

66. Spiritual Songs.

Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. Col. 3,16.

Vocal and instrumental music was employed by the chosen people of God ever since they were delivered from the Egyptian thralldom. It gradually developed, until it reached its highest perfection under David and Solomon. By divine direction they appointed four thousand Levites to serve in the Temple as singers and players on instruments. These were appointed to lead and support, by the melody of their voices and the harmony of their instruments, the worshipers assembled in singing the psalms of David, Asaph, and other inspired singers.

In the New Testament Zion we also hear singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Then came Antichrist, teaching the Christians to worship by proxy, in a strange language. The Reformation, reviving the singing of sacred hymns and songs by the congregation in the common language of the people, gave birth to a large amount of sacred hymns and music. While others, under the pretense of reformation, cast aside the liturgy and the hymns, Luther and his coworkers purified and preserved the liturgy and hymns as eminently serviceable in public worship.

If there is a Church that may look with especial pleasure upon its collection of sacred songs, it is our beloved Lutheran Zion. There is in our hymns a spirit of divine power; they are the response of our Christian faith, church hymns in the fullest and best sense, not only inspiring and devotional, but educating and instructive, designed to lead and properly direct us in our pilgrimage to the heavenly mansions. Let us rejoice in this good gift which God has bestowed upon us and diligently use it in our churches and homes. It is the noble handmaiden, preceding and following the preaching of the Word, the sweet odors bearing our devotion and sacrifice upward to heaven, in harmony with the sermon. The organ is to beautify the worship, the choir is to lead in singing, but the congregation is to do the singing.

Prayer.

Help me now, O Lord, my God, to begin a new life. Grant that I may at all times magnify Thy name and let Thy praise ever more be in my mouth. Guide me by Thy Holy Spirit that I may live to Thy honor and not yield my members as instruments of unrighteousness to serve sin, but as instruments of righteousness to serve Thee, my God. And I shall in Thy congregation sing songs of praise and glory to Thee all the days of my life. Amen.

Innumerable choirs before the shining throne
Their joyful anthems raise,
Till heaven's glad halls are echoing with the tone
Of that great hymn of praise,
And all its host rejoices,
And all its blessed throng
Unite their myriad voices
In one eternal song.

This devotion is one of 318 taken from *Daily Bread* by F. E. Pasche, published by CPH in 1926, but now in the public domain. They have been copied and reformatted by Rev. Bruce G. Ley and made available for distribution by pastors and missionaries.

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