

## WORTHY MUSIC IN SACRAMENT MEETINGS

Spirituality is increased by cultivating worthy music in sacrament meetings and other worship services (such as conferences on branch, ward, stake, and general levels). Music presented in general conferences is an excellent model for music provided in sacrament meetings. Since the hymn is the Lord's preferred style of music, hymns and sacred children's songs should be used most of the time in organ preludes and postludes, by choirs, and in special musical selections.

"We cannot preach the gospel without music" (President Brigham Young). "The most effective preaching of the gospel is when it is accompanied by beautiful and appropriate music" (President Harold B. Lee, April 1973 General Conference). "In the Church we need better music and more of it, and better speaking and less of it" (Elder Adam S. Bennion, Quorum of the Twelve).

### Scriptural Basis of Music in the Church

Any good music: "If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things" (13<sup>th</sup> Article of Faith).

Worthy music: "My soul delighteth in the song of the heart; yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me, and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads" (D&C 25:12).

"We can get nearer to the Lord through music than perhaps through any other thing except prayer" (President J. Reuben Clark Jr., October 1936 General Conference).

"Inspirational music is an essential part of our church meetings. The hymns invite the Spirit of the Lord, create a feeling of reverence, unify us as members, and provide a way for us to offer praises to the Lord. Some of the greatest sermons are preached by the singing of hymns. Hymns move us to repentance and good works, build testimony and faith, comfort the weary, console the mourning, and inspire us to endure to the end." (The First Presidency, Preface, *Hymns*, ix).

As taught in the Preface of the current hymnbook, the First Presidency would like members

1. **To sing the hymns and sacred children's songs more frequently,**
2. **To quote the words of hymns in support of teaching gospel principles,**
3. **To feel the power of hymns motivating individuals to righteous actions.**

### Characteristics of Worthy Music

Good music - **wholesome** and **uplifting** (see 13<sup>th</sup> Article of Faith).

Good sacred music - wholesome and uplifting, and also **inspirational** and **edifying**.

Worthy music - sacred music that also **builds faith and testimony**, and **teaches gospel doctrine**.

Worthy worship music - sacred music that also includes the basic elements of a **prayer** (see D&C 25:12) and contains a **devotional quality** and a **reverential mood**.

**“If we will listen, (the hymns) are teaching the gospel, for the hymns of the Restoration are, in fact, a course in doctrine! . . . (The hymns) are an essential part of our worship. . . .**

**“The Spirit does not ratify speech nor confirm music which lacks spiritual substance”**  
(President Boyd K. Packer, October 1991 General Conference).

### **Purpose of Worthy Music in Worship Services**

“The purpose of music in our Church services is not for performance but for worship. Prayerfully selected compositions and excellent performances are appropriate in our worship services when and if members feel a spirit of worship and of revelation. Church music should be supportive of the Lord and His work and not attract attention to itself.” (Elder Russell M. Nelson, CES Fireside, BYU, 4 May 2008).

### **Worthy Worship Music Provides Spiritual Power**

Worthy worship music provides spiritual power and protection. “Worthy music is powerful. It has power to make us humble, prayerful, and grateful. Prophets through all generations have taught the importance of worthy music in our expressions of worship.

“Worthy music also has the power to persuade. . . . Music has a sweet power to promote unity and love in the family. . . . Music has power to provide spiritual nourishment. It has healing power. It has power to facilitate worship; it allows us to contemplate the Atonement and the Restoration of the gospel with its saving principles and exalting ordinances. Music provides power for us to express prayerful thoughts and bear testimony of sacred truths. Music has power to overcome language barriers.” (Elder Russell M. Nelson, CES Fireside, BYU, 4 May 2008).

### **Worthy Worship Music Provides Protection**

“Wherever we are, we should carefully choose what we see and hear. Some of you would not knowingly tolerate pornography in your homes, yet you would allow music into your lives that can be just as devastating. Many youth listen to music that can be described as loud and fast, becoming louder and faster. It aims to agitate, not to pacify; to excite more than calm. Beware of that kind of music. Continued exposure to loud sounds will, in time, damage delicate organs of hearing. In like manner, if you overindulge in loud music, you will more likely become spiritually deaf. You may not be able to hear the still, small voice. . . .

“Do not degrade yourself with the numbing shabbiness and irreverence of music that is not worthy of you. . . . Do not allow unworthy, raucous music to enter your life. It is *not* harmless. It can weaken your defense and allow unworthy thoughts into your mind and pave the way to unworthy acts.” (Elder Russell M. Nelson, CES Fireside, BYU, 4 May 2008).

“Complete conversion is the key to our experiencing God’s greatest blessings. . . . One’s desire to sing praises to the Lord comes with one’s complete conversion to Him. . . . Please fill your minds with worthy sights and sounds. Cultivate your precious gift of the Holy Ghost. Protect it as the priceless gift that it is. Carefully listen for its quiet communication. You will be spiritually stronger if you do.” (Elder Russell M. Nelson, CES Fireside, BYU, 4 May 2008).