</sup>

### III. THE EFFECT PRODUCED BY WESLEYS' HYMNS

As was shown earlier one of the great contributions of their hymnology came from the fact that the hymns became a part of the people's lives. The hymns were on their lips and in their hearts. Congregational singing had been taken away from the people and no longer was there hearty singing by the whole congregation. Through the singing during the worship service a mighty power was released because they sang with an inspiration of conviction. ". . . As was said of the early Lutheran choral, so it might be said of the Methodist hymns, that they won more souls than even the preaching of the evangelists. . . ." <sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Gillman, op. cit., pp. 214-15.

<sup>30</sup>Edward Dickinson, Music in the History of the Western Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902), p. 379.

Again and again the crowds of listeners, in a fervour of emotion, "burst out, as with one consent, into loud praise and thanksgiving," until it almost seemed that heaven had come down to earth. The unique suitability of many of the hymns for the open-air gatherings which formed so conspicuous a feature of the Revival has often been remarked upon. The crowds were swayed by the passionate words of the preacher; and the exuberance, the lilt, the simple directness of the "hymns of invitation" exactly suited their need. . . .<sup>31</sup>

Great care was exercised in the introduction of new hymns. As new hymns were written many of them were taught to the congregations before they were issued in printed form. The teaching method that many employed was to have the leader first read the whole hymn after which he would re-read the first stanza and then sing it. He would re-read the first two lines and then have the congregation sing them. By using this method he would teach them the first two stanzas and in later meetings would teach them the rest of the hymn. They were further encouraged to learn the hymn because quite often the minister would use it as a basis for his sermon.<sup>32</sup>

Wesley also issued a tune book for them to follow. He included directions for singing in this book which were to be observed carefully in order that this part of Divine

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<sup>31</sup>Gillman, op. cit., pp. 225-26.

<sup>32</sup>Bailey, op. cit., p. 86.

worship might be the more acceptable to God, as well as more profitable to singer and hearer. The seven rules that he listed were: learn these tunes before any others; sing them exactly as printed; sing all of them; sing lustily; sing modestly; sing in time; above all sing spiritually, with an eye to God in every word.<sup>33</sup> Even though Wesley was specific in how the hymns were to be sung it did not hinder their use, but rather encouraged their use and made them more meaningful to the people.

There was a marked degree of spontaneity in their singing. At first there was a lot of physical exuberance in their singing which caused some confusion. Wesley instructed his preachers to interrupt the noisy hymns and ask the congregation:--"Now do you know what you said last? Did it suit your case? Did you sing it as to God, with the spirit and understanding also?"<sup>34</sup> Not only did Wesley want the people to enter into the singing but he wanted them to understand and know what they were singing.

Everywhere voices were raised in jubilant song. The people sang in the churches, their homes, founderies, outside of the pubs, while worshipping, working, and at play.

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<sup>33</sup>Renson, op. cit., p. 241.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., pp. 241-42.

. . . All because Charles Wesley, building on the sure foundations of Isaac Watts, changed the singing habits of a nation, led them across Mr. Watts' bridge where they surveyed that wondrous cross and with a thousand tongues sang their great Redeemer's praise.<sup>35</sup>

They sang the hymns and responded to them because they met their needs. John makes it evident in his journal that when he passed through a town that he would pick out hymns that were most suitable to the people's condition.<sup>36</sup>

Even though the masses accepted their hymns they suffered because the established church would not make them a part of their worship. Watts was accepted, seen, and respected by all, but the Wesleys were regarded as schismatics and ranters by the churchmen. To the churchmen their hymns were a mere vehicle of Methodist error and, therefore, they would not permit their use. As a result it took a long time for them to permeate into the established churches.<sup>37</sup>

#### IV. SOURCES OF THE HYMNS

It has been said that John Wesley called himself a man of one book, but actually he read many. However, with Charles it was different for after he left the university

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<sup>35</sup>Sydnor, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>36</sup>Mabel Richmond Brailsford, A Tale of Two Brothers John and Charles Wesley (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 148.

<sup>37</sup>Enson, op. cit., p. 258.

it is thought that he read few except for his Bible. He literally lived and spoke the Word of God. Both his poetry and his prose were saturated with the Holy Scriptures. The Bible was one of the main sources of material for his hymns.

. . . Charles Wesley painted pictures with Scripture allusions and phrases and images as another weaves with wool. But he did it as a poet does. The Scripture allusions and phrases were not a mere agglomeration, but a patterned design. His pattern was always evangelical. . . .<sup>38</sup>

It is almost impossible to have a real appreciation of Charles Wesley's hymns unless one relates them to the events that caused him to write them. They are actually a Pilgrim's Progress in verse. They come out of the events of the revival and express the experiences of Charles Wesley and the people with whom he came in contact. "They trace the religious life of every man as he travels from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City."<sup>39</sup> They express the spiritual life of a man: his hopes and fears, his aspirations and affections, his failures and victories.<sup>40</sup> His hymns are an expression of the heart.

His hymns were both forged and sung in the furnace of persecution that came as a result of the revival. Both Watts

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<sup>38</sup>Ernest J. Rattenbury, The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns (London: The Epworth Press, 1949), p.49.

<sup>39</sup>Frederick John Gillman, The Evolution of the English Hymn (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1927), p. 219.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

and his hymns were accepted and respected but the Wesleys were not. Wesleys' hymns were not written in the seclusion and security of a pastorate but on the firing line of a mighty revival. They spoke of the conviction of sin, of the physical and moral peril, of the fightings without and fears within. But more than this they spoke of a triumphant victory through Jesus Christ.<sup>41</sup>

. . . The theology of Charles Wesley cannot be properly understood apart from his life and experience. His inner life is best disclosed, indeed only truly disclosed, by the hymns which he wrote so constantly that they have been called his journal intime.<sup>42</sup>

In compiling the Methodist hymnal, John exercised authority as to which hymns would be included. Most of the hymns included in the hymnals were ones that Charles wrote. Also included in the hymnal were hymns that John translated from the German. As was stated previously, even though Watts and the Wesleys had theological controversies they still had a great appreciation for each others hymns. John included many of Watts' hymns in his hymnal for use in the Methodist congregations.<sup>43</sup>

In looking at the Lutheran revival and the Wesleyan revival a contrast can be seen. Martin Luther was the

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<sup>41</sup>Brailsford, op. cit., pp. 150-51.

<sup>42</sup>Rattenbury, op. cit., p. 88.

<sup>43</sup>Creamer, op. cit., p. 158.

author of some hymns, but strongly urged others to write also. John Wesley in contrast primarily advocated the use of Charles' hymns.

#### V. PURPOSE OF THEIR HYMNAL

From the first John considered their hymns as doctrinal documents of the Methodists. He not only refers to this in the prefaces to their hymnals but in his treatises and sermons.<sup>44</sup> In the preface to his hymnal John states the purpose for the hymnal.

. . . In what other publication of the kind have you so distinct and full an account of scriptural Christianity? such a declaration of the heights and depths of religion, speculative and practical? so strong cautions against the most plausible errors; particularly those that are now prevalent? and so clear directions for making your calling and election sure; for perfecting holiness in the fear of God?<sup>45</sup>

This hymn book was written for the purpose of giving the people a complete manual of religious instruction.<sup>46</sup> The table of contents shows at a glance what he is trying to teach the people through the hymns.

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<sup>44</sup>Rattenbury, op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>45</sup>John Wesley, A Collection of Hymns, for the Use of the People Called Methodists (London: John Mason, [1843]), p. 4.

<sup>46</sup>Albert Edward Bailey, The Gospel in Hymns (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), p. 84.



## PART FIRST

- SECTION I. Exhorting Sinners to return to God  
 II. Describing, 1. The Pleasantness of Religion  
                   2. The Goodness of God  
                   3. Death  
                   4. Judgment  
                   5. Heaven  
                   6. Hell  
 III. Praying for a Blessing

## PART SECOND

- SECTION I. Describing Formal Religion  
 II. Inward Religion

## PART THIRD

- SECTION I. Praying for Repentance  
 II. For Mourners convinced of Sin  
 III. For Persons convinced of Backsliding  
 IV. For Backsliders recovered

## PART FOURTH

- SECTION I. For Believers Rejoicing  
 II. Fighting  
 III. Praying  
 IV. Watching  
 V. Working  
 VI. Suffering  
 VII. Seeking for full Redemption  
 VIII. Saved  
 IX. Interceding for the World

## PART FIFTH

- SECTION I. For the Society Meeting  
 II. Giving Thanks  
 III. Praying  
 IV. Parting<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Wesley, A Collection of Hymns, op. cit., p. 6.

VI. A STUDY OF THE DOCTRINAL TEACHINGS  
OF THEIR HYMNS

Sin and Salvation. The exhortation to sinners to return to God was one of the main themes of the revival messages. John and Charles had received forgiveness of sins and they were eager for others to hear of it and to experience it. In his first hymn in the hymnal he breaks forth with a prayer that he might be able to proclaim this message.

O For a thousand tongues to sing  
My great Redeemer's praise!  
The glories of my God and King,  
The triumphs of his grace!

My gracious Master, and my God,  
Assist me to proclaim,  
To spread through all the earth abroad  
The honours of thy Name.

From there he goes on to tell the listener what Jesus can do in their life.

Jesus! the Name that charms our fears,  
That bids our sorrows cease;  
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,  
'Tis life, and health, and peace.

He breaks the power of cancell'd sin,  
He sets the prisoner free;  
His blood can make the foulest clean  
His blood avail'd for me.

He speaks,--and listening to his voice,  
New life the dead receive;  
The mournful, broken hearts rejoice;  
The humble poor believe.

Hear him, ye deaf; his praise, ye dumb,  
Your loosen'd tongues employ;  
Ye blind, behold your Saviour come,  
And leap, ye lame, for joy.

In the next two verses he tells the sinner how they can be converted. They must first look to Jesus and then by faith they can be justified. He tells them that their sins will be laid on Jesus who became an offering for their sins by dying on the cross.

Look unto him, ye nations; own  
Your God, ye fallen race;  
Look, and be saved through faith alone.  
Be justified by grace.

See all your sins on Jesus laid;  
The Lamb of God was slain:  
His soul was once an offering made  
For every soul of man.

In the final verses of this hymn he closes with another call to the sinner urging them to awake from their sleep and come to Christ. When they do this they will receive forgiveness of sins and a present and future heaven.

Awake from guilty nature's sleep,  
And Christ shall give you light,  
Cast all your sins into the deep,  
And wash the Aethiop white.

With me, your chief, ye than shall know,  
Shall feel, your sins forgiven;  
Anticipate your heaven below,  
And own that love is heaven.<sup>48</sup>

In this one hymn that is representative of this section of the hymnal the following doctrines are found:

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid., pp. 7-8.

1. Every Christian is to be a witness to the unsaved about Christ's saving power.
2. Jesus has power over sin.
3. Through the blood of Jesus Christ everyone can be saved.
4. The sinner is saved through faith.
5. Jesus bore the sins of the world.
6. Jesus died for the sins of the world.
7. It was necessary for Jesus to die only once for the sins of the world.
8. A person's sins can be forgiven.
9. He can know that his sins are forgiven.
10. Even while living here on earth a Christian can look forward to a home in heaven.

Under the section on Methodist theology it was noted that one of the controversies faced by Wesley was on the matter of election. Wesley felt that salvation was for everyone and that it was free to all. This doctrinal view is pointed out even stronger in the hymn "Come, sinners, to the Gospel Feast." He emphasizes it so much that he uses capital letters and italics to get the thought across. To illustrate, verses one, two, eight, and nine will be quoted.

Come sinners, to the gospel feast;  
Let every soul be *Jesu's* guest;  
Ye need not one be left behind,  
For God hath bidden all mankind.

Sent by my Lord, on you I call;  
 The invitation is to ALL;  
 Come, all the world; come, sinner, thou;  
 All things in Christ are ready now.

See him set forth before your eyes,  
 That precious, bleeding Sacrifice!  
 His offer'd benefits embrace,  
 And freely now be saved by grace.

This is the time; no more delay;  
 This is the acceptable day;  
 Come in, this moment, at his call,  
 And live for him who died for all.<sup>49</sup>

Entire Sanctification. Another one of the teachings of John and Charles Wesley was the doctrine of entire sanctification. Both in their teachings and in the teachings of the holiness movement the doctrine is referred to by many different terms. Some of the terms used to describe it are: the second rest, perfect love, sanctification, holiness, and full salvation. Sanctification is not for the unsaved but for the believer. As will be shown from their hymns, sanctification is required of the believer by God. He has made provision for it, and the believer is to seek for entire sanctification. God not only requires sanctification, has provided for it, but gives sanctification to the believer when he meets the conditions.

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., pp. 8-9.

He wills that I should holy be,  
 That holiness I long to feel;  
 That full divine conformity  
 To all my Saviour's righteous will.<sup>50</sup>

What is our calling's glorious hope,  
 But inward holiness?  
 For this to Jesus I look up;  
 I calmly wait for this.

I wait till he shall touch me clean,  
 Shall life and pow'r impart,  
 Give me the faith that casts out sin,  
 And purifies the heart.<sup>51</sup>

Jesus, thine all victorious love  
 Shed in my heart abroad;  
 Then shall my feet no longer rove,  
 Rooted and fixed in God.

O that in me the sacred fire  
 Might now begin to glow;  
 Burn up the dross of base desire,  
 And make the mountains flow!

O that it now from heav'n might fall,  
 And all my sins consume!  
 Come, Holy Ghost, for thee I call;  
 Spirit of burning, come.

Refining fire, go through my heart;  
 Illuminate my soul;  
 Scatter thy life through ev'ry part,  
 And sanctify the whole.

My steadfast soul, from falling free,  
 Shall then no longer move,  
 While Christ is all the world to me,  
 And all my heart is love.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>Hymns of the Living Faith, "He Wills That I Should Holy Be" (Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life Press, 1951), no. 298.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., "What is Our Calling's Glorious Hope," no. 299.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., "Jesus, Thine All-Victorious Love," no. 303.

Come, O my God, the promise seal,  
 This mountain, sin, remove;  
 Now in my gasping soul reveal  
 The virtue of thy love.

I want thy life, thy purity,  
 Thy righteousness, brought in;  
 I ask, desire, and trust in thee,  
 To be redeemed from sin.

For this, as taught by thee, I pray,  
 And can no longer doubt;  
 Remove from hence! to sin I say;  
 Be cast this moment out!

Anger and sloth, desire and pride,  
 This moment be subdued;  
 Be cast into the crimson tide  
 Of my Redeemer's blood.

Saviour, to thee my soul look up,  
 My present Saviour thou!  
 In all the confidence of hope,  
 I claim the blessing now.

'Tis done: thou dost this moment save,  
 With full salvation bless;  
 Redemption through thy blood I have,  
 And spotless love and peace.<sup>53</sup>

In the quotes that have been taken from Wesley's hymns these are the beliefs that he sets forth:

1. It is God's will for men to be holy.
2. Man must wait upon God for this holiness of heart.
3. The Holy Spirit comes in refining fire burning out the dross and purifying the soul.

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<sup>53</sup>Wesley, A Collection of Hymns, op. cit., pp. 395-96.

4. After the soul has been purified it is then filled with love.
5. Sanctification is promised in the Word of God.
3. By believing the promises this can and will be accomplished in the soul of the believer.

The Trinity. The Wesleys' concept of the Trinity can be found in this verse.

A mystical plurality  
 We in the Godhead own,  
 Adoring One in Persons Three,  
 And Three in Nature One.<sup>54</sup>

They believed that there was one God and yet three persons, but in nature they were one. A further concept of what they believed about the trinity will be found in this hymn.

Hail! holy, holy, holy Lord!  
 Whom one in Three we know;  
 By all thy heavenly host adored,  
 By all thy church below.

One undivided Trinity  
 With triumph we proclaim;  
 Thy universe is full of thee,  
 And speaks thy glorious name.

Thee, Holy Father, we confess;  
 Thee, Holy Son, adore;  
 Thee, Spirit of Truth and Holiness,  
 We worship evermore.

The incommunicable right,  
 Almighty God! receive,  
 Which angel-choirs, and saints in light,  
 And saints embodied, give.

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 246.



Three Persons equally divine  
 We magnify and love;  
 And both the choirs ere long shall join,  
 To sing thy praise above.

Hail! holy, holy, holy Lord,  
 (Our heavenly song shall be,)  
 Supreme, essential One, adored  
 In co-eternal Three!<sup>55</sup>

To get a better insight into their beliefs about the trinity the discussion will now be turned to the God-head as it exists in its three personalities of God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

God. The doctrine of God in the authorized hymnal of 1779 is mainly concerned with the Calvinistic controversy again. His primary aim is not to prove the existence of God, but to show that God is a God of love and that He has provided salvation for everyone. Charles used irony in his hymns to show how absurd they felt the Calvinistic doctrine was. He attacked the idea of election from two different angles. In one hymn he personates a backslider who is on the brink of despair, but who still trusts in God's mercy and cannot bring himself to believe in 'the Horrible Decree'; he cries:

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid., pp. 248-49.

God forbid that I should dare  
 To charge my death on Thee;  
 No, Thy truth and mercy tear  
 The HORRIBLE DECREE!  
 Though the devil's doom I meet,  
 The devil's doctrine I disclaim;  
 Let it sink into the pit  
 Of hell, from whence it came.

I this record leave behind,--  
 Though damn'd, I was forgiven;  
 Every soul may mercy find,  
 Believe, and enter heaven.

In another of his hymns he takes the idea of the Calvinists and tells the sinner that since he is elected to salvation, his sins really do not matter.

'You are secure of heaven,'  
 (The tempter softly says,)  
 'You are elect, and once forgiven  
 Can never fall from grace.  
 'You never can receive  
 The grace of God in vain;  
 The gift, be sure, He did not give,  
 To take it back again;  
 He cannot take it back,  
 Whether you use or no  
 His grace; you cannot shipwreck make  
 Of faith, or let it go.

. . . .

God is unchangeable,  
 And therefore so are you;  
 And therefore they can never fail  
 Who once His goodness knew;  
 In part perhaps you may,  
 You cannot wholly fail,  
 Cannot become a castaway  
 Like non-elected Paul.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>Rattenbury, op. cit., pp. 119-20.

Charles Wesley's hymns probably did more to destroy popular Calvinism in their day than any other single factor. They made Calvinism seem so incredible to the reason, and repulsive to the heart of informed people.

However, these hymns did not have the permanent value of the positive hymns on God's Everlasting Love.<sup>57</sup> The hymn known as "Wrestling Jacob" was considered by Isaac Watts and many others as his outstanding hymn. The last three verses of this hymn very vividly portray the love of God.

Yield to me now, for I am weak,  
 But confident in self despair;  
 Speak to my heart, in blessings speak,  
 Be conquered by my instant prayer:  
 Speak, or thou never hence shalt move,  
 And tell me if thy name be Love, thy name be Love.

'Tis Love! 'tis Love! thou diedst for me;  
 I hear thy whisper in my heart;  
 The morning breaks, the shadows flee:  
 Pure, universal Love thou art:  
 To me, to all, thy mercies move;  
 Thy nature and thy name is Love.

Lame as I am, I take the prey;  
 Hell, earth and sin, with ease o'ercome.  
 I leap for joy, pursue my way,  
 And, as a bounding hart, fly home,  
 Through all eternity to prove  
 Thy nature and thy name is Love.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>58</sup>Hymns of Living Faith, op. cit., no. 309.

Jesus Christ. The second person of the trinity is Jesus Christ the Son of God. God loved the world so much that he gave his only son that through Him the world might be saved.

Father, whose everlasting Love  
Thy only Son for sinners gave;  
Whose grace to all did freely move,  
And sent him down the world to save;<sup>59</sup>

The Word of God is Jesus Christ his son and through His Word all creation was made.

He spake the word, and it was done!  
The universe his Word obey'd;  
His Word is his eternal Son,  
And Christ the whole creation made.<sup>60</sup>

Jesus is equal with God but when he came to earth he laid aside His glory and became a man.

Equal with God Most High,  
He laid his glory by;  
He, the' eternal God, was born,  
Man with men he deign'd to 'appear,  
Object of his creature's scorn,  
Pleased a servant's form to wear.

Jesus was both divine and human.

Hail! everlasting Lord,  
Divine, incarnate Word!  
Thee let all my powers confess;  
Thee my latest breath proclaim;  
Help, ye angel-choirs, to bless,  
Shout the loved Immanuel's name!

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<sup>59</sup>Wesley, A Collection of Hymns, op. cit., p. 42.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 226.

Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary and came to defeat the powers of Satan.

Fruit of a virgin's womb,  
The promised Blessing's come;  
Christ, the fathers' hope of old,  
Christ, the woman's conquering Seed,  
Christ, the Saviour long foretold,  
Born to bruise the serpent's head.<sup>61</sup>

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."<sup>62</sup> The name of Jesus is over all. At his name both men and angels fall. The name of Jesus causes the devils to tremble.

Jesus, the Name high over all,  
In hell, or earth, or sky,  
Angels and men before it fall,  
And devils fear and fly.

Jesus, the Name to sinners dear,  
The Name to sinners given;  
It scatters all their guilty fear;  
It turns their hell to heaven.<sup>63</sup>

And, being assembled together with them commanded them, that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid., pp. 190-91.

<sup>62</sup>Holy Bible, Acts 4:12.

<sup>63</sup>Wesley, A Collection of Hymns, op. cit., p. 40.

<sup>64</sup>Holy Bible, Acts 1:4, 5.

Holy Spirit. Before Jesus ascended into heaven He told his disciples to wait until they had been baptized with the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost or Spirit is the third member of the trinity. He came from the Father and the Son and has existed with them from eternity.

Hail, Holy Ghost, Jehovah, Third  
 In order of the Three;  
 Sprung from the Father and the Word  
 From all eternity!

The Holy Spirit was also active in the creation.

Thy Godhead brooding o'er the' abyss  
 Of Formless waters lay;  
 Spoke into order all that is,  
 And darkness into day.

He was active in the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ.

Thy power through Jesu's life display'd,  
 Quite from the virgin's womb,  
 Dying, his soul an offering made,  
 And raised him from the tomb.<sup>65</sup>

It is through the Holy Spirit that the sinner receives the assurance that his sins have been forgiven.

Dost thou not dwell in all thy saints,  
 And seal the heirs of heaven?  
 When wilt thou banish my complaints,  
 And show my sins forgiven?

Assure my conscience of its part  
 In the Redeemer's blood;  
 And bear thy witness with my heart,  
 That I am born of God.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>Wesley, A Collection of Hymns, op. cit., pp. 593-94.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 599.

Jesus promised that the Father would send the Holy Spirit  
in His name.

Jesus, we on the words depend,  
Spoken by thee while present here,--  
"The Father in my name shall send  
The Holy Ghost, the Comforter."<sup>67</sup>

On the Day of Pentecost the dispensation of the Holy Spirit  
began. Even as those that were gathered together on that  
day were filled with the Holy Spirit so the Wesleys exhorted  
the people to wait until they received the Holy Spirit.

Come, Holy Spirit, raise our song,  
To reach the wonders of the day,  
When with thy fiery cloven tongues  
Thou didst those glorious scenes display.

O 'twas a most auspicious hour,  
Season of grace and sweet delight,  
When thou didst come with mighty power,  
And light of truth divinely bright.

By this the blest disciples knew  
Their risen Head had enter'd heaven;  
Had now obtain'd the promise due,  
Fully by God the Father given.

Lord, we believe to us and ours  
The apostolic promise given;  
We wait the Pentecostal powers,  
The Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.<sup>68</sup>

When the Holy Spirit is come He will be a teacher and a  
guide to the believer.

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 598.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., p. 596.

That promise made to Adam's race,  
 Now, Lord, in us, even us, fulfil;  
 And give the Spirit of thy grace,  
 To teach us all thy perfect will.

That heavenly Teacher of mankind,  
 That Guide infallible impart,  
 To bring thy sayings to our mind,  
 And write them on our faithful heart.<sup>69</sup>

In the study of the Wesleys' hymns the doctrines of sin, salvation, sanctification, and the God-head have been considered. No attempt has been made to try to exhaust the teachings found in their hymns on each of these doctrines. Throughout their hymns many other teachings can be found such as the teachings on hell, heaven, the devil, the Christian experience, and the judgment. Not only was the Methodist Society founded on the doctrinal teachings of Arminius and Wesley but almost the entire holiness movement which encompasses many denominations. Not only did their hymns serve as an educational means for their day, but even now many of their hymns are used to teach denominational doctrines. For example, in the hymnal Hymns of Living Faith which is the authorized hymnal of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America and the Free Methodist Church of North America, seventeen out of the thirty-one hymns included under the doctrine of

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 598.



entire sanctification were either written or translated by the Wesleys. Truly, the Methodist hymnal of John Wesley was the Methodist theology book of their day.

## CHAPTER IV

### IRA D. SANKEY

In chapter three several similarities were shown that existed in both the Lutheran and Wesleyan revivals. Music also played a prominent part in the Moody revival. Moody knew the value of singing and used the services of Ira D. Sankey to a great extent. However, the contrasts between these three revivals are even more prominent than the similarities. Even though the meetings were not under direct sponsorship of the churches many pastors co-operated in this great revival; thus their churches benefited from the converts that were won to the Lord. This was not true in the Reformation or the Wesleyan revival, for out of them came the Lutheran and Methodist churches.

There was also a contrast in the music that they used. In addition to his own compositions, Luther encouraged others to write, while Wesley primarily used the hymns that Charles wrote. Sankey was the author and composer of only one or two gospel hymns. He also was the composer of several hymns which he used very effectively, but his main source of sacred music was from the compositions of others. This revival also marked the beginning of a new type of hymn known as the "Gospel Hymn" or "Gospel Song," which is used

very effectively in Protestant services today. Therefore, both the hymns and gospel hymns that he used will be studied.

### I. FACTORS INFLUENCING SANKEY

The impact of sacred music upon Sankey began at an early age, for as a child the singing of hymns was a part of the home life. In his autobiography he tells that the first hymn he could remember was the one that his mother used to sing him to sleep.

"Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber,  
Holy angels guard thy bed."

During the long winter evenings the family would gather around the log fire in the old homestead, and would spend the long evenings singing the hymns of the church. It was through this that he first learned to read music.

The family lived several miles from the church but Sankey's fondness for singing led him to be a regular attendant. Later his family moved to Newcastle, where he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. Soon after that he was elected superintendent of the Sunday school and leader of the choir. When he first took charge of the singing many of the members thought that it was wrong to use the organ, or any kind of musical instrument in the church. Later on the church began to use an organ in the church and as a

result he began to use the organ to accompany his singing. Through this he began to make preparation for the work that he was engaged in for the rest of his life.

The only formal musical education that he had was when he attended a musical convention in Farmingtown, Ohio, under the direction of Mr. Bradbury. On his return home, his father said to his mother, "I am afraid that boy will never amount to anything; all he does is to run about the country with a hymn-book under his arm."<sup>1</sup> His mother replied that she would rather see him with a hymn book under his arm than with a whisky bottle in his pocket.

In 1860, when President Lincoln called for men to enlist in the Union army, Ira Sankey was one of the first in Newcastle to enlist. Religious services were held in the army camp where he often led the singing. Several of the other fellows also took part and as a result families began to invite them to their homes to sing.<sup>2</sup>

Sankey was also active in the church as a class leader. The two outstanding things about the class meetings

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<sup>1</sup>Ira D. Sankey, My Life and the Story of the Gospel Hymns (New York: Red Label Reprints, 1907), p. 16.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 13-16.

he led were the emphasis on the Bible, and the singing. As a result his class was kept constantly full.<sup>3</sup>

Later in the mass revival meetings of Moody and Sankey it will be shown that he had basic requirements for the choir members. This came as a result of standards that he set in his early choir work in his home church. He required that every member be a Christian and he trained them so that they would give a real witness for Christ. He felt that a song should minister just as much as a sermon. He insisted on Christian character and deportment from every member.

One choir member, namely Miss Edwards, made a great impression on him and as a result they were married on September 9, 1863. Mrs. Sankey was a great help to him and proved to be equally self-denying as her husband.<sup>4</sup>

In 1870, Ira D. Sankey was appointed a delegate to the International Convention of the Young Men's Christian Association to be held at Indianapolis. For several years he had read about the work of Mr. Moody in the city of Chicago and when he heard that Mr. Moody would be at the

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<sup>3</sup>E. J. Goodspeed, A Full History of the Wonderful Career of Moody and Sankey in Great Britain and America (New York: Henry S. Goodspeed & Co., 1876), p. 47.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 50.

convention he was very pleased. Mr. Moody had been chairman of the convention for a number of years, but this year someone else became the chairman, with Mr. Moody taking his place among the delegates. It was announced later in the convention that Mr. Moody would lead the prayer meeting on Sunday morning in the Baptist Church. When Sankey arrived late at the prayer meeting he sat down near the door with the Rev. Robert McMillan. Mr. McMillan told him that the singing had been abominable and asked him to start a song, when a man stopped praying, which Mr. Sankey did. After the meeting Mr. McMillan introduced Sankey to Mr. Moody.

Moody's first words to me, after my introduction, were, "Where are you from? Are you married? What is your business?" Upon telling him that I lived in Pennsylvania, was married, had two children, and was in the government employ, he said abruptly, "You will have to give that up."

I stood amazed, at a loss to understand why the man told me that I would have to give up what I considered a good position. "What for?" I exclaimed.

"To come to Chicago and help me in my work," was the answer.

When I told him that I could not leave my business, he retorted, "You must; I have been looking for you for the last eight years."<sup>5</sup>

Although he promised Moody that he would think about it he did not particularly want to leave his job and relocate

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<sup>5</sup>Sankey, op. cit., p. 19.

his home. However, Moody was insistent about his joining him in the work at Chicago and finally in the early part of 1871, they began their work together.

It is a surprising fact that a man who could not sing, who, indeed, could not distinguish one tune from another, set more people singing and gave a wider circulation to sacred songs than any musician or composer of his age. This Mr. Moody did by enlisting and encouraging leaders and writers of hymns, by gathering huge audiences of people to whom their compositions could be taught, and by publishing and circulating books which carried their words and melodies to all the lands of the world.<sup>6</sup>

Even though Moody was not musical he had reflected on the subject perhaps as carefully as Wesley. He knew the value of music and determined to use it. He never let the power and emotion of it get away from him or let music become the chief feature but he did get every possible ounce of power and glory out of it.<sup>7</sup>

He not only knew the power of music and how to use it but he had a keen insight into how it would effect the audience. This insight was so keen that Sankey respected it and followed Moody's guidance repeatedly.

. . . Mr. Moody has always been an inspiration to me in preparing hymns for gospel work; not that he was a musician or claimed to be, but I soon learned to

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<sup>6</sup>Charles R. Erdman, D. L. Moody His Message for To-Day (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1928), p. 104.

<sup>7</sup>Gamaliel Bradford, D. L. Moody a Worker in Souls (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., 1928), p. 165.

prize his judgment as to the value and usefulness of a hymn for our work. What moved him was sure to move others, and what failed to do so could be safely omitted.<sup>8</sup>

Mr. Moody felt that devotional and stirring music were an essential part of public worship and were an aid in the preaching of the gospel. He believed that divine truth could be presented in song as well as in speech, and often will attract people in a way that a message will not. As a result of listening to the sweet tones of the human voice the heart can be touched with the gospel truth. He knew that music could convey Christian doctrines to the people.<sup>9</sup> Moody had one purpose in his ministry and that was to win men and women to Jesus Christ; therefore, he used the gospel in song as one way of accomplishing this.

Not only was Sankey influenced by his home-life and Mr. Moody, but a little child unconsciously showed him the great power of hymns. He told the following incident at a meeting in Dundee, Scotland, which shows how early God gave him evidence that he was called to evangelize by song.

I want to speak a word about singing, not only to the little folks, but to grown people. During the winter after the great Chicago fire, when the place

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 158.

<sup>9</sup>Rufus W. Clark, The Work of God in Great Britain: Under Messrs. Moody and Sankey, 1873 to 1875. (New York: Harper & Brothers, Pub., 1875), p. 48.



was built up with little frame houses for the people to stay in, a mother sent for me one day to come and see her little child, who was one of our Sabbath-school scholars. I remembered her very well, having seen her in the meetings very frequently, and was glad to go. She was lying in one of these poor little huts, everything having been burned in the fire. I ascertained that she was past all hopes of recovery, and that they were waiting for the little one to pass away. 'How is it with you to-day?' I asked. With a beautiful smile on her face, she said, 'It is all well with me to-day. I wish you would speak to my father and mother.' 'But,' said I, 'are you a Christian?' 'Yes.' 'When did you become one?' 'Do you remember last Thursday, in the Tabernacle, when we had that little singing-meeting, and you sung 'Jesus Loves even Me?' 'Yes.' 'It was last Thursday I believed on the Lord Jesus, and now I am going to be with him to-day.' That testimony from that little child, in that neglected quarter of Chicago, has done more to stimulate me and bring me to this country, than all that the papers or any persons might say. I remember the joy I had in looking upon that beautiful face. She went up to heaven, and no doubt said she learned upon the earth that Jesus loved her, from that little hymn. If you want to enjoy a blessing, go to the bedsides of these bedridden and dying ones, and sing to them of Jesus, for they can not enjoy these meetings as you do. You will get a blessing to your own soul."<sup>10</sup>

## II. THE CONTRIBUTION OF SANKEY'S HYMNOLOGY

In the consideration of the contribution to hymnology by Luther and Wesley it has been noticed that congregational singing had been taken away from the people. In addition to restoring it to the congregation it was necessary for them to also provide hymns so that the people could sing. Both

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<sup>10</sup>Goodspeed, op. cit., p. 53.

Luther and Wesley were faced with the apostasy that had crept into their churches and as a means of reviving their church they set forth the doctrines that they believed in their hymnology. Their hymnology served several purposes: (1) the congregation was given an active part in the worship service, (2) they taught their doctrines through their hymns, and (3) their doctrines became instilled in the hearts and minds of the people as they sang them repeatedly. However, the established churches of their nations rejected what these men believed and taught and as a result two strong Protestant denominations were established.

When Moody and Sankey came on the scene an entirely different situation existed. Although most of their meetings were not connected with the existing churches, in the sense of being church sponsored meetings, they still had the co-operation of many churches and pastors in their meetings and found churches open to them. Furthermore, they had a rich heritage of hymnology. Not only did they have the hymns of Wesley and Luther but countless other composers. Needless to say, in addition to using his own compositions he employed the use of a great many established hymns. Nevertheless, he made a unique contribution to the stores of hymnology by the use of both his own and the gospel hymns of others.

It must not be supposed that Mr. Moody used no hymns excepting those composed by his immediate associates. He and Mr. Sankey, of course, employed in their meetings, and embodied in their books, scores of the grand old hymns of the Church, as well as many of the popular hymns of the day.<sup>11</sup>

By the time of Sankey the value of music for religious services was generally appreciated. It had come to be excepted as a necessary part of the revival services. The things that were unique about this revival was the solo singing and the intimate co-operation of the preacher and singer. "Nothing like it had been known before Moody and Sankey and nothing since has quite equaled their popular reputation."<sup>12</sup> However, this scene has again been seen in contemporary times in the Billy Graham revivals. Very likely the success of Sankey's singing in the Moody revival has had an influence on contemporary revival movements.

Both the British Isles and the United States shared in the impact of this great revival. Before going into mass revival on a large scale, Moody had become well known for his work in Chicago. They left this great work in Chicago and went to the British Isles to begin meetings. From a very small beginning their fame spread throughout England

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<sup>11</sup>Erdman, op. cit., p. 115.

<sup>12</sup>Bradford, op. cit., p. 156.

and as a result they spent two years there in meetings. Their ministry was quite different from what these people had known, but in a quiet way they won themselves into the hearts of the people. "In Scotland, Sankey achieved a major victory. Faced by the Calvinist prejudices against solo singing and against organ accompaniments, he overcame both objections. . . ."13

. . . Sankey, before sitting down to play his own accompaniments at his small reed Estey organ, always prayed with the congregation that God would bless his singing, and use the music to bring salvation to many hungry, lost souls. This intimate approach prefaced by prayer helped to dispel the antagonism of the uncoquid who hated organs as they hated sin. . . .14

As a result an American Methodist, invading the stronghold of Knox, achieved the hitherto impossible.15 When they returned to the United States Sankey's solo singing was also widely acclaimed and accepted by the people. The impression that he made on the people did not come as a result of a well trained voice, but because of how and what he sang. He gave to them a message of hope and he felt it as he sang.

Sankey's contribution to gospel hymnody came more as a composer than as an author. John Julian in his Dictionary

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13Robert Stevenson, "Ira D. Sankey and "Gospel Hymnody," Religion in Life, XX (Winter Number, 1950-1951), 84.

14Ibid.

15Ibid., p. 85.

of Hymnology only gives him credit for writing one song, but in checking his autobiography Sankey lists two other hymns that he wrote. His greatest recognition comes from the hymns that he composed, for example, "The Ninety and Nine," and "I Am Praying for You." If one was to judge his success in such terms as these: numbers of persons who have been added to church membership rolls, or have responded to altar calls, or have visited inquiry rooms under the spell of his music, then he would be placed at the top of the ladder of success.<sup>16</sup> During their ministry in both England and the United States people flocked to hear him sing. As one writer so graphically said, "Mr. Sankey sings with the conviction that souls are receiving Jesus between one note and the next. The stillness is overawing; some of the lines are more spoken than sung. . . ."17

He did not write or compose great volumes of gospel hymns. His great contribution came from the fact that he knew how to use the ones that he did compose. He went even further than this because he used and promoted the gospel hymns of other authors and composers. He gave to the world

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>17</sup>Clark, op. cit., p. 51.

a new type of hymn, namely, the gospel hymn which has won its way into the hearts of the people.

Gospel hymnody has the distinction of being America's most typical contribution to Christian song. Gospel hymnody has been a plough digging up the hardened surfaces of paved minds. Its very obviousness has been its strength. Where delicacy or dignity can make no impress, gospel hymnody stands up triumphing. . . . Sankey's songs are true folk music of the people. Dan Emmett and Stephen Foster only did in secular music what Ira D. Sankey and P. P. Bliss did as validly and effectively in sacred music.<sup>18</sup>

### III. SANKEY'S USE OF HYMNS

Much has been written about how Sankey sang, but the expression that most accurately describes his singing is that he sang the gospel. His message to the people was the glad tidings of salvation. When he came before the people not only did he have a well prepared song but he himself was prepared. He prepared himself with prayer and as a result the Spirit worked through him to win men and women to Christ.

. . . It is, however, altogether a mistake to suppose that the blessing which attends Mr. Sankey's efforts is attributable only or chiefly to his fine voice and artistic expression. These, no doubt, are very attractive, and go far to move the affections and gratify a taste for music; but the secret of Mr. Sankey's power lies, not in his gift of song, but in the spirit of which the song is only the expression. He, too, is a man in earnest, and sings in the full

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<sup>18</sup>Stevenson, op. cit., p. 88.

confidence that God is working by him. Like his colleague, he likewise has a message to lost men from God the Father; and the Spirit of God in him finds a willing and effective instrument in his gift of song, to proclaim in stirring notes the 'mighty love' of God in Christ Jesus. . . .<sup>19</sup>

In addition to coming before the people prepared in himself he came to them with a message and for a purpose. Their chief purpose was the conversion of souls to Christ.<sup>20</sup> They lifted up the cross of Jesus Christ and held forth before the eyes of the people the Lord Jesus in all his glory of the God-head, in all the simplicity of His manhood, in all the perfection of his nature, for their admiration, for their adoration, and for their acceptance.<sup>21</sup> They didn't come to the people with a new and novel doctrine but with the old gospel--old, yet always fresh and young, too, as the living fountain or the morning sun--in which the substitution of Christ is placed in the centre and presented with admirable distinctness and decision.<sup>22</sup> The same thing can be said of the Moody-Sankey revival as was said of the other two-- that they met the people where their needs were. This was a revival for the common people and not just the intellects.

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<sup>19</sup>Clark, op. cit., pp. 48-49.

<sup>20</sup>Goodspeed, op. cit., pp. 268-69.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 133.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 83.

Faithfully they presented the gospel in message and song to a needy people and to this gospel the people responded.

Mr. Sankey had very definite ideas about the use of music for religious services. He believed in solo singing but felt that the words were far more important than the music. He used his voice and the accompaniment on the organ as a means of getting the message of the song across to the audience. He always played his own accompaniment so he was able to use the music very effectively.

He often expounded on the subject of how music should be used. Many of his basic principles can well be adapted today in the musical education of the church. In one of the musical conferences he held he set forth the following principles:

1. The music in the church should be conducted by a good, large choir of Christian singers who would in turn inspire the congregation to join heartily in the singing. Every member of the choir should be a Christian. He felt that ministers should insist that the choir give as much attention to the sermon and service as the congregation.

2. He felt that the choir-master should not be consistently introducing new-fangled tunes in which the congregation could not join heartily.

3. The choir should never be allowed to have the idea that they are a separate organization in the church.



The music of the church should be kept in the hands of the office-bearers of the church and the choir is responsible to them. They should not feel that they can go to war with the church and even secede from the church when things do not go as they like. Praying singers are likely to be loyal to the church, and not to give trouble.

4. The singing in the regular prayer-meeting should be of the most spirited and spiritual character. The singing of long hymns should be avoided. The hymns that you use should have a bearing on the key-note or subject of the meeting.

5. Do not let the school run into a singing-class. See that all the hymns have a bearing upon the lesson of the day.

6. In union religious services the singing should occupy a prominent place. A union choir should be formed of Christian people that are recommended by their pastor. Frequent meetings of these singers should be held for practice. All of these practices should be opened and closed with prayer.

7. In union meetings the hymns and tunes used should be simple enough so that the people can learn them quickly. They should contain the simple gospel and be full of invitation rather than of creed.

8. Never permit solo singing, or any other kind of singing, to take the place of the preached Word; but solo singing, properly conducted, may be a means of attracting people to the services who would not have come simply to hear a sermon in the usual way.<sup>23</sup>

#### IV. THE EFFECT PRODUCED BY SANKEY'S MUSIC

The influence of music can be used both for the salvation or damnation of souls. In the days of Moody the slow, subtle, dreamy magic of the waltz was supposed to whirl thousands of souls into the abyss.

Yet if music is a mighty agent for damnation, its regenerating power is equally immense and equally wayward and accountable. . . . A man who is torn and fretted and maddened with the hurrying tumult of the world, who is harassed with the perplexities of business or sick with the satiety of pleasure, may hear a strain of a long-remembered air, perhaps a cadence of a hymn his mother sang to him in childhood, and suddenly the material pressure of the world about him may melt into utter unreality, and he may stand for a moment at least on the threshold of heaven. . . .<sup>24</sup>

The power of God was present in a most marked degree both in the singing and the preaching of the Word. There was a power released in which souls were convicted of sin and at other times were taken almost to the gates of heaven. Even while he was singing people were convicted of their sins and

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., pp. 379-83.

<sup>24</sup>Bradford, op. cit., pp. 143-44.

many yielded their lives to Christ during the singing. They knew that there was power in music and they used it to the honor and glory of God.

The fame of the evangelists spread as people talked about them. Their names became almost a household word. After the meetings the streets were made lively with vigorous singing of hymns, as bands of Christians wended their way home.<sup>25</sup> The people sang, murmured, and whistled them as they went about their work and play.

. . . The little hymn-book that was published in England containing most of the hymns we are enjoying here to-day, has taken such a hold, I would say for the most part on the common people, that no less than five million copies have been sold all over the world--I mean those with the music and the words. . . .<sup>26</sup>

Probably the most remarkable incidents that show how the people responded to them was in the overflow meetings. Through these meetings it can be seen that the people did not come just because they were curious. Many times the churches and halls where the meetings were held were packed out and the overflow crowd would go to a neighboring church where they would sing the songs that Sankey had made familiar to them and would then listen to the message of some other preacher. The people came because they wanted to experience what Moody and Sankey were preaching.

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<sup>25</sup>Goodspeed, op. cit., p. 155.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 579.

Sankey's voice and his manner of singing carried such power that there were times when the meeting could have gotten out of hand as the people were stirred with great emotion. On one occasion particularly Moody saw that in just a matter of minutes the audience would have been in an attitude of religious frenzy as a young man began to weep almost uncontrollably. He stopped Mr. Sankey at the end of the first verse, asking the audience to rise and sing, "There is a Fountain Filled With Blood." Moody realized that mere excitement was not healthy and checked it while it was possible, leaving to the influence of the Holy Spirit the completion of the work which had evidently commenced in many hearts.<sup>27</sup>

#### V. A STUDY OF THE DOCTRINAL TEACHINGS OF SANKEY'S HYMNS

In the doctrinal teachings of Sankey's hymns one theme stands out more prominently than any other. This doctrinal teaching is the plan of salvation. He presents it in many different forms. He shows us that God has provided it for men out of a heart of love and yet if men do not except it then they must reap the consequences that rejection

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 247.

brings. In making this doctrinal study the investigation has been focused mostly on the hymns that Sankey composed. However, in order to get a clearer conception of Sankey's teachings it has been necessary to not only study his gospel hymns but also his gospel songs which served mostly as a means of exhortation and invitation. Also a few hymns that he used in his meetings which were written by other authors and composers have been considered.

In presenting the theme of salvation he stressed the love of God in providing it for mankind.

It passeth knowledge; that dear love of Thine!  
 My Jesus! Saviour! Yet this soul of mine  
 Would of that love, in all its depth and length,  
 Its height, and breadth, and everlasting strength,  
     Know more and more.

He goes on to say that it is almost impossible to tell about the love of God and yet he must tell the sinner that love can remove all guilty fear and as a result he can receive love. His heart is full of untold praises because he has received this love and that his sins have been forgiven.

It passeth telling! that dear love of Thine,  
 My Jesus! Saviour! Yet these lips of mine  
 Would fain proclaim to sinners far and near  
 A love which can remove all guilty fear,  
     And love beget.

It passeth praises! that dear love of Thine,  
 My Jesus! Saviour! Yet this heart of mine  
 Would sing a love so rich, so full, so free,  
 Which brought an undone sinner, such as me,  
     Right home to God.

Throughout the rest of the hymn he prays that he will be filled with love and when he makes his home in heaven his soul will sing of the breadth and length, the height and depth, and everlasting love of Jesus Christ.<sup>28</sup>

In the hymn, "The Cross of Jesus" he shows that as a result of the love of God, Jesus died on the cross for him and for others.

Upon that Cross of Jesus,  
 Mine eye at times can see  
 The very dying form of One,  
 Who suffered there for me  
 And from my smitten heart with tears,  
 Two wonders I confess,--  
 The wonders of His glorious love,  
 And my own worthlessness.<sup>29</sup>

As a result of the grace of God salvation was not only planned for, but was also provided for all mankind. Grace does not stop here, for through grace man may have his needs met every day.

Grace! 'tis a charming sound,  
 Harmonious to the ear;  
 Heaven with the echo shall resound,  
 And all the earth shall hear.

Refrain:  
 Saved by grace alone,  
 This is all my plea;  
 Jesus died for all mankind,  
 And Jesus died for me.

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<sup>28</sup>Mary Shakleton, "It Passeth Knowledge," Gospel Hymns and Sacred Songs, P. P. Bliss and Ira D. Sankey (New York: Biglow & Main, 1875), p. 70.

<sup>29</sup>Mrs. E. C. Clephane, "The Cross of Jesus," Ibid., p. 44.

Grace first contrived a way  
 To save rebellious man;  
 And all the steps that grace display,  
 Which drew the wondrous plan. Ref.

Grace taught my roving feet  
 To tread the heavenly road;  
 And new supplies each hour I meet,  
 While pressing on to God. Ref.<sup>30</sup>

Probably the most effective and most remembered gospel song that he used was, "Jesus of Nazareth Passeth By." In the first three verses of this song Biblical incidents are related. He refers to Jesus mingling with the crowds and meeting their needs as he met them along the way. From out of the crowd comes the cry, "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." When he passed by he brought hope to the sick, the weary, and the sin oppressed. In the last three verses the thought comes that Jesus is again passing by and he pleads with men to accept the grace that Jesus has provided. He ends the song with the teaching that a sinner can reject Christ and will find himself hearing the terrible words that it is too late and that he will be lost. Not only has God in love provided salvation and pleads for the sinner to accept it, but the soul can be lost if he rejects this plan of redemption.

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<sup>30</sup>Philip Doddridge, "The Wondrous Gift," Ibid., p. 50.

Again He comes! From place to place  
 His holy footprints we can trace.  
 He pauseth at our threshold--nay,  
 He enters--condescends to stay.  
 Shall we not gladly raise the cry--  
 "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by?"

Ho! all ye heavy laden come!  
 Here's pardon, comfort, rest, and home.  
 Ye wanderers from a Father's face,  
 Return, accept His proffered grace.  
 Ye tempted ones, there's refuge nigh:  
 "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by."

But if you still this call refuse,  
 And all His wondrous love abuse,  
 Soon will He sadly from you turn,  
 Your bitter prayer for pardon spurn.  
 "Too late! too late!" will be the cry--  
 "Jesus of Nazareth has passed by."<sup>31</sup>

Jesus is constantly in search of the sinner. He calls for him to return. He looks after his own and when one wanders away he goes out in search of his child until he has found him. When He returns with his child even the angels in heaven rejoice.

But all thro' the mountains, thunder-riven,  
 And up from the rocky steep.  
 There rose a cry to the gate of heaven,  
 "Rejoice! I have found my sheep!"  
 And the angels echoed around the throne,  
 "Rejoice, for the Lord brings back His own!"<sup>32</sup>

In a gospel song by P. P. Bliss entitled, "The Holy Spirit" the work of the Holy Spirit in salvation can be seen.

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<sup>31</sup>Emma Campbell, "Jesus of Nazareth Passeth By,"  
Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>32</sup>Elizabeth C. Clephane, "The Ninety and Nine,"  
Ibid., p. 8.



He issues three warnings to the sinner about his relationship to the Holy Spirit, for it is through the Holy Spirit that a sinner is convicted of sin and by which he receives the witness that his sins have been forgiven. He tells the sinner to resist not, grieve not, and quench not the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit, oh, sinner, In mercy doth move,  
Thy heart, so long hardened, Of sin to reprove;  
Resist not the Spirit, Nor longer delay;  
God's gracious entreaties, May end with today.

Oh, child of the kingdom, From sin service cease;  
Be filled with the Spirit, With comfort and peace.  
Oh grieve not the Spirit, Thy Teacher is He,  
That Jesus, thy Saviour, May glorified be.

Defiled is the temple. Its beauty laid low,  
On God's holy altar The embers faith glow.  
By love yet rekindled, A flame may be fanned;  
Oh quench not the Spirit, The Lord is at hand!<sup>33</sup>

Not only did he present to them a present peace but a hope for a glorious future when they will go to be with God in heaven for eternity. Through this he presented the ultimate aim of every Christian when he will see his Saviour face to face.

I have a Father: to me He has given  
A hope for eternity, blessed and true;  
And soon will He call me to meet Him in heaven,  
But oh that He'd let me bring you with me too!

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<sup>33</sup>p. P. Bliss, "The Holy Spirit," Ibid., p. 43.

I have a robe: 'tis resplendent in whiteness,  
 Awaiting in glory my wondering view;  
 Oh, when I receive it all shining in brightness,  
 Dear friend, could I see you receiving one too'.

When Jesus has found you, tell others the story,  
 That my loving Saviour is your Saviour too;  
 Then pray that your Saviour may bring them to glory,  
 And prayer will be answered--'Twas answered for you!<sup>34</sup>

Out of this revival came a new type of hymnody which was distinctly American. In putting the right value on Sankey's contribution to hymnody one must be conscious of the fact that by many the gospel hymn is not too highly regarded. Nevertheless, this was also true of Luther's and Wesleys' hymns by their contemporaries. Sankey never set his hymns above the others, but put all of them to use as they best fit into their services. The uniqueness of his hymns comes from the fact that he was able to accomplish two purposes with them: (1) to present the doctrinal teachings of salvation and the Christian life, and (2) to place before the people an invitation and an exhortation to accept them.

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<sup>34</sup>S O'Maley Cluff, "I am Praying for You," Ibid., p. 13.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### I. SUMMARY

The purpose of this investigation has been to study the hymnology of these three representative revival movements in history. It has been seen that there was a teaching ministry accomplished through their use of hymnology. A primary teaching aim of these revivals was the advancement of their doctrines through the aid of music. Their doctrinal teachings served a two-fold purpose. First, they stated clearly what they were advocating. Their opponents could not claim ignorance as to the doctrinal aims of these revivals. Second, they served the purpose of bringing converts to Jesus Christ.

The teachings of their hymns were so clear that they regarded them as statements of their beliefs. If no theology books were available, that were written by Luther and Wesley, it would be possible to develop a systematic theology from their hymns. Luther said that his opponents could not claim ignorance of their doctrines because they had preached it, written it, painted it, and sung it.<sup>1</sup> Wesley regarded

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<sup>1</sup>Martin Luther, as quoted by Carl F. Price (ed.), The Papers of the Hymn Society, Luther D. Reed, "Luther and Congregational Song" No. 12 (New York City: The Hymn Society of America, 1947), [p. 1].

their hymnal as a theology book of the Methodist societies.<sup>2</sup> Sankey's ministry in song was often referred to as singing the gospel.<sup>3</sup>

Their hymns served both a catechetical and devotional purpose. They endeavored to win men and women to Christ through the ministry of song. Their hymns did not stop here but helped them to become mature Christians. As they sang the hymns they learned the doctrines, and as a result they continued to grow in grace. When they sang the hymns they found that they were singing about their own religious experiences and as a result they were able to receive help and further guidance to become stronger Christians.

They chose their hymns with a purpose in mind. When Wesley was travelling as an itinerant preacher it was his habit of choosing hymns which would fit the people's needs when he arrived in a village. Sankey chose and fitted his hymns into the theme of the service. His closing selection came during the ministry of the Word by Mr. Moody. He would make his choice according to the thought of Mr. Moody's sermon so that it would carry on the message and would not

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<sup>2</sup>Ernest J. Rattenbury, The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns (London: The Epworth Press, 1949), p. 62.

<sup>3</sup>Ira D. Sankey, My Life and the Story of the Gospel Hymns (New York: Red Label Reprints, 1907), p. 62.

detract from it. While there was a tremendous teaching ministry in the hymnology of these revivals the music was always secondary to the preaching of the Word. It complemented the ministry but always took a subordinate place.

The hymns that were used in these revivals had a purpose and a message. They were also doctrinally sound, for their doctrines were based on the Bible. Their purpose, the message that they were to bring, and the doctrine that they were to teach depended on the situation in which they were to be used.

## II. CONCLUSIONS

While this study has been concerned with the happenings of the past, many basic principles can be found in the music of these revivals that can serve as principles for today. In the light of what has been seen in these revivals the following questions can be used as a means of evaluating the music that is being used in the Protestant churches today.

1. What is the purpose and aim of your musical program?
2. What are you endeavoring to teach through your music?
3. Are the hymns that you use doctrinally sound?
  - a. Do they teach the doctrines of your church?
  - b. Are the doctrines true to the teachings of the Bible?

4. Does the selection of hymns fit into the theme of the service?
  - a. Do they create an attitude of worship?
  - b. Do they help your congregation to worship?
5. Is your selection made mostly on the basis of appeal rather than on the message that it will convey?
  - a. Does the music compliment the words?
  - b. Does it detract from the words?
6. Are your hymns evangelistic?
  - a. Do they present the plan of salvation and entire sanctification?
  - b. Do they serve as a means of instruction for the other doctrines of the church?
  - c. Do they help the people mature as Christians?
  - d. Are they a source of help and inspiration in their daily lives?
7. Is your music program dominant or subdominant to the preaching of the Word? The music of the church, whether it come from the congregation, the choir, or a soloist, should never be permitted to take the place of the preached Word.

One of the basic principles in education is that aim controls everything. Not only does aim control the worship and educational programs of the church, but it should also

control the music program. This is not an independent part of the church. When definite aims are established for this part of the church program it will again become a vital part of the educational program of the church.

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