

GOOD HYMN -- BAD HYMN

“Rejoice, the Lord is King!”

Charles Wesley (1735-1790)

Rejoice the Lord is king! Your God and King adore;
Rejoice, give thanks, and sing, And triumph evermore:

Refrain:

Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Our Savior Jesus reigns, The God of truth and love;
When he had purged our stains, He took his seat
above:

Refrain

His kingdom cannot fail; He rules o'er earth and heav'n;
The keys of death and hell Are to our Jesus giv'n:

Refrain

His sits at God's right hand Till all his foes submit
And bow to his command And fall beneath his feet:

Refrain

What's right?

It doesn't have the beat, but it has the meat. It's
simple, but not simplistic.

A refrain, yes, but not one long refrain.

Old style, but look what it affirms – the hymn lifts up
what the Lord has done, is doing, and will do!

And it's upbeat to boot.

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Luther on salvation

“Since God has taken salvation out of my hands
into his, making it depend on his choice and
not mine, and has promised to save me, not by
my own work or exertion but by his grace and
mercy, I am assured and certain both that he is
faithful and will not lie to me, and also that he is
too great and powerful for any demons or any
adversities to be able to break him or to snatch
me from him.”

(*Luther's Works* 33:289)

“I Bless You”

by Cal Tuttle

1982 Mercy/Vineyard Publishing

I bless You Lord, (I bless You Lord)
I bless You Lord, (I bless You Lord)
I kneel down, (I kneel down)
Before You (before You) (Repeat)

Chorus

With all of my heart (with all of my heart)
With all of my mind (with all of my mind)
With all that is within me
I offer up (I offer up)
A sacrifice of praise

I thank You Lord (I thank You Lord)
I thank You Lord (I thank You Lord)
I lift my hands (I lift my hands)
To You (to You)
(Repeat, then chorus)

I worship You (I worship You)
I worship You (I worship You)
I fall down (I fall down)
Before You (before You)
(Repeat, then chorus)

7/11 Praise songs

Praise songs like “I Bless You” are often called “7/11
songs” because they have few words – about 7 words
– and these words are repeated over and over – seems
like 11 or more times!

In “I Bless You” the words “I,” “my,” “me” appear 28
times in the song. The word “You” appears 18 times.
Clearly the one praising is more central than the one
praised.

Contemporary song books are filled with songs in
which the word “I” dominates: “I Have Found You,” “I
Just Want To Praise You,” “I Only Want To Love You,”
“I'll Seek After You.”

Some church services open with 20 minutes of praise
songs like “I Bless You.” So what, you may protest?
Different strokes for different folks and all that.

Singing hymns to open a worship service can be
done appropriately, but too often the repetitive words
and rhythm are hypnotic. Carried along by the beat,
there is a certain emotional pull, but it is mostly about
you and me – the bland leading the bland.