

Music in the Home: Hymns Attacked/Defended Pt. 4

Hymns Attacked: “We need something fresh. The old hymns are stale and familiar.”

Hymns Defended: Numbers 11:6 “But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.”

“Fresh” is not a bad word, but it is being misused in contemporary Christianity to refer to constant change. Yet, God warns in Pro. 24:21 not to meddle with them given to change. Modern Christians are so caught up in the world's love of change that we jump on board the newest apparel, newest social media craze, the newest food fads, and the newest music buzz. As a result, we loathe (Num. 21:5) God's manna of historical and spiritual hymns. **Like Israel in the wilderness, though fed daily by the heavenly manna of God, we grow bored and tired of the miracle of the old hymns.** As if addicted by change itself, we allow our very souls to dry up (Num. 11:6) if some new song doesn't come down the pipe before long. “Fresh” music to many these days means music that is more in line with today's fleshly desires, and the ancient hymns don't match that. So the ancient hymns are deemed stale and are removed. Most of the modern hymnbooks, including those found more and more in independent, Baptist churches, have removed the older hymns. These newer hymnbooks have replaced some of the older hymns with jazzy CCM songs (“People Need the Lord”) and doctrine-deficient contemporary Southern Gospel songs (“Somebody Touched Me” and “Because He Lives”). At the same time, these newer hymnbooks are changing the rich words of the older hymns to more contemporary thought and speech (often without letting the reader know about it)! **Friend, if you really want fresh, just start singing all of the older hymns in hymnbooks like “Great Hymns of the Faith” and “Soul Stirring Songs and Hymns”.** There are hundreds in just one hymnbook. That will keep things fresh, yet spiritual! And if one hymnbook somehow gets stale and familiar, start gathering the older hymnbooks and you'll eventually find thousands upon thousands of solid hymns that have been written. What happened to those? That would keep things fresh!

By the way, there have been really good hymns written during modern times. Dr. John R. Rice, the famous evangelist who started the Sword of the Lord wrote wonderful hymns like, “We'll Never Say Goodbye in Glory” and “So Little Time”. Alfred B. Smith is another modern hymnwriter who has passed to glory (“Surely Goodness and Mercy”; “For God So Loved the World”). John W. Peterson was a prolific hymn writer (“Great Hymns of the Faith”) who is also now in heaven (“Jesus Is Coming Again”; “Surely Goodness and Mercy”; “Just One Step at a Time”; “I'm a Soldier”; “So Send I You”; “Isn't the Love of Jesus Something Wonderful”; “Springs of Living Water”; “Heaven Came Down and Glory Filled My Soul”).