

# Keep Singing the Doxology

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*There are hymns and songs that we need to keep singing for the good of our souls. There is a benefit to joining our voices with the saints that have preceded us. There is a blessing in keeping alive the rich theology, pastoral wisdom, and comforting truths that many of our old hymns, psalms, and songs convey. By God's grace let's keep creating new and good Christian songs and hymns. However, let's not throw out the old for the new.*

Let me say from the beginning of this post, I am in favor of new Christian music. I have the [Gettys](#) on my Iphone. I regularly hum [RUF hymns](#). I came to saving faith listening to Vineyard music. My kids love to blast Matt Redmon's [10,000 Reasons](#). I am not opposed to new Christian music. In fact, I like much of it (don't tell my Presbyterian friends). However, I am concerned that we are losing some of our old, tried, tested, and true music. And that is not good.

This hit me with force this past December. URC co-sponsored a conference in Lansing called [Sola](#). This was a conference that focused on the five Solas of the Reformation and it was filled with 3,000 people, most under the age of thirty!

As someone who was helping to coordinate the event, I was sitting in the sectioned off speakers' area. Two young men came in underneath the rope and sheepishly sat at the end of the row. They weren't supposed to be there and they knew it. What was I to do? After a moment of debating whether to apply the law or grace, I saw the excitement upon their faces and extended grace through my silence. They just wanted to be close to the podium while the night's final speaker, John Piper, preached.

I couldn't help but watch them. I watched as they sang the new songs leading up to the sermon with great enthusiasm. I watched as they sat upon the literal edge of their seat as John Piper delivered a masterful sermon. Their heads nodded in agreement and they would often look at each other with a smile of delight as they heard biblical truth proclaimed. I confess to being distracted. I couldn't help it. I was just so encouraged to see young people this engaged with our God and His Word. I thoroughly loved watching this young, zealous, joy-filled, heart-delighting, focused faith. It warmed my soul.

After John Piper finished preaching, Kevin DeYoung came upon the platform and said, "Let's sing the [Doxology](#) to close our conference." And the room began to be filled with, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow..." I stole a glance over to the two young men again. And I watched as they turned to each other, shrugged their shoulders, and gave one another a dumbfounded glance. They didn't know the doxology. They had never heard it.

Now, let's be clear. The Doxology is not necessary for our Christian faith. It is not an essential component of Christian worship. It is not indispensable to the Christian church. But it is old. It is good. It is true. The people of God have been singing it for close to 500 years for a reason. And we lose something when we lose it.

I pray that the Church keeps creating new, musically beautiful, theologically rich, biblically sound music. However, I also hope we don't lose the old tried and tested music of the Church. It can happen. Who would have guessed two hundred years ago that very few churches would be singing the Psalms today? It is the song-book of the Bible for goodness sakes! And yet, it has been mostly lost in our churches. As it has happened with the Psalms (though I hope they will make a comeback), so it could happen with the great hymns and songs of our faith.

How sad it would be if this new generation of the church didn't know the profound simplicity of the Gloria Patri, which has been sung since the second century. We lose something if we can't comfort ourselves with Horatio Spafford's *It is Well with My Soul*, can't find strength in Martin Luther's *A*

*Mighty Fortress is Our God*, or lose the ability to ruminate upon the rich theology of Wesley's *And Can It Be*.

There are hymns and songs that we need to keep singing for the good of our souls. There is a benefit to joining our voices with the saints that have preceded us. There is a blessing in keeping alive the rich theology, pastoral wisdom, and comforting truths that many of our old hymns, psalms, and songs convey. By God's grace let's keep creating new and good Christian songs and hymns. However, let's not throw out the old for the new. New friends don't require us to jettison old friends. I don't want to be the generation that loses the hymnal as the previous generation lost the Psalter. We don't have to be. Sing the new and sing the old. There are benefits that accompany both.

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